

cnme

computer news middle east

WHERE TECHNOLOGY MEANS BUSINESS

ISSUE 352 | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021
TAHAWULTECH.COM



FACEBOOK'S HEAD OF
TECH, MENA

SECLORE'S CEO & FOUNDER

RIMINI'S STREET GENERAL
MANAGER, EMEA

AVAYA DRIVING THE NEW 'EXPERIENCE ECONOMY'

NIDAL ABOU-LTAIF, PRESIDENT –
AVAYA INTERNATIONAL OUTLINES
HOW THE COMPANY'S COMPOSABLE
SOLUTIONS ARE DRIVING THE NEW
'TOTAL EXPERIENCE' MINDSET

CPI

PUBLICATION LICENSED BY
DUBAI PUBLICATION CITY, DCCA

 tahawultech.com

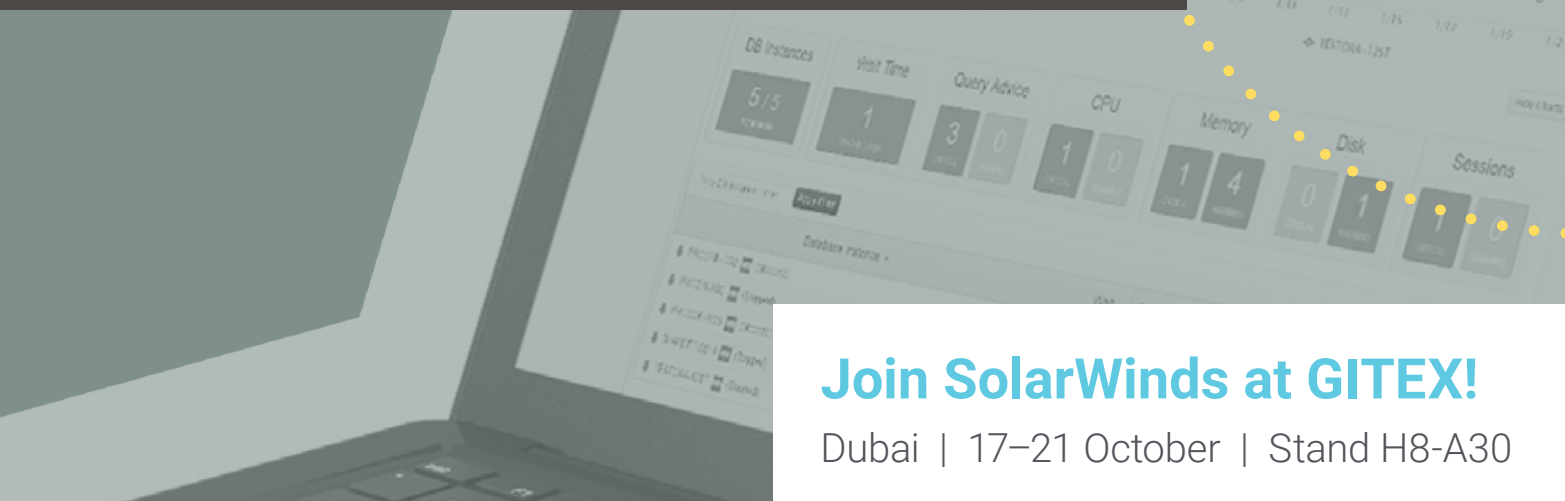
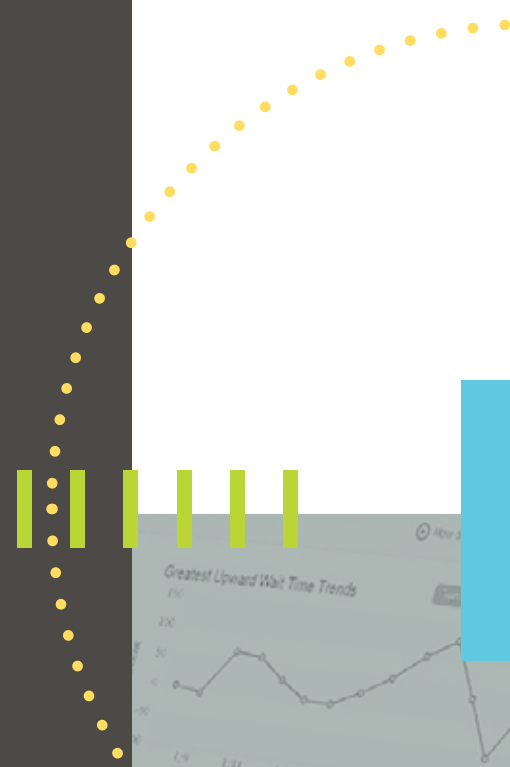
Download on the
App Store

ANDROID APP ON
Google play

Monitor. Manage. Secure IT.

- » Over 300,000 customers in 190 countries from SMB to Fortune 500®
- » 498 of the Fortune 500 are customers
- » #1 in Network Management*
- » 50+ IT management products

solarwinds.com



Join SolarWinds at GITEX!

Dubai | 17-21 October | Stand H8-A30



NETWORK
MANAGEMENT



SYSTEMS
MANAGEMENT



SECURITY AND
COMPLIANCE



IT SERVICE
MANAGEMENT



DATABASE
MANAGEMENT



APPLICATION
MANAGEMENT

Our events



Our online platforms



tahawultech.com

Our social media



facebook.com/tahawultech



twitter.com/tahawultech



linkedin.com/in/tahawultech



Talk to us:
E-mail:
mark.forker@
cpimediagroup.com



**Businesses
unable to become
composable
will struggle
to compete in
the burgeoning
'experience
economy'**

EDITORIAL

ORCHESTRATING THE 'EXPERIENCE ECONOMY'

A good composer is ultimately judged by his ability to orchestrate his symphony and the same can be said of businesses tasked with the responsibility of delivering experiences for their customers.

Avaya are a global leader when it comes to unified communications, and it's their mission statement to give their customers the autonomy, flexibility and solutions required to meet the evolving demands of the new digital economy.

In an exclusive interview with CNME, Nidal Abou-Ltaif, President – Avaya International, highlights the growing need for composable solutions – and declared that businesses unable to become composable will struggle to compete in the burgeoning 'experience economy'.

CAFU have emerged as a major disruptor in the automotive industry, and Deputy Editor of tahawultech.com Daniel Shepherd spoke to Helal Ismail, Head of Technology at CAFU to find out how the company plans to tailor its technologies to follow new market trends.

Soocho Choi, Head of Global Travel & Hospitality at Publicis Sapient talked about the growing trend of 'smart destinations' and outlined what he believes are the fundamental principles and building blocks needed in the development of smart cities.

Security remains a hot topic and over the last few months we have witnessed more and more cyberattacks.

We spoke to Visha Gupta, CEO & Founder of Seclore, to find out what he believes are the biggest challenges facing enterprises when it comes to protecting and controlling their devices – and how automated security solutions are the preferred choice for most major industries globally when it comes to tackling the problem.

Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou is currently embroiled in a high-profile extradition case between Canada and the United States, but we managed to secure an interview with legal expert Tim Taylor to find out more about the issues at the heart of the case and how he feels the trial will play out.

In addition to this, we have brilliant op-eds from prominent thought leaders from the IT ecosystem including AVEVA, Lenovo, Heriot-Watt University and Veritas.

Ola Lind from FinTech Futures (FTFT) is on hand to talk about his cryptocurrency platform SoBitX and how he believes that blockchain will be the key technology in decentralised cloud over the next couple of years as the technology matures.

CPI Media Group hosts its annual GovTech Awards at the end of September, which acknowledges the achievements of the IT leaders from within the UAE government.

We will have coverage from that event as well as a comprehensive preview ahead of GITEX Technology Week, which takes places on October 17th, at Dubai World Trade Centre in October's edition of CNME.

Enjoy!

Mark Forker
Editor

MEET THE RALLY FAMILY, FOR VIDEO MEETINGS OF ALL SIZES.



The Logitech® Rally family of all-in-one video bars and modular conference camera systems delivers the performance, installation ease, and device management tools you need to video-enable small, medium, large, and multipurpose rooms throughout the workplace.

SUPERIOR AUDIO AND VIDEO

Every Rally device features motorized pan and tilt lenses and AI-powered RightSense™ technologies for expansive room coverage with automatic framing, lifelike video quality, and exquisite voice clarity.

FLEXIBLE DEPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Available in pre-configured systems with Logitech Tap for Google Meet, Microsoft Teams®, Zoom Rooms, GoTo, Pexip, and RingCentral. Or, deploy in USB mode to use with any software.

VERSATILE SETUP AND CABLE MANAGEMENT

Find the perfect setup for any space—go modular with the expandable options of Rally Plus for larger rooms or choose the all-in-one ease of Rally Bar or Rally Bar Mini. Whichever you choose, integrated cable management keeps connections tight.

EASY TO MONITOR, MANAGE, AND SUPPORT

Get ahead of possible issues with remote device management using Logitech Sync. Monitor device status, push firmware updates, and even measure room utilization.

Raise the bar on your video meetings with Rally Family.

logitech®



6 News

CNME rounds up the biggest regional and global developments in enterprise technology, which includes the announcement that AVEVA and Aramco have partnered on a sustainability mission, A10 Networks have expanded their security portfolio to boost its zero-trust architecture – and research from Lenovo indicates how businesses can innovate beyond their boundaries.

14 Dubai-based QC Tim Taylor, outlines the legal complexities in the high-profile extradition case of Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou, in an exclusive interview with CNME Editor Mark Forker.

18 Alain Mayni, Head of Tech, Media & Telecoms, at Facebook MENA, highlights how the social networking behemoth is

helping operators generate new revenue models in the digital economy.

40 James Petter, Vice President International, Pure Storage, raises his concerns over vendor ambiguity when it comes to the details of their XaaS contracts.

42 Emmanuelle Hose, General Manager, EMEA at Rimini Street, documents how the third-party IT support provider is giving their customers flexibility and autonomy when it comes to their IT strategy.

48 Ola Lind, Director of FinTech Futures, reveals why their cryptocurrency exchange selected Dubai as the base for its operations, and the role blockchain will play in the evolution of cloud services.

FOUNDER, CPI
 Dominic De Sousa
 (1959-2015)

Published by **CPI**

Publishing Director
 Natasha Pendleton
natasha.pendleton@cpimediagroup.com

EDITORIAL
 Editor
 Mark Forker
mark.forker@cpimediagroup.com

PRODUCTION AND DESIGN
 Senior Designer
 Analou Balbero
analou.balbero@cpimediagroup.com

DIGITAL SERVICES
 Web Developer
 Adarsh Snehan

webmaster@cpimediagroup.com

Publication licensed by
 Dubai Production City, DCCA
 PO Box 13700
 Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 5682993

ADVERTISING
 Group Sales Director
 Kausar Syed
kausar.syed@cpimediagroup.com

Online Editor
 Daniel Shepherd
daniel.shepherd@cpimediagroup.com

Senior Sales Manager
 Sabita Miranda
sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.com

© Copyright 2021 CPI
 All rights reserved

While the publishers have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information in this magazine, they will not be held responsible for any errors therein.

AVEVA and Aramco Plan to Partner to Realise Key Sustainability Goals through Digitalisation



Peter Herweck, CEO, AVEVA

Aramco, one of the world's largest integrated energy and chemicals companies, and AVEVA, a global leader in industrial software, driving digital transformation and sustainability, have today announced their intention to form a strategic alliance. Focused on driving sustainability in the region through digital transformation, the partnership will help enable AVEVA to

establish their largest digital hub, with an R&D capability, in the Middle East, headquartered in Saudi Arabia. This partnership will represent a significant investment for AVEVA which is also looking to create up to 300 high skill new jobs in the Kingdom by 2030.

This transformative and groundbreaking partnership is designed to foster a working relationship between the two companies in the deployment of various digital technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and Data Management. AVEVA and Aramco aim to work together to unlock the benefits of these technologies in line with the Kingdom's move towards industrial sustainability. One of the key focus areas of the partnership would be to utilise digital technologies to support the development and implementation of blue hydrogen and decarbonisation facilities in Saudi Arabia in line with the Kingdom's energy

transition strategy. Another area in which the companies intend to work together is in the implementation of cutting-edge predictive analytics technology across Aramco's operating facilities. This would be one of the largest deployments of such technology in the region and the main goal is to further improve the reliability, performance, and safety of Aramco's operation.

AVEVA's CEO Peter Herweck commented, "AVEVA is proud to be working with Aramco towards an agreement to facilitate its digital transformation journey. Through this partnership the vision of our companies is to play a fundamental role in industrial sector decarbonisation within Saudi Arabia and the delivery of its sustainable goals, bringing capabilities to optimise every aspect of the value chain with sophisticated imaging, data analytics and deep-learning technologies that this initiative would bring. Through this initiative AVEVA aims to contribute to creating job opportunities in the Kingdom and throughout the Middle East region".

Cybereason Exposes Chinese Threat Actors Compromising Telecommunications Providers for Cyber Espionage



Cybereason CEO and co-founder Lior Div

Cybereason, the leader in operation-centric attack protection, today announced the discovery of several previously unidentified cyber attack campaigns infiltrating major telecommunications providers across Southeast Asia. Similar to the recent SolarWinds and Kaseya attacks, the

threat actors first compromised third-party service providers — but in this case instead of using them to deliver malware through a supply chain attack, the intent was to leverage them to conduct surveillance of their customers' confidential communications.

"The attacks are very concerning because they undermine the security of critical infrastructure providers and expose the confidential and proprietary information of both public and private organisations that depend on secure communications for conducting business. These state-sponsored espionage operations not only negatively impact the telcos' customers and business partners, they also have the potential to threaten the national security of countries in the region and those who have a vested interest in the region's stability", said

Cybereason CEO and co-founder Lior Div. "This is why Cybereason maintains a global team of seasoned threat intelligence investigators whose focus is to expose the tactics, techniques and procedures of advanced adversaries so we can better protect organisations from these kinds of complex attacks now and into the future".

Key Findings Include:

- Adaptive, Persistent and Evasive attackers
- The compromise of Third-Parties to Reach Specific Targets
- Microsoft Exchange Vulnerabilities Exploited Again
- A focus on High Value Espionage Targets
- Operating in the Interest of China
- The Potential for Broader Impact

AIO Networks Expands Security Portfolio Capabilities to Bolster Zero Trust Architectures



Dhrupad Trivedi, president and CEO of AIO Network

AIO Networks has enhanced its solutions to help customers meet and accelerate their Zero Trust strategies. Zero Trust eliminates implicit trust from information technology systems, and is embodied by the maxim ‘never trust, always verify.’ It recognises that internal and external threats are pervasive, and the de facto elimination of the traditional network perimeter requires a different security approach. Every device, user, network, and application flow should be checked to

remove excessive access privileges and other potential threat vectors. Multi-layered protection should incorporate controls, from i) foundational visibility into encrypted traffic streams to stop infiltration from ransomware, malware, and other common attacks, ii) application workload protection through segmentation and advanced user authorisation and verification, and iii) sustainable user training in best practices to minimise risky behaviours.

“Customers are facing unprecedented increases in both threats and vulnerabilities along with a critical shortage of cybersecurity professionals. Now with threats crossing over into the physical domain, it is more critical than ever before to ensure safety, security and compliance. Service providers and enterprises are modernising their security approaches as recommended by the Zero Trust security model to ensure digital resilience and successful business outcomes”, said Dhrupad Trivedi, president and CEO of AIO Networks.

Lenovo Research Finds the 3 Steps Businesses Can Take to Innovate Beyond Boundaries



Lenovo Group has launched Beyond Boundaries, a new report on the state of business innovation today. The study examines how businesses are innovating their way into the post-COVID future, not just to satisfy pent-up demand and unlock growth, but also to improve their social and environmental performance.

Report highlights include the findings that:

- Businesses recognise that diversity is directly related to successful innovation, but there is more work to do before individuals can be their authentic selves at work.
- Disrupting a stifling, hierarchical culture – also related to effective innovation – is far from easy. The study finds some leaders are struggling to embrace a bottom-up working environment.
- Business agility has led to improved innovation. However, there are fears that these gains will be lost as firms transition back into the office or adopt a hybrid model that balances on-site and remote working.

Priorities for UAE HR Professionals: Digitisation, Talent, and the Future of Work



Dr. Christopher Daniel, Managing Director and Partner, BCG Middle East

A new report by Boston Consulting Group and the World Federation of People Management Associations, titled *Creating People Advantage 2021: The Future of People Management Priorities*, identifies digitisation, talent, and the future of work as the immediate priorities for HR executives, a central finding that applies to the UAE market.

“No matter the vertical in which they operate, every company today shares a common goal – building a workforce and workplace capable of thriving well into the future”, said Dr. Christopher Daniel, Managing Director and Partner, BCG Middle East: “To create and capture such success, organisational strategies must be implemented without delay, frameworks that consider different aspects and deliver on internal priorities”.

Three Organisational Imperatives

- Digitisation, including the implementation and continuous use of new technologies such as people analytics, cloud-based applications, AI, and robotics.
- Talent, comprising strategic workforce planning, leadership development, upskilling and reskilling, and working with an ecosystem of employees, contractors, and other types of labor. Crucially, UAE respondents ranked future importance of talent ecosystem management much higher in comparison to the global average.
- The future of work, including more agile HR, the incorporation of “smart” work, and change management.

Malware attacks in UAE are increasing, reaching 34 million in only 6 months



Maher Yamout, Senior Security Researcher for Middle East, Turkey and Africa at Kaspersky.

Kaspersky research highlights that malware is widespread across the Middle East, accounting for 161 million of attacks and growing by 17% when compared to the last year figure – 138 million. The growth in each country in the region varies. Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain and Egypt have seen a large spike in malware attacks, increasing by 67%, 64%, 45% and 32%, respectively. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) show lower increases of 16% and 7% – however increases none the less.

Says Maher Yamout, Senior Security Researcher for Middle East, Turkey and Africa at Kaspersky; “Even though the scourge of malware has always been of concern, the past 12-months have highlighted how hackers are refocusing their efforts to compromise consumer and corporate systems and gain access to critical data and information. Given the growth in digital transformation since last year and considering the increase in remote working resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, countries of the Middle East have become an attractive target for those looking to exploit a lack of user education or cybersecurity understanding”.

Intellect announces Digital Transaction Banking on Cloud

Intellect Global Transaction Banking (iGTB), the transaction banking specialist from Intellect Design Arena Limited, ranked #1 in the world for Transaction Banking by IBS Intelligence two years in a row, announced its completely reimagined Digital Transaction Banking on a cloud platform.

According to Mr. Manish Maakan, CEO, iGTB, “CIOs and CTOs that run the bank IT, can reap value from cloud platforms by completely re-thinking digital technology transformation. The time to commercialise is reduced 4-6 fold, so that banks can go live in weeks rather than months with iGTB’s proprietary rapid implementation methodology iZoom, backed by pre-configured, industry-proven domain expertise and core-banking pre-integrations built into



Mr. Manish Maakan, CEO, iGTB

the software. Banks can future-proof their investments with a progressive modernisation upgrade roadmap thanks to iGTB’s cloud-ready enterprise cash management platform, which has the best-of-breed technology capabilities built-in with microservices and Open Banking APIs”.

ServiceNow to Acquire Indoor Mapping Disruptor Mapwize to Make Hybrid Work for Everyone



Blake McConnell, SVP of Employee Workflows at ServiceNow

ServiceNow, the leading digital workflow company that makes work, work better for people, today announced it has signed an agreement to acquire Mapwize, an indoor-mapping and wayfinding company based in Lille, France. With Mapwize, ServiceNow will provide indoor mapping capabilities for employees as they reserve seats, conference rooms, workspaces and workplace resources, as well as navigate offices, from their desktop or mobile

devices. Mapwize capabilities will also help workplace teams manage and update floor maps based on usage trends and evolving real-estate needs.

“In the new world of hybrid work, the role of workplace services has never been more critical in creating great employee experiences”, said Blake McConnell, SVP of Employee Workflows at ServiceNow. “With Mapwize, ServiceNow will power the future of employee experiences by making it easier for people to navigate their work environment and access the workspace information and workplace services they need to remain productive”.

Mapwize’s mapping solutions, product features and technical talent will complement and enhance ServiceNow’s existing Workplace Service Delivery capabilities, including Workplace Space Mapping, Workplace Reservation Management, Workplace Space Management, Workplace Visitor Management, Case and Knowledge Management and the Safe Workplace Suite.

Poly Baselines Six Workplace Personas And the Emerging Trends



Poly has revealed six distinct personas, and the associated trends to baseline the workplace technology needs that businesses must be aware of and adapt to in the world getting fine-tuned by a continuum of regional nuisances, the pandemic, and the new ways of work.

Office Collaborator

Making up the largest proportion of the workforce at 27%, these workers have a traditional office-based work style that

is highly collaborative in nature, and open to new technology.

Flex Worker

Splitting time between the corporate office, a home office and travel, 20% of the workforce is now a flexible worker who is always innovating, and adapting their communications channels due to their frequent remote and on-the-go work.

Remote Collaborator

With fewer opportunities for in-person meetings, the 15% of the workforce who are Remote Collaborators face challenges including successful and productive collaboration. They need multiple devices, unified communications, and technologies to bridge the gaps between them and their colleagues, co-workers and clients.

Office Communicator

Office Communicators are most

comfortable with familiar systems and devices such as a desk phone. They make up 13% of the workforce and it is important to acknowledge their challenges such as being diverted by interruptions, background noise and lack of privacy on calls.

Connected Executive

These tech-savvy business drivers make up 12% of the typical workforce. They go wherever needed to make decisions and solve problems. Versatile in their work style, they use more communication tools than any other persona.

Road Warrior

Accounting for 5% of the workforce, Road Warriors are always on the move working outside of the office more than 50% of the time. They need highly portable and easy to use solutions that eliminate noise and reduce the chance of unreliable connections.

E-Commerce Growth Driving Tech Investments in Supply Chain Execution Systems and High ROI



New research from Reuters Events

Supply Chain in partnership with Blue Yonder reveals the priority strategies and investments for supply chain execution and risk management. The State of Supply Chain Execution Report 2021 analysed responses of supply chain professionals and found that the COVID-19 pandemic, customer centricity, rising e-commerce complexity and costs, need for Direct-

to-Consumer (D2C), and the risk of financial peril are propelling retailers, manufacturers, and logistics service providers (LSPs) to digitally transform.

Pandemic Prompts Reevaluation of Supply Chain Risk Management

From constraints on raw materials to labor shortages to growing cybersecurity threats on distributed networks, pandemic-related challenges

have shifted supply chain risk management priorities:

- Respondents are hesitant to pursue near/onshoring plans, with only 29% of retailers/manufacturers making an investment.
- 63% of retailers/manufacturers stated that dual-sourcing was a favored strategy for risk management moving forward.
- Environmental concerns are also being considered when planning for supply chain risks. Over half (53%) of retailers/manufacturers and half (50%) of LSPs plan to invest in sustainability as a strategy for risk management.

Companies Prioritise Digital-First Practices and Technology Investments

The report found that there are various factors driving investment in supply chain technologies and digital-first practices. LSPs cited the pressure to reduce supply chain costs (58%) while also improving service levels for their retailer customers (48%) and dealing with labor shortages (30%).

PUBLICIS SAPIENT

SMART 'CONNECTED' DESTINATIONS

CNME Editor Mark Forker managed to secure an exclusive interview with **SooHo Choi**, Global Head of Travel & Hospitality at digital transformation consultancy, Publicis Sapient, to find out more about the concept of smart destinations, and the challenge facing city planners in terms of ensuring connected IoT devices that fuel futuristic cities are robust and secure.

10

It has been forecast by IDC that technology spending on smart city initiatives on a global scale will reach \$189bn in the next five years.

Dubai has positioned itself to be a leader in the Middle East region in terms of championing and pioneering smart city projects to achieve its objective, which is to improve the lives of all its citizens and residents.

However, in my fascinating discussion with the dynamic executive from Publicis Sapient, I began the conversation by asking what where the fundamental components or characteristics of a 'smart city'.

"The traditional definition of a smart city is essentially

using ICT to improve urban services and infrastructure. Typically, that is enabled by individual capabilities that are deployed across a larger geographic footprint, or in terms of multi-capabilities in a narrower location. However, from my perspective, I believe that the concept of being 'smart' is really based around the intelligence use of data," said Choi.

We are all acutely aware that if any business wants to survive and thrive in the digital economy then it must have data at the center of its all decision-making, but how do cities harness the ocean of data it harbors from all its sensors and systems to make their cities

more efficient, and ultimately better places to live?

"That is the million-dollar question. What do you do with all the data that is garnered from transactions, sensors, systems, and devices? I look at it in two halves, and it is probably an oversimplified view. However, there is an operational smart aspect to it, such as smart meters that are designed to optimise power and enable the automation of certain capabilities within government services – and then there is the human-centric aspect to it all, which really feeds into this concept of smart destinations," said Choi.

The concept of smart destinations as referenced by



“

I believe that the concept of being 'smart' is really based around the intelligent use of data.”

Sooho Choi
*Global Head of Travel &
Hospitality at Publicis Sapient*

Choi are going to be ultimately driven by experiences, and they are going to play a huge part in Saudi Arabia's continuing efforts to rebrand itself as a tourist attraction and hotspot, as they accelerate efforts to start diversifying its economy away from oil. As Choi highlights 'experiences' are critical whether it is in new smart destination builds, or major cities.

"There are a lot of these destination builds happening in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, but it is fair to say that they are not easy to do in a metropolis that already exists, so when I say smart, my question is how do you use data in an operational sense to become more efficient as a municipality in terms of the services you provide, but also how does a person interact with that? Because ultimately it is all about experiences and cities need people to live there and consume their services and drive value to the metropolis," said Choi.

Many global industries were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the travel and hospitality sector along with aviation were decimated and their business models were effectively ground to a halt overnight.

However, there are green shoots of recovery, particularly in the Middle East with significant investments being made, but again as Choi has reinforced delivering 'seamless experiences' is critical.

"The Gulf region is in a very

fortunate place right now in terms of being in investment mode, and we need to make sure that we do not lose that investment opportunity in terms of how that brings experiences to life. There is a big base-level of capability that people take for granted, such as mobile connectivity being ubiquitous, and the ability to do transactions on their mobile applications, but it is important to highlight that if there is a significant hiccup when engaging with a specific application, or a service then it does take a long time to forget, so it needs to work," said Choi.

However, as Choi points out the ability to use data and build it into a system that allows you to deliver these unrivalled customer experiences is a lot easier said than done.

"In the Gulf region there is a tradition where luxury travel has always been a high-touch bespoke experience, that was usually done by a human, because the person that arrived was important. But if you take that in a systemic way using digital technology, how do you know what their reason for travelling is, what is important to them, are they here on business, or are they travelling





The Gulf region is in a very fortunate place right now in terms of being in investment mode, and we need to make sure that we do not lose that investment opportunity in terms of how that brings experiences to life.”

with friends? As routine as that may sound, it is shocking how difficult it is to get that right on a consistent basis, and to be able to make the journey appropriate for the individual that is travelling, especially in a luxury setting,” said Choi.

Technology has undoubtedly improved our lives and transformed the cities that we live in, and the continued evolution of technology means it is inevitable that cities will become more and more connected.

However, many security analysts have expressed grave concerns regarding the plethora

of connected devices already out there that are vulnerable to cyberattacks, and with IoT devices expected to be the foundation for futuristic, smart, and connected cities, how much of a challenge is that going to be for city planners and administrators?

“When you talk about deploying thousands of sensors and edge devices that have computing power into a public environment then we must be cognisant of the fact that there is risk associated with that, and we would be naïve to suggest that there is no risk. However, I do think there are

ways to be responsible in terms of how you deploy technology. It’s not that different from the things that we are dependent on every single day, like how banks protect themselves from cybersecurity attacks through the procedure of hardening software, and hardware components that are specialised from a security perspective,” said Choi.

Choi rejected the assertion from some that the risk could outweigh the reward and insisted that in order to progress from a technological and innovation standpoint, risks have to be taken, but he countered by reiterating the need for technology to be used responsibly.

“I think that governments, municipalities, and developers that deploy these devices need to do the same as what developers did in terms of protecting banks and promote the best-in-breed solutions that are available on the market. I do think they have to do more due to the sheer volume of connected devices that are out there in the open, and we know that is only going to increase. I think we do need to deploy technology responsibly, but because there is risk that should not prevent us from taking the next step to improve services and experiences. We need to do everything within our power to keep it secure, but the risk cannot stop us from transforming our societies through enhanced experiences,” said Choi. **cnme**

HUAWEI

LEGAL EXPERT BELIEVES EXTRADITION REQUEST WILL BE DENIED IN CASE OF HUAWEI CFO

14



CNME Editor Mark Forker interviewed **Tim Taylor QC**, Managing Partner at King & Wood Mallesons Dubai, to learn more about the legal complexities surrounding the high-profile extradition case of Huawei CFO, Meng Wanzhou – and how the growing trend of nationalism amongst some global superpowers is making it increasingly difficult for multinationals to conduct their business.

It's fair to say that the political climate in the United States has become extremely divisive, which can be traced back to when Donald Trump swept to power in November 2016, and the new Biden administration has done nothing to heal the nation.

However, Trump's presidential election came against the backdrop of Brexit, which seen the UK leave the European Union, a decision which has sowed huge divisions – and the country remains as divided as ever on the issue.

What both election results have in common is that they were driven by nationalistic principles and ideals. Trump played to his base by declaring that globalism had led to millions of job losses in rust belt states as US companies moved their manufacturing overseas, according to the Republican firebrand the middle class were being crushed, as was the concept of the 'American Dream'.



But the real competition between the US and China is a business one, and it's very much in the tech space with AI and Quantum computing to the fore."

In the UK, the European Union was painted out to be the villain, and it was time to take back control and put the 'great' back into Great Britain.

But what did all this mean in a business context, especially for large multinational companies like Huawei and ZTE, who were keen to expand their footprint in the United States.

Taylor believes that the resurgence in nationalism and what we have seen by the rise of populists from Trump to Johnson is really a subset of a return to big power duality between China and the United States. He referenced some significant global events that occurred up until the pandemic that has in many ways created the climate that we now find ourselves in.

"Chinese socialist capitalism has succeeded greatly there is no doubt about that. However, you then had 9/11 and then this sort of clash of civilizations happens, and then you have a period up until the financial crash where you have mass manufacturing in China, which made it easier for the United States to consume and spend, but that essentially led to the evisceration of jobs across America and a sort of hollowing out of American society in many ways. The latest endpoint is the pandemic, and it has caused some cross currents in different directions with things becoming more local, nationalised, and global. You cannot fix climate change and pandemics locally. I

think what we are seeing is that the localisation themes are food security, manufacturing being closer to the consumer, and when you have automation who needs to ship goods all over the world. It is ironic in many ways that America is trying to get manufacturing jobs to go back to the States in circumstances where frankly traditional manufacturing and cheap labor is going to become less and less of a thing," said Taylor.

Taylor stated that big data was now the new oil in the current global economy, but said the growth of 'Big Tech' monopolies was becoming a major issue as it was with railroads and oil in the 1930's.

"You have geo-political competition, where in the United States it's the power of Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, Google, and AWS, but it's not new. In Japan, you have got the big trading houses and it's similar in South Korea, with Samsung and Hyundai. However, in China you have a mix of big state-owned enterprises that are fueling this sort of export drive of the Belt and Road initiative. It's like the British Empire in the 19th century, massive industrial overcapacity needs to find an outlet. In the tech space you have the private enterprise, whether it is Jack Ma with Alibaba, or Huawei, that has become enormously powerful and the relationship between the Chinese state and how big they can get for the boots. But



the real competition between the US and China is a business one, and it's very much in the tech space with AI and Quantum computing to the fore – and I think what we are seeing under the Biden administration is a return to federal government funded scientific research and development,” said Taylor.

The trade war between Washington and Beijing has been a bruising battle over the last number of years, but diplomatic tensions between China and the United States heightened significantly following the arrest of Huawei's Chief Financial Officer, Meng Wanzhou in Vancouver in December 2018.

The case against Meng Wanzhou focuses on a PowerPoint presentation given during a meeting with HSBC on August 22nd, 2013.

The United States alleges that Meng lied to HSBC about Huawei's relationship with a subsidiary in Iran called Skycom, as part of their effort to obtain banking services.

Huawei's legal team believe that the Department of Justice's grip on HSBC in relation to a settlement they brokered in 2012, provides them with a motive to present Huawei as the mastermind of its sanctions' violations.

However, to understand HSBC's role in the case and

its settlement agreement with the DOJ, Taylor provides some historical context as to why HSBC would want to as some would say 'play ball' with US prosecutors.

“HSBC admitted to U.S. prosecutors in 2012, that it had helped dirty money flow through its branches around the world, including at least \$881 million controlled by the notorious Sinaloa cartel and other Mexican drug gangs. HSBC had to pay a fine of \$1.9bn, which was a record at the time, and what it essentially did was cop a plea and sign a deferred prosecution agreement, which ran out in 2017. It's relevance to the Meng case is that there was



The presupposition is that HSBC obviously had an incentive to be helpful and not be found to have been culpably evading US sanctions against the background of that plea agreement.”

Tim Taylor QC
Managing Partner at King & Wood Mallesons Dubai

a PowerPoint presentation by Huawei to HSBC in Hong Kong. However, dealing with Iran did not involve any illegality from Hong Kong – providing that you stayed out of the US dollar clearing system and that was the center of it. The presupposition is that HSBC obviously had an incentive to be helpful and not be found to have been culpably evading US sanctions against the background of that plea agreement,” said Taylor.

In terms of the extradition request itself, a lot of debate has centered on the topic of ‘dual criminality’ and whether it is applicable in the case of Huawei’s CFO, again Taylor

leverages his knowledge to better outline and detail the legal aspects of the extradition request being made by the United States, with many analysts saying the arrest is politically motivated and fueled by the trade war between China and the United States.

“I think it is important to take a step back and understand broadly how extradition works. In a world where criminality has become progressively global, and a large part of that criminality is the laundering of money all around the world. This means you do need a functional system for people who are suspected of crime and who are fleeing internationally to be sent back for prosecution. There are five features worth thinking about, typically there needs to be double criminality, which means that what it is that you’re being accused of is a crime where it happened – and would have been a crime if it had happened in the state being asked to extradite. Other features are, is there probable

cause, is there sufficient evidence, has it been fairly presented, has there been an abuse of process, or an abuse of someone’s rights – and the final thing is it should not be a political offence,” said Taylor.

Despite some of the legal setbacks incurred by Huawei’s lawyers in terms of getting some crucial evidence allowed into the case, Taylor firmly believes that Meng will go free.

“The double criminality in the Meng case comes down to this, it is perfectly legal to deal with Iran from Hong Kong, but the United States has got around that by saying that HSBC were deceived into lending money – and if HSBC had been deceived in Canada, then that would have been an offence in Canada too. Huawei’s legal team tried to knock it out on double criminality then failed to do so. What they have been focusing on lately has been trying to get evidence in and they have had a mixed outcome. They have been successful in ensuring that the entire PowerPoint presentation that was given at the restaurant in Hong Kong goes in rather than just part of it. What they have not been able to get in is a great deal of evidence that HSBC were aware that they were conducting business in Iran, so there is no way they could have been deceived. I hope I am not proven wrong, but I think this judge is taking a long time to deal with this case carefully, and I think that it is more likely than not that extradition will be refused and she will go free,” said Taylor. **crime**

FACEBOOK

UNLOCKING THE 'VALUE' OF YOUR CUSTOMER

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Alain Mayni**, Head of Tech, Media, Telecoms & Professional Services – MENA, at Facebook, to find out how telecom operators can generate new revenues by harnessing the capabilities presented by customer value management and how digital experiences will spark a resurgence of growth in the telecoms sector in the MENA region.

Facebook is best known for being a platform that connects billions of people all over the world, but the social media networking behemoth has diversified its business portfolio over the years and is one of the most innovative and valuable companies in the world.

One of the business segments it has entered over the years has been digital media and professional services, and Alain Mayni is the person tasked with the responsibility of guiding Facebook's direction in that

space in the MENA region.

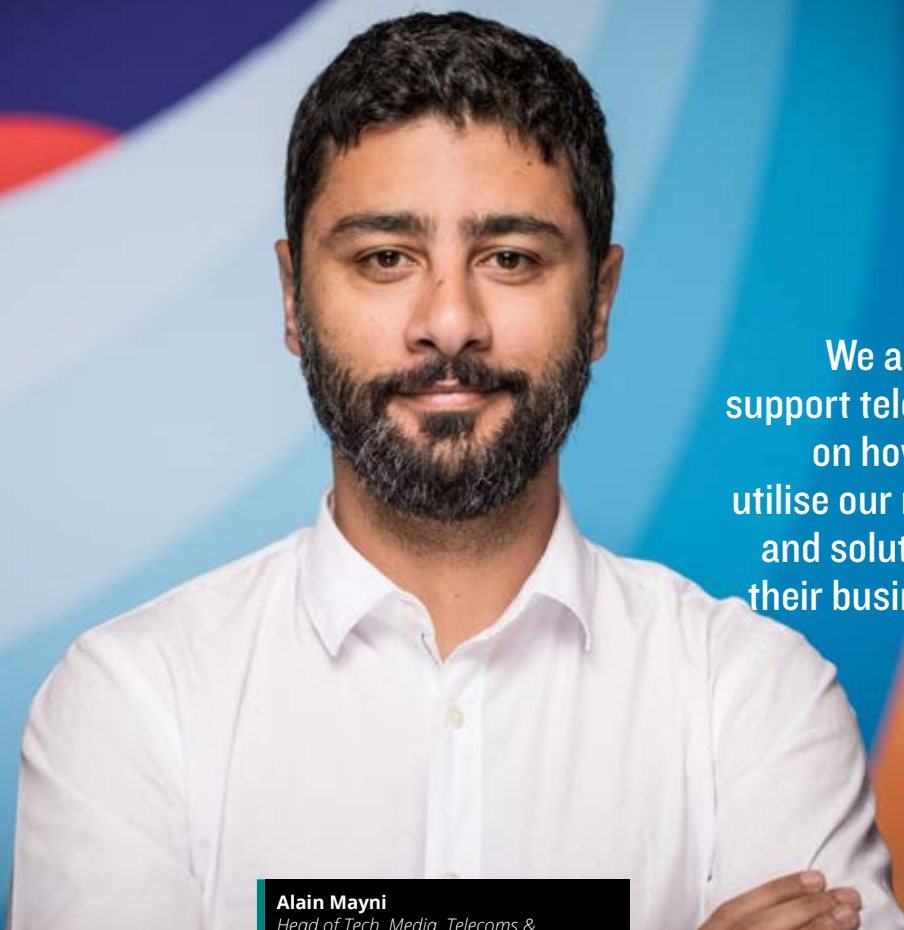
Mayni explained the relationship Facebook has with telecom operators in the region and outlined how they leverage their solutions to help them overcome business challenges.

"My scope within Facebook covers the relationship with telecom operators as well as other industry sectors. We advise, train and support telecom operators on how they can best utilise our marketing tools and solutions to achieve their business outcomes. During this process we are also exposed

to their business challenges, and we also serve as a gateway for many of the other functions related to telecom operators," said Mayni.

The connectivity industry was essential during the global COVID-19 crisis for both social and business continuity, and telecom operators were at the core of that connectivity, especially here in the Middle East.

However, whilst operators played a key role during the pandemic, Mayni highlighted how they had to undergo their own digital transformation journey.



Alain Mayni
*Head of Tech, Media, Telecoms &
Professional Services – MENA, at Facebook*



We advise, train and support telecom operators on how they can best utilise our marketing tools and solutions to achieve their business outcomes.

19

“We have seen telecom operators in coordination with governments all over the world play a key role in highlighting social awareness regarding public health information related to the pandemic – and we have witnessed their transformation from brick-and-mortar players to digital players. Telecom operators had to undergo their own digital transformation in terms of moving their entire workforce to a remote working environment, which was a challenge because they are large employers, so they were moving thousands of people out of the office,” said Mayni.

However, he added that despite contrary belief that all operators were resilient during the pandemic, he pointed out

that operators have experienced a huge decline in their revenues, largely due to the decimation of its roaming business.

“The general narrative has been that operators are resilient and were adaptive to the situation, but they also suffered a massive decline in their revenues with the GSMA reporting that there was a drop of between 4–8 percent for operators on a global scale. While roaming was one of the reasons for the collapse, the drop in store sales was due to store closures while the drop in enterprise revenue was due to remote working. Telecom operators are now looking at ways to reaccelerate or reignite their growth and they are looking at their existing

customers to find that new wave of growth, and that’s why we are talking a lot lately about customer value management,” said Mayni.

Mayni believes that customer value management is going to be a key driver for growth for operators in the MENA region, and he explained the concept in more detail.

“People expect seamless omnichannel experiences when engaging with a brand and they expect a consistent experience. Customer value management is not only about increasing revenues, but also a combination of improving customer experience, satisfaction and retaining those customers and growing their loyalty. Essentially, you

want to drive the right action to the right customer towards the right channels and this discipline and practice is commercial at its core but relies heavily on data practices and leveraging technologies such as AI and predictive modelling, which would serve to help onboarding new customers, and moving customers from call centres to digital channels like WhatsApp,” said Mayni.

Mayni explained that their proposition in relation to customer value management is based around three different components.

“Operators have the opportunity to take their customer value management to Facebook and we help them do it in three folds. Firstly, we focus on the reach, globally we connect 3.45 billion people every month and operators can expect to find many of their customers on Facebook and we help them target their customers very precisely through a combination of our prediction models and their own prediction models. Then we have our omnichannel solutions in which we can show ads on 17 placements across Facebook apps, that can be optimised for specific outcomes, and finally the last element is measurement. We help operators close the loop with measurement by connecting the signals from what happens instore, over the phone, on their web or their mobile application, and they can form a complete overview of the customer journey,” said Mayni.

Operator revenues have come under pressure from the rise of OTTs, but the dynamic Facebook

executive also highlighted the issue of commoditisation as a major issue for telcos.

“Operators in saturated markets have been battling with commoditisation because users view telcos as a utility, and they expect a high level of service. In pre-paid markets you will see people carry 2-3 smartphones



People expect seamless omnichannel experiences when engaging with a brand and they expect a consistent experience.”

and they will juggle between the operator that is offering the best deal. To escape commoditisation, we know that operators are diversifying and by doing this they can go beyond their core voice and data offering, but the migration from voice and data revenue has also been a painful one, because the data revenue did not really make up for the voice revenue,” said Mayni.

Operators have diversified their portfolios and have yielded excellent results for investments outside of their traditional core service offerings, highlighting the success of STC Pay in the burgeoning FinTech sector.

“When operators are expanding, they are exploring a variety of services outside of their core services, and in fact, another GSMA statistic reports that globally major operators are seeing on average 20% of their revenue coming from their

non-core and data businesses. They are empowering the enterprise sector with cloud services and applications and are helping SMEs to digitise through their one-stop shop approach. However, I expect to see more operators invest significantly in the FinTech space to enable financial inclusion. A great example of this is STC, their STC Pay offering, which is an e-wallet is now a unicorn valued at \$1 billion and has just been granted a license to become a digital bank, and we will see more operators entering this industry vertical,” said Mayni.

Operators are still trying to get a return on the investments they have made in 4G networks, and some industry analysts believes there is a reluctance from some to go all out until more concrete use-cases have been established, but Mayni believes that 5G will generate revenue for telcos in the enterprise sector.

“Globally there is a consensus that 5G monetisation will come from the enterprise sector, in verticals such as manufacturing and smart cities to name a few, and we will also see B2C use-cases, and we have already seen some of these in the Gulf. Immersive entertainment in e-sports and gaming has grown and AR and VR will become more mainstream when 5G networks are rolled out on scale. We see a lot of opportunities for 5G opportunities in the enterprise sector first, and then as the technology matures, we believe we will then see more consumer use-cases emerge in immersive entertainment,” concluded Mayni. **enme**

17-21 OCT 2021
DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE

GITEX
TECHNOLOGY
WEEK

ai
عالم الذكاء الاصطناعي
EVERYTHING

LF
GITEX FUTURE STARS

**Fintech
SURGE.**
فينتك سيرج

**FUTURE
BLOCKCHAIN
SUMMIT**
قمة مستقبل البلوك تشين

ماركتنغ مانيا
**Marketing
Mania**

17-20 OCT 2021

WHERE BUSINESS,
INNOVATION,
AND THE FUTURE
WILL BE DECIDED

140 COUNTRIES PRESENTING THEIR TECHNOLOGIES,
MAKE SURE YOU'RE THERE TOO

SECURE YOUR SPACE NOW: marketing@gitex.com

#GITEX2021
GITEX.COM

Gold Sponsor

HUAWEI
5G Innovation Partner

Bronze Sponsor

CISCO

VIP Majlis Sponsor

**midis
GROUP**

Platinum Sponsor

NEOM
نيوم

Conference Sponsor

TeamViewer

Headline Sponsor
Xlabs

APTEC

Headline Sponsor
Xlabs

Bitdefender

Supporting
Sponsor Xlabs

OBRELA
SECURITY INDUSTRIES

Supported by

AVAYA

vmware

Honeywell

Hisense

Red Hat

Organised By

DUBAI WORLD TRADE CENTRE

SECLORE

REDEFINING DATA SECURITY

Vishal Gupta, CEO & Founder, Seclore, explains to CNME Editor Mark Forker, how the company's device-agnostic, automated range of security solutions makes it the preferred choice for some of the largest enterprises in the world.

What is the biggest challenge faced by encryption and rights management technologies today?

Encryption and even rights management technologies have been tough for users to adopt. They require complicated setups of key and software agents and lots of user education over a period of time. This becomes cumbersome to manage. Often, enterprises have had to hire armies to manage encryption/ rights management technologies as they become key and policy management nightmares.

Overall, I believe that a lack of automation at the user and security administration levels has been the biggest stumbling block. Users are forced to make decisions such as what to protect,

how to protect, what policy to apply, how to monitor, when to change the policy and when to raise an alarm, while security administrators are busy defining and managing security policies and user permissions and rights.

This combination of clunky user experience and high overheads has been the adoption bane in the encryption and rights management world.

Emails are the most common source of data breaches today. Are existing email gateways and encryptions enough to secure them?

The focus with most email security systems today is threat protection i.e., how we prevent hackers from infiltrating the enterprise. Today, the biggest risks arise from the lack of data protection, i.e., how we prevent confidential information from being exfiltrated or misused by internal or external actors. This non-linear focus on threat protection leaves the goal of data protection unachieved by present-day email security systems.

Therefore, the need today is to combine the best threat protection systems like anti-

malware, anti-phishing, APT, etc. with the best data protection systems like encryption, rights management, and data-centric audits. This combination can help enterprises continue using email as the dominant method for both internal and external collaboration.

What is Seclore's approach to email security? Can you tell us more about the Seclore Email Protector and its key features?

Seclore's approach to email security is based on 4 key principles:

Automation – The best products are the ones which we don't have to 'use' at all

User experience – The user experience must be seamless and should encourage security-conscious behavior and not try to bypass the system across personal devices like mobile phones and corporate devices.

Visibility – Users and enterprise security professionals appreciate the visibility of what is happening to their emails within and outside of the enterprise.

Bullet-proof Security – The security of emails and documents should not be dependent on complicated and faulty key



The biggest challenge for security teams in enterprises when it comes to emails on personal devices has been the lack of control over these devices.”

management, endpoint agents, and insecure infrastructure.

With built-in capabilities to automatically protect emails from official computers, personal phones and web interfaces, as well as applications AND integration with leading DLP and email security systems, Seclore eliminates the need for user participation or awareness.

The user experience is seamless without the need to download/install clunky agents and extends to all devices and operating systems. The enterprise and the users get visibility into WHO is using the information shared via email, WHAT is each person doing, WHEN and from WHERE.

This visibility is extremely important for privacy compliance and breach investigations. Granular controls and dynamic policy management allows for highly confidential information to be shared with people while still allowing for remote destruction, should the need arise.

These capabilities have made Seclore the data protection solution of choice for some of the largest enterprises in the world.

Emails on mobile phones are even more vulnerable to breaches and attacks than the ones accessed on laptops. How does Seclore Email Protector address this problem?

Seclore's email protection capabilities are completely device-agnostic so they work with any device which could be creating or consuming enterprise emails. The device itself need not be under enterprise control for "Seclored" emails to be created or consumed on it.

The biggest challenge for security teams in enterprises

when it comes to emails on personal devices has been the lack of control over these devices. Users have specific preferences on the devices they want to use and for enterprises to even gain visibility to the devices being used is tough.

Seclore solves this problem by relieving the enterprise of exercising control over user devices while still ensuring that enterprise emails are secured and compliant. This is a first in the email security world.

Aspects such as email attachments & archiving are very often ignored, even in the most comprehensive of email security frameworks. How different is Seclore's email protection solution in this regard?

Historically, long-term information governance and retention have always conflicted with encryption and rights management technologies. This creates challenges in archiving, search and indexing, and the discovery of emails. However, Seclore's rich integration and interfaces allow email archives to store unprotected copies of the information for easy search and discovery. Ready connectors allow DLP and other discovery systems to be able to "peek" inside 'Seclored' emails on the fly.

All the above makes email archiving, discovery, and DLP inspection seamless for enterprises as they seek to deploy

Seclore's email security solutions.

Does Seclore provide on-premise deployments and cloud options? How would you describe Seclore's own security infrastructure?

Seclore is flexible when it comes to provisioning. Large enterprises and defence agencies use Seclore in a completely on-prem model and even in air-gapped networks. Seclore is also available in a completely cloud-hosted, managed model which enterprises can start using in less than 24 hours from the time the decision is made.



Vishal Gupta
CEO & Founder, Seclore



IT'S TIME TO FACE THE MUSIC

Are CIOs ready to become composers to meet their customers' endlessly evolving needs? According to Avaya's Nidal Abou-Ltaif, there's no alternative; any enterprise that can't become 'composable' will have a difficult time competing in the emerging experience economy. But he has some advice on how to make the transition.

It's time to face the music: Customer and employee expectations are skyrocketing. It's little wonder that the organisations running monolithic, glass-ceiling apps are struggling to keep up – in the months it can take to roll out new capabilities through an old-world platform, the customer's preferences may already have changed.

So what's the answer? According to Nidal Abou-Ltaif, President, Avaya International, these monolithic apps are about to hear their swan song, and they'll soon make room for new compositions. He says that the organisations who'll succeed are the ones who adopt a vision of the 'composable enterprise'. Pointing out that the world is never going back to how it was

pre-COVID, he explains that the only way for businesses to differentiate themselves today is to focus on the quality of the experiences they provide. And to keep up with ever-shifting demands on the experiences that people want, a new, more agile approach to technology must be pursued.

That means it's time for CIOs to become composers.



The pandemic showed us there is no one-size fits all model for the new ways of delivering experience.”

To find out how they can do this, we sat down with Abou-Ltaif to understand just what the composable enterprise really means, and how the rise of composable technologies will empower businesses to roll out the services their customers demand as needed.

Over the last 18 months we have experienced many changes in our society, but what the pandemic has really reinforced to all of us is our dependency on technology. As a result of this technology dependence, our expectations have heightened, and consumer demands have evolved. What has been the biggest change in consumer behaviour that you have seen, and will consumer demands continue to evolve so rapidly as new technologies emerge?

After seeing the world struggle with the difficulties of the pandemic for the last 18 months, we're finally seeing light at the end of the tunnel. The world is returning

to something resembling normal, but it's got a different flavour now, and consumer and employee expectations are never going back to how they used to be.

That might sound like a challenge, but it's incredibly exciting, as we're seeing huge transformations taking place across almost every business sector. The pandemic showed us there is no one-size fits all model for the new ways of delivering experiences, and enterprises now realise that their customers and employees expect personalised experiences, wherever they are, and however they're choosing to interact.

In terms of what that change actually looks like, according to our "Life And Work Beyond 2020" survey, over one third of consumers prefer a mix of ways to engage with the organisations they contact. And 60% of employees support policies that embrace hybrid working. On the flip side of that, we've also conducted research showing that 71% of tech decision makers have reported faster adoption of new technologies in their organisation due to COVID-19. And most companies have seen a shift in technology priorities with 52% increasing investment in collaboration software.

So it's fair to say that the demands of customers and employees are driving the wholesale changes we're seeing in technology industry. And the question most businesses now

face is how they can keep up with all of this change, while understanding that delivering unforgettably positive experiences is among the most powerful differentiators for businesses today.

We all know that cloud is the future, but many enterprises are struggling to adapt to the demands of cloud transformation across the Middle East region. How big a factor has the issue of large 'legacy estates' been for companies trying to successfully move their IT operations to the cloud, and how can Avaya help them overcome these challenges?

As we mentioned, consumer and employee demands are constantly changing, and businesses are struggling to keep pace using legacy technologies. The experiences that people demand just can't be satisfied with the monolithic, glass-ceiling apps that we had in the pre-cloud world. Experiences need to be 'composed' on the fly, and legacy estates that require months of integration for new service roll-outs won't cut it.

With the assumption of cloud as a given, however, experiences can be composed as and when they're required – with deployment times of hours, rather than months. And it's that thinking that we've built into Avaya OneCloud, our AI-powered experience platform, which enables a composable enterprise

capable of delivering the ‘Total Experience’ that customers and employees demand.

Many experts within the IT ecosystem are advocating for the adoption of composable infrastructure to help them transform their IT operations to give them the agility they need for further innovation. From an Avaya perspective, what is your view on composable solutions and why should enterprises adopt it?

The idea of the composable enterprise isn’t something that’s only coming from an Avaya perspective – it’s something that’s emerging in real-time in front of us, and it’s the way that the industry is going. Just like cloud 15 years ago.

Think of it this way: Even today, with massive innovation happening across every sector, technology solutions have their limits. In the large enterprise space, and even in the SME space, too, there’s very little chance of buying something off the shelf and having it work



Experiences need to be ‘composed’ on the fly, and legacy estates that require months of integration for new service roll-outs won’t cut it.”

exactly as you need it to. You need to integrate it into your systems, and adapt it to your processes. That’s no good when you need to create experiences to meet fast-moving demands – you need an open, underlying platform that can help you create what you really need, right when you need it.

With Avaya OneCloud, we’re enabling our customers to create the unique experiences they need—in the moment. And this doesn’t even mean embracing public cloud wholesale, or having to rip and replace an entire technology stack. It can be a hybrid architecture, extending what you already have, using something out-of-the-box, or a customised, new solution that meets your specific needs. The outcome is what’s important, and the outcome is being able to compose what you need right away. And any business that cannot do this in the future will have a very difficult time competing.

Can you tell us more about the concept of a ‘Total Experience’ mindset and highlight how composable solutions can create this?

From our point of view, Total Experience refers to every experience, for every person, across your entire business. It takes a holistic, AI-driven approach to delivering what your customers and employees want—even before they think to ask—and brings everyone together in a seamless journey. **enme**

AT GITEX 2021, AVAYA WILL BE SHOWING HOW ITS VISION OF A COMPOSABLE ENTERPRISE WORKS IN PRACTICE WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF REAL-WORLD USE CASES FROM CUSTOMERS ACROSS THE GLOBE.

NUUDAY, A SERVICE PROVIDER IN DENMARK PARTICIPATING AT THE EVENT ON THE AVAYA STAND AS ITS CUSTOMER, IS USING COMPOSABLE TECHNOLOGIES TO SOLVE THE BALANCES BETWEEN ACHIEVING HIGH CUSTOMER SATISFACTION, INCREASING EFFICIENCIES, AND MAINTAINING HIGH PRODUCTIVITY AND MORALE. SAUDI ARABIA’S MAKKAH HEALTHCARE CLUSTER, MEANWHILE, IS LEVERAGING AVAYA’S HYBRID CLOUD SERVICES TO CONNECT THE DOTS BETWEEN SYSTEMS, APPS AND USERS TO ENABLE AN ENTIRE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE.

ABOU-LTAIF REVEALED THAT HIS COMPANY WILL BE ANNOUNCING AN EXPANDED ECOSYSTEM OF CLOUD SERVICE PROVIDERS ACROSS THE MIDDLE EAST TO HELP CUSTOMERS ACCELERATE THEIR JOURNEYS TOWARDS DELIVERING A TOTAL EXPERIENCE.

HUAWEI IP CLUB

CONNECTIVITY THE KEY FOR AI

Faisal Malik, CTO, Enterprise Business Group, Huawei Middle East, chaired a fascinating and engaging panel discussion during their recent IP Club Carnival, in which the experts examined how AI can be key in helping enterprises tackle cybersecurity – and how an intelligent converged network can really propel businesses towards the digital era.



Faisal Malik
CTO, Enterprise Business Group, Huawei Middle East

The annual Huawei Middle East IP Club Carnival is the company's flagship event in the region, and played host to a series of brilliant presentations, which included several customer success stories outlining the impact Huawei's cutting-edge technologies are having in terms of driving innovation across the region.

There was also a fantastic panel discussion, which was excellently moderated by dynamic Huawei thought-leader Faisal Malik.

The panel which was entitled 'Unleashing the Potential of your Enterprise Network with Cutting-Edge Technology', and it covered a broad range of topics, but again AI dominated large parts of the discussion.

The panelists for the session were: Dr. Scott Nowson, AI Lead, PwC Middle East, Aloysius Cheang, Chief Security Officer, Huawei UAE, Dr. Feras Ahmad Hanandeh, Professor & Director, Center of Big Data & AI, Hashemite University & Alaa Bawab, Vice President, Enterprise Networking Business, Huawei Middle East.

There have been many seismic changes to the IT ecosystem over the last 18 months and beyond, but there is no denying that right now we are in the midst of a security crisis globally.

There have been a series of high-profile ransomware attacks, most notably Colonial Pipeline in the US, which had its operations crippled by a ransomware attack.

However, Aloysius Cheang, Chief Security Officer, Huawei UAE, believes that AI can empower businesses with the tools to help them mitigate and prevent future cyberattacks, whilst also addressing the talent shortage in the cybersecurity industry.

“Cybersecurity right now is facing a real crisis, in terms of having the adequate expertise and resources to tackle the new threats that are constantly evolving. AI is solving the problem in terms of a shortage of manpower required to tackle cybersecurity. However, the moment we know where an attack is coming from, we need to use automation to stop it, and that’s what I call efficiency. In my opinion, only AI can help us overcome these issues effectively because it allows us to zero in on the problem, and as the algorithm continues to learn it will build knowledge to be able to deal with common attacks such as ransomware,” said Cheang.

Dr. Scott Howson, AI Lead, PwC Middle East, believes that connectivity holds the key in terms of yielding the results we want from AI by allowing us to effectively access and utilise the data that is fueling the digital economy.

“Connectivity is critical for AI. We keep telling everyone that data is everywhere, but we need to get at it, so having that connectivity to be able to stream data to where you are doing the computation or taking that computation to the edge is very important. We need to start taking decisions at the edge, but we then need to communicate those decisions back, and they all need to happen in real-time. We need the connectivity to



Cybersecurity right now is facing a real crisis, in terms of having the adequate expertise and resources to tackle the new threats that are constantly evolving.”

be stable, reliable and trust that it won’t go down on us – and having it in a local area and over a long distance is absolutely critical to successful deployments of AI anywhere in the world,” said Howson.

Dr. Feras Ahmad Hanandeh, Professor & Director, Center of Big Data & AI, Hashemite University, Jordan, highlighted how Huawei’s solutions had helped them completely transform their network infrastructure, which allowed them to create what he described as a ‘smart campus’.

“We have the infrastructure of what we call the ‘smart

campus’, which essentially means we have an intelligent network that allows us to exploit all the data at our disposal and use it in a much smarter and more effective way and reduces human interference and costs. It enhances the teaching processes that we provide for all our students – and it not only improves the decision-making of the faculty staff, but it also enhances the way our students think, and it only serves to improve their overall learning experience. We want to share the knowledge that we gain through this intelligent network transformation in our university with other faculties internationally,” said Hanandeh.

Alaa Bawab, Vice President, Enterprise Networking Business, Huawei Middle East, declared that if governments and private sector entities truly want to achieve full-scale digitisation then establishing an intelligent, secure, and scalable network was not a nice to have, but a ‘must have’.

“In the current digital economy, there is an increased demand for people to always be connected to different networks, or devices. In addition to this, with AI and Cloud being top of the agenda for both government and enterprises then I believe that the requirement for an intelligent converged networking platform that covers the entire infrastructure is critical for us to deliver the digital transformation that we keep referring to. An Intelligent, converged, secure, scalable platform is crucial for us to extract all the benefits that the digital and AI era have to offer us in Industry 4.0,” said Bawab. **enme**

VERITAS

VERITAS EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS BENEFITS OF SAAS ADOPTION

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Arthur Dell**, Technology Leader at Veritas to find out more about the barriers facing enterprises over cloud data protection, why SaaS has emerged as the preferred model of adoption – and how its recent acquisition of Hubstor will enhance its security offering to its customers.



Arthur Dell
Technology Leader at Veritas

What are some of the biggest barriers to cloud data protection faced by enterprises today?

One big barrier is the widespread but mistaken belief that the cloud service providers are responsible for backing up the data. In fact, customers are responsible for protecting their own SaaS data, but they often don't realise this.

Performance and scalability can be a challenge, given the volume of data that modern businesses generate. Especially

when initially setting up a backup, companies can have many PBs of data to capture, and some systems are unable to accomplish this within an acceptable timeframe.

Data sovereignty is a challenge for many organisations, as different countries have different laws about how and where data can be stored, which ultimately requires multiple distributed global data stores.

Why is enterprise adoption of SaaS becoming so popular?

If you were to pose this question to the decision-makers at different organisations, you'd likely receive different answers, but at the core, their reasons for choosing SaaS over on-premises comes down to the following:

Lower cost—SaaS costs for the organisation will be less than the total of individual applications for each user.

Ease of deployment—There's no actual software deployment needed. All users need is a web browser or a client they can download and install.

Simpler purchasing process—Rather than having to count users

to ensure the purchase of enough license keys, SaaS has a far simpler subscription pricing model.

Simple support for remote users—From the SaaS platform's point of view, all users are remote, including those working on-premises, allowing all of them to receive the same support regardless of their location.

Reduced management effort—On-premises or per-desktop software requires administrators spend time and effort monitoring and managing the software and its infrastructure. Management tasks associated with SaaS applications are minimal, and the SaaS provider manages the infrastructure.

Tell us more about Veritas's Enterprise Data Services platform—what is its USP?

NetBackup SaaS Protection is the optimal data protection solution for data in your SaaS applications.

It protects your SaaS data against both accidental or malicious deletion, as well as protecting it from ransomware or other forms of data corruption.

NetBackup SaaS Protection was designed from the ground up to

be an enterprise SaaS application allowing you to protect your data on the most commonly-used SaaS applications.

NetBackup SaaS Protection provides the performance, scalability, and hardened security that enterprises need and is unique in offering all its benefits through a dedicated single-tenant instance and for its ability to automate data sovereignty compliance.

What prompted the decision to acquire HubStor? Can you give us a background to the acquisition?

Veritas recognised the need for SaaS backup, and the increasing vulnerability due to the widespread misconception that it was being handled by the cloud service providers. The company was looking for the best way to address this market and to extend its leadership in enterprise data protection.

Veritas spent over six months understanding HubStor's capabilities. We were impressed with the traction that they had achieved in a very short period.

HubStor offered a granular, scalable, easily configurable solution for SaaS Backup that had already established an impressive track record in the enterprise space, and even within the Veritas customer base.

Veritas has over twenty years of successful partnership with Microsoft, so the fact that the HubStor solution is tightly integrated and fully optimised for Azure was attractive.

How will the addition of HubStor to the Veritas portfolio enhance cloud data protection & security for customers?

Bringing HubStor into the NetBackup portfolio extends

that platform into key SaaS applications. With HubStor, now re-branded as NetBackup SaaS Protection (NSP), we support Microsoft 365, Box and Slack, and the plan within the next six months to a year is to further expand the Salesforce presence beyond Slack.

This supports our strategy of the Enterprise Data Services platform protecting data wherever it may be and however the customer wishes to do it, by protecting those key SaaS applications.

A standardised, consistent architecture across the data estate is critical to reduce risk, yet most solutions fail to provide comprehensive support. How will the addition of HubStor to Veritas address this issue?

Veritas provides a highly scalable, unified platform to provide reliable protection and robust resiliency across the entire infrastructure, which is vitally important for enterprise customers.

Modern enterprises must manage heterogeneous environments, with data stored locally and remotely with both physical and virtual servers, public and private clouds, and an ever-increasing volume of mission critical data.

Veritas' unified suite of products is designed to handle



Veritas provides a highly scalable, unified platform to provide reliable protection and robust resiliency across the entire infrastructure."

this complexity and scale, and the addition of NetBackup SaaS Protection strengthens our offering for SaaS Data, as increasing numbers of enterprises embrace the SaaS model.

Threats such as ransomware and accidental/malicious deletion are widespread today. Does the Veritas NetBackup SaaS Protection solution take this into account?

Yes, NetBackup SaaS Protection provides a completely separate backup of a customers' SaaS data that is secure and scalable, and under their control. In the event that the data stored within the SaaS environment is lost through accidental or malicious deletion or is damaged by ransomware, the customer can revert to a recent backup copy of the data – and can avoid significant interruption or data loss. Furthermore, NetBackup SaaS Protection works with immutable storage to prevent attackers from similarly damaging the backup data.

Why is Automatic Compliance Enforcement important? How does the new NetBackup solution ensure this?

Regulatory compliance is absolute by definition. A single file that is inappropriately deleted or stored in the wrong location is enough to render the entire solution non-compliant. Reliance on manual processes is therefore dangerous.

NetBackup SaaS Protection features fully automated compliance enforcement that allows customers to set up their policies and then rely on the system to automatically capture information and store it in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. **crme**

CAFU

AN AUTONOMOUS FUTURE

TahawulTech.com's Deputy Editor, Daniel Shepherd, spoke with **Helal Ismail**, Head of Technology at CAFU, about emergent technology trends in the automotive industry - and its plan to innovate their technologies to fit alongside these new industry developments.

What trends driven by technology do you see emerging in the automotive industry over the next few years – particularly in the Middle East? Convenience is a key trend, technology that helps passengers. Another would be the shift from a mechanical focus to devices for cars such as on-board technologies.

In the Middle East we have observed a significant dip in the passenger market, likely brought on by COVID-19. However, we believe that enriching the passenger experience via connectivity and standardisation is vital for the longevity of the automotive industry.

There is an opportunity for technology integration, and we would like to invest in this emergent industry as it fits very well into our division at CAFU.

Car ownership is on the decline, but do you believe consumers will opt for a

subscription option for cars, as it significantly reduces costs and general maintenance that comes with vehicles – or will people still want to own their vehicles?

People have more options on how to own and operate their vehicles such as via leasing and subscriptions. Overall, the



With 5G I see a huge scope for autonomous solutions. We can now start making cars smarter and faster to respond to the demands of their passengers.”

process is much more digitalised than it used to be. I still believe people will always value their cars and a sense of ownership.

We've seen massive regional investment in car infrastructure here in the UAE as governments focus on roads and transit.

The pandemic has changed the way we collectively think about commuting. To that end we at CAFU have endeavoured to design cars that appeal to the younger generation and the change in habits we've observed.

Car manufacturers are phasing out self-combustion engine cars, as they move towards electrification. However, there is also a growing effort to develop autonomous vehicles. Do you see a world of autonomous vehicles with the rollout of 5G networks, or do you think autonomous driving will remain largely inaccessible for most consumers?

I believe that in the next 10 years we will see a massive change. Here in Dubai the government has a vision to massively



Helal Ismail
Head of Technology at CAFU

transform transportation for everyone by 2030. We will witness massive investments with new technology.

With 5G I see a huge scope for autonomous solutions. We can now start making cars smarter and faster to respond to the demands of their passengers. However, there does exist challenges surrounding the costs and infrastructure to support these innovations.

CAFU has been a disruptor in the automotive industry here in the UAE – how do you plan to leverage other technologies to

enhance the experience of the services that you provide for your customers?

Technology is at the forefront of everything we do at CAFU. In the near future we plan to focus more on the productive and connective features within automobiles such as smart refuelling orders or engine oil and battery change notifications.

We think in terms of how we can help alleviate responsibility for car owner's needs. In the future we want our technologies to become 'the convenience you cannot live without'.

What are your primary objectives and goals for the remainder of 2021 in your role as Head of Technology at CAFU?

As always, we aim to make people's lives easier and more convenient. We want to continue to introduce new services and products that transform the way you operate your vehicle. We want to build up our app with the latest in cutting edge technology.

We're also attempting to answer some big picture goals such as how can we deliver faster and how can we fit A.I and M.L (Machine Learning) into our delivery system. **enr**

LENOVO

ACCELERATING THE SHIFT TO EDGE COMPUTING

Chris Docherty, Regional Manager Infrastructure Solutions Group (ISG), Lenovo Middle East, has penned an exclusive op-ed which highlights how the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the shift towards 'edge computing'.



Chris Docherty
Regional Manager Infrastructure Solutions
Group (ISG), Lenovo Middle East

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns have spurred fundamental changes in the ways we live and work. They have also exposed some weaknesses in the broader IT architectures that support us in our day-to-day life.

Some of the changes, including remote work, more virtual collaboration, increased video streaming, an ongoing rise in online gaming, and an increased need for data security are likely to last long after the pandemic passes. Meanwhile, the infrastructure shift towards intelligent edge computing will be widely accelerated. According to IDC, over one quarter (28%) of companies in the GCC say they will invest in edge technologies.

One of the applications created in response to COVID-19 is the real-time mask and social distancing identification. An effective prevention measure is to wear a mask in crowded

places while maintaining physical distance. To help enforce these measures and generate data on habits, governments and other orgs explored and deployed automated, real-time detection methods. See Lenovo's work with UNC Chapel Hill, for example. High data transmission speed and low latency enabled by edge computing supports real-time image and video handling with deep learning and other intelligent technologies to support public health precautions.

COVID-19 also changed the way we work, making remote work or working from home "the new normal"—what we've called the remote revolution. Many companies already stated they will not return to the old ways of working even when the pandemic danger has passed. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies can help lessen the need for spending on hardware devices company wide. This enables employees to use their personal devices from home, and that—combined with edge computing and Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI)—makes for less expensive and more flexible work operations.

Perhaps even more importantly, our culture has changed—and this shift has been further catalysed by the ongoing pandemic changing expectations for both employers and employees.

A survey of 1,000 white collar professionals in the Middle East, conducted by recruitment company Robert Walters, found that 38% of professionals would like full-time remote working,

and a further 32% would like to be able to work remotely at least half of the time.

Beyond the two use cases above, we also see new trends in online shopping, gaming, and entertainment, which are becoming the new gold standard for consumption, driven in part by lockdown policies. These new ways of consuming media bring new challenges to traditional IT infrastructure. As more and more customer workloads require fast response and interlocks, edge computing is the most efficient way to address new challenges like reducing response time, providing better customer experiences, and reducing the bandwidth requirement from edge to cloud to help optimise OPEX and CAPEX from the networking infrastructure side.

Edge computing is also helping transform smart cities, which can also help provide a quicker response to a public emergency crisis like COVID-19 by bringing computing, storage, and artificial intelligence/machine learning technologies to where data is being generated: e.g. public emergency healthcare, public security, public transportation,

remote education, etc.

Coming out of the COVID outbreak, leaders are upgrading their business with the help of edge computing. Because of its advantages, edge computing is rapidly becoming a focus not only for emergency use cases such as COVID-19, but also for the intelligent evolution of industry.

Lenovo is supporting businesses everywhere by enabling them at the Edge. In manufacturing clients are using Lenovo big data to better forecast market demand. A retail customer is piloting a cashless store where payment is enabled with facial recognition. In healthcare augmented reality is transforming cancer research.

And we're working to transform cities too. One example is Bogota; deploying a Lenovo Edge solution to enable efficiency and scale at its central control room, which manages over 1,000 cameras.

Going beyond that we also see Edge as an enabler and driver of Artificial Intelligence. At a time when the speed and agility of processes within businesses critically impacts operations, our customers demand more powerful, secure and flexible solutions. Lenovo's technology architecture is purpose-built to deliver real-time, valuable insights from edge to core to cloud, enabling a new era of intelligence where customers can fully realise the potential of the data at their disposal. Being able to handle and compute real time data is where Edge is enabling the next phase of artificial intelligence. **enr**



Lenovo is supporting businesses everywhere by enabling them at the Edge."

AVEVA

SUSTAINABLE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The twin sustainability goals of power diversification and efficiency require strengthening capacity and minimising losses. This is something that can be enhanced by digital transformation says **Dr Tariq Aslam**, Head of MEA, AVEVA.



Dr Tariq Aslam
Head of MEA, AVEVA

Sustainability objectives are high on power companies' agendas as they look to ensure energy security, hit 'green' targets and meet customer demand, all while protecting and potentially improving their financial outcomes.

With these goals in mind, power firms around the world are undertaking a wide variety of sustainability-focused projects, from expanding their renewable energy capacity through to upgrading existing infrastructure.

Power companies realise the need to diversify their sources and improve efficiencies in order to boost energy security, become more sustainable and stay competitive. Today's forward-thinking industry leaders are therefore already investing heavily in digitalisation; digital transformation is expected to continue growing in the coming years as organisations come to understand that it's more than a slogan.

In truth, it's something they need to foster in order to ensure compliance with the growing number of local, regional, national and international regulations.

Challenges behind digital transformation:

But digital transformation isn't without its own challenges. New tools, technologies and work processes first need to be put in place, and then accepted and adopted by a diverse workforce likely to include employees that aren't digital natives.

To ensure a smooth transition, digitalisation needs to be embraced from the top down. Leaders must cultivate a business-wide openness

to change and develop an organisational mindset centered around creating and driving value.

Without bringing together their people, work processes, strategy and technology, digital transformation efforts are likely to fail. This is because digitisation provides possibilities – but needs to be supported by a holistic combination of all aspects of the business, and most importantly the buy-in of employees, in order to succeed.

Although technology is key, digital transformation should not be viewed as a technology project. Instead, it should be seen as a work transformation program, focused on the wider business rather than the IT department.

With this mindset, you're most likely to succeed and see a wide range of benefits from reduced costs and a rise in productivity, through to improvements in safety, reliability and efficiency as staff are empowered with not only the right enabling technologies to transform how they work, but also the right company culture and training.

The power industry's need to find efficiencies:

The need to find efficiencies within the power sector is clear. In the Middle East alone, it's been reported that generating capacity needs to increase by 40% in order to meet 2030's expected electricity demand¹.

In the European Union (EU), there's still a lot of work to be done in order to hit the European Commission's (EC) target of 53% of Europe's power needs being met by renewable and nuclear.

Digitalisation is essentially replacing manual processes with digital processes, or further upgrading a digital solution with a more advanced technology and is playing a key role in helping power companies to meet these and other challenges.

It does this by providing a 360° view of plant performance through the use of digital twins – real-time digital representations of physical assets – and automated asset performance management (APM) solutions.

These use artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) technologies to provide information on how assets are running and predict future behavior. This can be applied to advanced diagnostics, enabling workers to detect potential faults before they occur, or opportunities to further optimise efficiencies.

The insights provided can help reduce operational and maintenance costs by approximately 20%, dramatically reduce fuel costs, significantly improve asset safety, efficiency and reliability,

and drive productivity, all by providing fast and accurate data about where and how power is being generated, transmitted and distributed.

Changing the way we work:

With technologies such as AI and ML, digital transformation improves work process efficiencies and accuracy, and minimises waste by automating calculations and the use of data. Amongst other things, this enables businesses to optimise their workforces by freeing up experts from manual tasks to focus on more intensive, business-critical projects.

Just take a look at the benefits ENEL, an international producer and distributor of electricity and gas, gained from its digital transformation.

Having adopted APM to drive the organisation's autonomous plant vision, it was able to remotely monitor its 1,275 renewable assets. This was particularly beneficial when the pandemic hit in 2020, as it enabled staff to pivot overnight to working from home, ensuring the resiliency and continued sustainable delivery of the company's critical services.

Since implementation, ENEL's APM solution has detected more

than 220 events early, which prevented failures from occurring, and optimised performance across 23GW of power.

"Digitalisation has truly enabled us to maximise returns," says ENEL's Digital Transformation Director Matteo Cantu.

Benefits of digitalisation in the power sector:

Another example comes from US-based Duke Energy, which introduced APM software to centrally monitor its power generation assets. Using strategically placed sensors to send data to AVEVA predictive analytics AI-infused software, Duke can detect equipment failure before it happens – driving better performance and improving uptime.

The company has saved US\$50m through reduced failures, including a saving of \$30m from a single early catch event.

There remain many challenges for the power industry, but diversification, new technologies and business models continue to point to a positive, more sustainable future. Digital transformation empowers the power sector to engineer smarter, operate better and drive sustainable efficiency, so make the most of the latest technologies available to you.

Technology providers are here to offer guidance, and have the tools to help you along your journey to sustainability and operational excellence. From design and build to operation and maintenance, there's a solution to meet your organisation's bespoke needs and a partner keen to show you the way. **enme**



Digital transformation empowers the power sector to engineer smarter, operate better and drive sustainable efficiency."

BE **WHERE**
THEY WANT YOU
TO BE **24/7...**



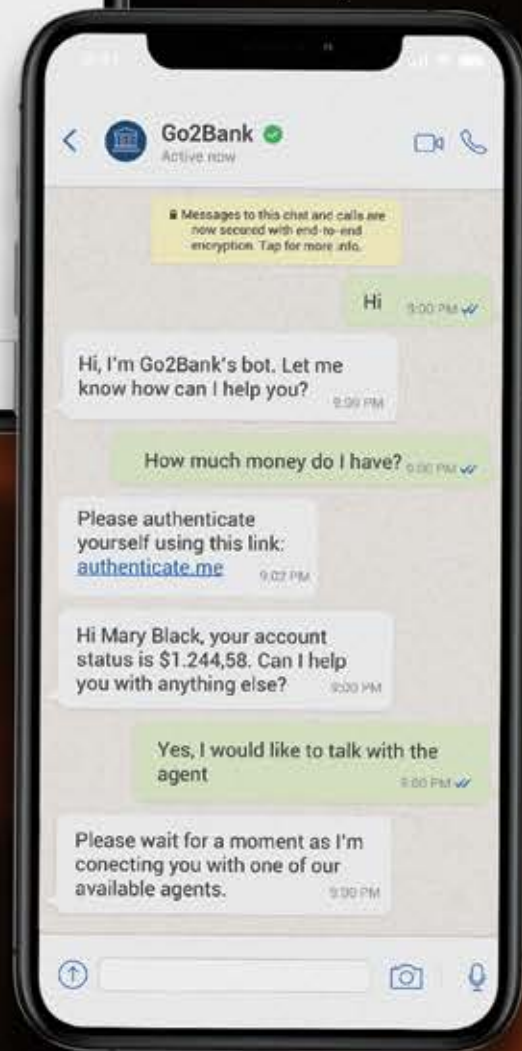
Deliver moments that
matter and leave
a lasting impression!

...NEVER LOSE
TOUCH WITH YOUR
CUSTOMERS **AGAIN**



Offer support in
real-time,
all the time.

Create chat
enabled customer
connections.



PURE STORAGE

'SERVICE' WITH A SMILE

James Petter, Vice President of International Sales, EMEA for Pure Storage, tells CNME Editor Mark Forker, what makes the IT data storage pioneer a truly unique vendor in the burgeoning XaaS economy, and how its unwavering core value of customer-centricity has allowed them to become a global market leader.



James Petter
Vice President - International,
Pure Storage

Our world has undergone some seismic changes since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, and our reliance on technology cannot be overstated.

We have seen radical shifts in the way some global industries operate, all of which is being underpinned by IT. The acceleration of digital transformation and migration towards cloud technologies

has been well documented, but a new report from the Global Technology Distribution Council (GDTCC) has highlighted the importance of the XaaS economy.

The report has determined that many IT directors view XaaS as a stronger alternative to traditional IT. However, as companies like Pure Storage have shed light on through a series of blogs, many customers have discovered that not all XaaS contracts provide the freedom, autonomy and flexibility

that was initially promised.

CNME spoke to Pure Storage executive James Petter to find out what his definition of XaaS entails and how his company approach it in a different way to market rivals.

"We are projecting that 50% of data center infrastructure and 75% of edge locations by 2024 will be bought as-a-service. We believe that in the next few years there is a going to a massive move towards that. However, it's critically important for people to understand what as-a-service means. Ultimately, it is the underpinning of technology delivered through a financial model. We want our users to have block, file, object technology, whether it be in a private, public or hybrid cloud to be delivered as-a-service. The way we deliver XaaS is fundamentally different to the way other vendors approach as-a-service, most other vendors will deliver it as a lease," said Petter.

Petter highlighted that a major problem in the current XaaS ecosystem is the fact that many vendors don't provide service level guarantees to their customers.

"The reason why we believe we have a unique offering is that if you look back over the last few years, a lot of these XaaS offerings are in fact dependent on your ability to make service level guarantees. Can I guarantee that I will not have any downtime when I migrate? Can I guarantee that what I am using is going to be billed in that right way? Many customers have fallen foul of this, but we have been able to cover off all these elements through our Evergreen subscription model," said Petter.

He added that its automated software also equipped them with

the ability to be predictive.

“We use Pure 1 Meta, which is our automated software technology for managing our environment and we use that to be able to not only see what is out there, but also to predict what will happen. However, it is critical when you’re buying a service level agreement that you can guarantee the up-time, the migration and risk, and if there is breach of some description, whether that be in capacity or performance then the vendor needs to step up and fix it,” said Petter.

What is evident from speaking to Petter is that many vendors in the XaaS space are deriving all the benefits of these agreements, whilst safe in the knowledge that they are absolved of any responsibility when it comes to performance or capacity requirements. But why is this being allowed to happen?

“It’s partly down to the entity delivering the service and partly down to the technology that is being delivered. Legacy vendors have sold in a certain way for 30 years, and it’s very difficult for them to be able to change that on a sixpence. The technology has not allowed them to have any sort of predictive analysis of what is going on, so therefore they cannot proactively make changes,” said Petter.

The Vice President of International Sales for Pure Storage in the EMEA region stressed the importance of being ‘proactive’ – and said that it should not be the job of the customer to go to the vendor to ask for an upgrade in capacity or performance, but instead should be led by the vendor.

“As a technology vendor we built our technology from the ground up. We had predictive

analytics on support, we could see what was going on, and we could repair a customers’ environment, so essentially, we were able to make proactive changes. It’s all about the proactivity, which gives you the ability to be able to step up and make changes as and when they are needed, and not to wait for the customer to say I have got downtime, or my capacity is not where it needs to be, can you help me? In my mind, everything centers around the customer and the vendor should be held ransom to what the customer wants,” said Petter.

There is a consistent debate that fluctuates year-on-year within the IT ecosystem over the pros and cons of a CAPEX versus OPEX model in relation to storage expenses, but Petter was unambiguous as to which model he is an advocate for.

“Unfortunately, what is happening now is a customer buys a system and signs a 3–5 year-deal. They pay for their product, software, and maintenance, but their buying the product and software upfront, so their buying incremental unused capacity from Day 1 for those 5 years, so essentially you have just given a vendor all this money when you do not necessarily need to because there is no guarantee you’re going to use the capacity,” said Petter.

He reinforced how customer-centricity is at the heart of everything Pure Storage does by highlighting the benefits of its own XaaS offering.

“One of the primary reasons that XaaS is fantastic is that fact that with XaaS you can have a minimum term contract of one year with us. In addition to this, you have a fixed rate and a burst rate. You commit to a certain level and then if you go over a line then your committed rate will increase. You could use 1 terabyte and be billed for that, but that would be impossible in a CAPEX environment. Ultimately, we ensure a customer gets what they need, and not what they necessarily want,” said Petter.

When asked what differentiates Pure Storage from other vendors, Petter declared that it was their ability to manage their customers data infrastructure effectively without the customer being concerned as to how the system functions.

I get asked this question frequently, what is our North Star? I like to use an analogy of a heating system. A thermostat dictates what temperature you have, but you don’t really care what the boiler or radiator does, so I would use the same analogy as to what Pure Storage does. We provide a thermostat to you so that every other working part of your data infrastructure can be managed through automation, simplicity, service level and a financial wrap-around that allows you to just not worry about it. The reason why we are so good at it is simply because we have developed it to be cloud-like and provide service levels that we can guarantee that no other vendor in the world in my view can do,” concluded Petter. **cnn**



We want our users to have block, file, object technology, whether it be in a private, public or hybrid cloud to be delivered as-a-service.”

RIMINI STREET

PARTNERS OF 'CHOICE'

Emmanuelle Hose, General Manager, EMEA at Rimini Street, tells CNME Editor Mark Forker, how their ability to give their customers 'choices' is what differentiates them from traditional vendors when it comes to supporting their enterprise applications and IT infrastructure.

42

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally reshaped many aspects of our society and forced global industries to transform quickly.

Many businesses seized the opportunity to accelerate their digital transformation, but with so many different ways to implement digital transformation getting it right can be a big challenge.

As a result of these seismic changes there has been an exponential increase in demand from businesses seeking third-party support in terms of transforming their existing business operations to become more efficient.

CNME spoke to Emmanuelle Hose, General Manager, EMEA at Rimini Street, to find out how their company is responding to the increased demand for third-party support.

Hose has enjoyed a distinguished career in IT that has spanned over two decades, and since joining Rimini Street in 2014, has helped the company go from strength-to-strength.

Hose acknowledged that many businesses have struggled with the demands of cloud transformation due to confusion as to what model works for them – and outlined how Rimini Street is leveraging their expertise to help them overcome their challenges.

“There are a lot of different ways to do digital transformation, and many businesses have a ‘cloud-first’ strategy when it comes to digital transformation, but what does cloud mean? There has been a lot of confusion for companies in relation to choosing between XaaS, SaaS and PaaS cloud models, and they have been left asking which one do we do first? At Rimini

Street, we have been able to help our clients by giving them choices, because there is no one size fits all approach when it comes to cloud. Every company will have different priorities and will approach it from a different perspective. When we work with our clients, we attempt to determine how can we help them become more efficient, and how they can do more with what they have,” said Hose.

Hose added that there is a desire within many organisations from the top down to accelerate digital transformation, but that a big challenge encountering many of them is finding the time and the budget to do it.

“There are a lot of businesses who want to implement their digital transformation strategies in a bid to become more efficient, and to better connect with their customers, which is great, but an issue

many businesses face is how are we going to find the time, money and resources to be able to do that? However, this is something that Rimini Street can help them to do, by taking care of their Oracle and SAP estates, which tends to be significant. Many businesses have big estates that are extremely costly to maintain, but we remove that fear for them, we release large amount of funds to enable them invest in innovations faster and provide them with the resources to enable to properly focus on their digital transformation journey,” said Hose.

Hose said a big problem in the current IT ecosystem in terms of supporting businesses with their innovation strategy was the fact that many vendors are dictating the roadmap.

“At Rimini Street, we are polar opposite to the vendors. We listen to our clients, and we give them choices and allow



Emmanuelle Hose
*General Manager, EMEA
at Rimini Street*



We listen to our clients, and we give them choices and allow them to develop a roadmap that suits their specific priorities.”

them to develop a roadmap that suits their specific priorities. For example, SAP have told their customers that they need to move away from Business Suite by 2030 and implement S/4Hana and have been very clear that there will be no support from 2030 onwards. It was initially supposed to be 2025, but they moved it back to 2027 and then 2030, because businesses were

simply not ready to make that move,” said Hose.

She added that many enterprises do not see the business case in ripping and replacing existing legacy applications & technologies, but they are being told by vendors that, to transform now, they must do it in a certain way.

However, Rimini Street is approaching it in a very

different way – and is in fact empowering their customers to have the autonomy in terms of what direction they want to take to deliver innovations to their business, which only serves to reinforce how customer-centricity is at the core of what Rimini Street does.

“They are being told to transform and embrace change, but is a company going to accelerate their digital transformation, or innovate faster, by having a different finance and HR system? Absolutely not. We are giving time to organisations, by saying to them you do not need to do that now! We will support their innovation strategy, and then when they are ready, they can go and buy S/4Hana if and when it is right for them. The client is in control, and they can decide when they want to do it based on their business needs, as opposed to being told by vendors that they must do it now,” said Hose.

Hose has been a strong advocate for AI, but she has been critical in terms of how some vendors deploy AI and has implored them to be more ‘human’ when it comes to viewing the unique and transformative capabilities possessed by AI.

“I am very passionate about AI as it allows you to not only do things much faster, but it also enables you to do things that you never thought of before. If you look at Rimini Street, we are all about support and service, and how can we spend more time directly



When we implemented our AI platform the primary objective for us was how can we connect the right client to the right engineer much faster.”



with our clients to help them overcome their business issues. When we implemented our AI platform the primary objective for us was how can we connect the right client to the right engineer much faster, and this is very powerful tool to have as we believe that AI is all about connecting people,” said Hose.

Hose also highlighted how its AI platform had helped Rimini Street completely transform their customer experience offering, something that is still lacking in other major industry verticals and amongst many vendors.

“If I have a banking issue, or

I want to speak to my telecom provider, I must press 1 for this, and press 2 for that, but it’s a protracted process that often ends with me speaking to the wrong person, whereas I would love to be directly connected with the person that can actually resolve my issue. We have been able to do this at Rimini Street, and it’s been an incredible journey for us – and we’ve improved the resolution of our support tickets by 23%. For me, our AI platform is all about bringing real people together much faster and that is essentially what Rimini Street



does. If you look at the support vendors provide today, much of it is outsourced offshore, and people have no idea who they are speaking to. A lack of due diligence hinders finding the right talent to provide the correct solution. By connecting customers straight to the engineer assigned to them, we have brought back something very simple – a great customer experience,” said Hose.

Rimini Street was born out of a demand for third-party support, prior to their inception in 2005, the only support customers got for their products

was directly from vendors, which was once again a very one-way street in terms of a partnership.

“We created an industry that never existed at a time where, if you wanted support for your product, you could only get it from the vendor. In the car industry, if I buy a car from Toyota, I can get it serviced by Toyota, or by my local dealership, I can go anywhere I want and I have a choice. However, I did not have that on the software side, it just didn’t exist. The support model that existed was archaic, and it remains that way because

the vendors haven’t changed it. We sell support, but it is not necessarily what our clients come to us for, they come to us to accelerate their digital transformation,” said Hose.

Hose pointed out that increasing maintenance costs, coupled with a stifling of innovation led to the demand for a different support framework, and said that their approach was to support the client in any direction they wanted to go, which ultimately makes them completely unique.

“Our clients had never bought support before, they bought software and that comes with maintenance, and nobody ever challenged it. However, what happened was the products became very mature, but there was no more innovation happening, and the cost of the maintenance was continuing to increase. It led to a situation where businesses were asking what am I getting for the maintenance? They needed to innovate, but when they examined their IT budget around 90% of it was being consumed for just maintenance. What we noticed was that the market wanted us to support their environment today, and how it might evolve tomorrow, whereas the vendor was focused solely on supporting their core product. We support our clients’ current environment, we support them if they want to customise, and essentially we are an extension of their team, and there is nobody else doing what we do, and that is why we have been such a success globally,” concluded Hose. **cme**

HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY DUBAI

GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF THE CLOUDS

Stephen Gill, Academic Head of the School of Mathematical and Computer Sciences, Heriot-Watt University Dubai, has penned an exclusive op-ed which lays out the blueprint and roadmap he believes enterprises can use to seize upon the opportunities presented by cloud technologies.

Digital transformation is at the core of any modern enterprise's competitive advantage. The scope and nature of a company's IT infrastructure determines how agile it is when responding to new market opportunities and how well it is able to serve its customers.

A 2020 study by the leading market intelligence firm International Data Corporation (IDC) states that direct digital

transformation investment is growing at a CAGR of 17.5% from 2020 to 2023 and is expected to approach \$7.1 trillion as companies build on existing strategies and investments. Organisations also recognise that this approach is crucial to successfully compete in the digital platform economy.

It is exactly here that cloud computing has established its authority in powering digital transformation that is needed for achieving true business agility. Companies that often struggle to establish a cloud strategy, or to connect it with their broader business strategy eventually find it challenging to derive true value from this kind of digital transformation.

Whether the cloud conversation is initiated by legal and compliance or risk management or finance, or simply IT, most decision-making teams don't have a well

thought out cloud strategy that properly defines the "why", "how" and "what" of their cloud implementation.

Hence when enterprises are taking a "cloud-first" approach, they should begin with establishing the desired benefits of their proposed cloud strategy and consider a range of factors to ensure successful implementation.

Ensure readiness assessment and objective-setting: It is important to begin with an assessment of the company's IT in terms of its readiness to adopt new technologies and processes.

A readiness assessment is in essence a scorecard that offers a framework for establishing whether what the company currently has in place is adequate to introduce something new. At the same time, it is also crucial to evaluate and establish the strategic business objectives, whether it is to achieve operational excellence, acquire and retain new customers, or ensure business survival.

Build an inclusive, collaborative project team: Objective setting and cloud implementation requires clear communication and collaboration between several internal (and external) stakeholders. Building a solid core team internally which also involves key decision-makers is a major success factor.

In other words, the executive team including the CIO, COO and CEO need to participate in the decision-making process, and not just leave it to the IT team. The executives and their teams need to study the viability



Ultimately, cloud computing and security aren't exclusive. Just as with any major shift in the IT industry, the cloud too has security risks, no matter what the platform is."

A portrait of Stephen Gill, a middle-aged man with a full grey beard and mustache, wearing a blue and white checkered button-down shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid grey.

Stephen Gill

*Academic Head of the School of
Mathematical and Computer Sciences,
Heriot-Watt University Dubai*

of the ideas from the lenses of business strategy, technology and budget.

Ultimately, when cloud implementation fails, it results in higher costs, security flaws, frustration, and wasted time.

Develop a proof of concept: Commence with a proof of concept (POC) that are low-risk but visible enough to the organisation to ensure success, awareness, and future funding. This enables the project team to detect early warning signs and offers them short achievable targets for success.

The POC helps eradicate several problems especially when companies are implementing an end-to-end (E2E) cloud strategy. Moreover, collaboration is key.

The involvement of executives when drawing up the POC demonstrates their commitment to the team. And the foundation laid by the POC empowers all team members to understand the decision-making process, as well as define a successful path for the primary cloud strategy.

Test applications: A common pitfall during cloud implementation is to migrate several business areas at once, without testing applications first. For instance, it is wiser to commence with migrating a smaller area, such as the business' email system, before trying to shift large volumes of sensitive data.

Another common blunder is trying to force fit on-site applications for use on the

cloud, which may eventually prevent them from running at full capacity. Instead, it may be logical to thoroughly consider how an application functions, and how the cloud may be able to support this.

Develop multi-cloud governance and management processes: Governance of cloud computing is tricky even in the case of a single cloud provider. It becomes challenging ever further when organisations shift to multi-cloud.

Cloud providers present on-demand, self-service resources with infinite capacity, which makes it challenging for organisations to gain visibility into, and manage, what is being used. Without visibility into consumption, it is impossible to oversee and control the environment.

Ultimately, cloud computing and security aren't exclusive. Just as with any major shift in the IT industry, the cloud too has security risks, no matter what the platform is.

It is crucial to carry out a comprehensive audit to understand the full scope of the organisation's cloud-hosted infrastructure at every level of the cloud computing stack. A clear view of all hardware elements used in the infrastructure is vital for making informed decisions and to ensure security is a top priority.

And finally, before migrating data, applications, and other resources to the cloud, it is important that strong encryption methods such as AES or RSA are used. This ensures added security when usernames and passwords are breached. **crime**

Ola Lind
Director of FinTech

THE FUTURE OF BLOCKCHAIN IS IN CLOUD STORAGE

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with Ola Lind, serial entrepreneur, and Director of FinTech Futures (FTFT) and cryptocurrency platform SobitX, to learn more about its decision to launch a joint venture in Dubai with blockchain company SOSOB, the benefits of its SobitX platform for crypto-traders - and what the future holds for blockchain technology.

The topic of cryptocurrency has certainly become more and more mainstream in the last 18 months and has emerged from the periphery of importance for global investors. Ola Lind has enjoyed a decorated and distinguished career in implementing disruptive new technology in industries such as marketing, gaming and blockchain, whilst he is also a highly regarded angel investor.

Lind is a director at NASDAQ listed FinTech Futures Group, and the company recently announced that it was launching its crypto asset management and digital asset trading service in Dubai, in partnership with Chinese blockchain firm SOSOB, largely due to volatile regulatory environment in China.

“Our decision to setup in Dubai was based on a series of factors, but largely due to the hostile regulatory environment in China, which was becoming more and more regulated. In 2018, we had a marketing platform, and so a lot of initial ICOs that happened in China, were partly marketed by us. However, one Sunday, the Central Bank said they were stopping all ICOs in China, and that companies in the process of ICOs had to pay back their investors. Companies that had just did their ICOs were OK as they had the money, but others did not, and as you can imagine it created pandemonium, and was a very painful experience for a lot of crypto enterprises. In addition to this, all regulatory announcements are made on a Sunday in China, and need to be implemented on a Monday

morning, so we opted to look elsewhere to setup,” said Lind.

Lind added that they looked at going to Hong Kong to set up their exchange, but the political unrest combined with the likelihood that regulation will become stricter forced them to look elsewhere.

He confirmed that South Korea was also an option, and they had engaged in preliminary talks with the relevant authorities, but the regulatory framework was not clear, whilst locals were prohibited from promoting cryptocurrencies. That has now changed, and he believes more exchanges will move there. However, for Lind, it was the Emirates that was the most attractive option.

“For us cryptocurrency is a blockchain technology, and the government in Dubai is

very progressive in terms of implementing blockchain in a series of different projects over the last few years. I think the UAE has a great opportunity when it comes to blockchain, green technology and cloud storage, because we believe that decentralised cloud storage will be the future in blockchain. At the minute, the technology is not fast enough to do that, but it will evolve very quickly, and we believe that in the next five years there will be a transaction for utilising blockchain. It is cleaner, it doesn't consume as much power and I think the positioning for the government here has the opportunity to become a world leader in this space," said Lind.

FTFT's SoBitX platform has 1.2 million registered users globally, but Lind believes they can scale significantly as they begin to ramp up its operations, however, like a lot of industries, the cryptocurrency space is saturated with competitors, so what differentiates SoBitX from other crypto trading platforms?

"I think ultimately what makes us different is the fact that we are independent. Our platform is not dependent on any other crypto exchanges, or anything like that. If you trade with other companies then you go to their trading platform and they provide you with data and information and investment tips, but we believe that is not the right approach, we believe in a model that gives users greater transparency and autonomy," said Lind.

One other key component of SoBitX according to Lind, is that SoBitX is a one-stop shop in terms of data and information on all aspects of cryptocurrencies.

"We have 300 exchanges on

our platform, and we collect all the data from those exchanges, which essentially enables our users to examine all the data from those exchanges on the one platform. As a crypto trader you have everything in one place, and we have key opinion leaders (KOLs) giving their tips on trades, and we have all the information you need regarding cryptocurrency on our platform.

He also added that the platform is tailored for everyone – and is not just designed for high-net worth individuals or global investors, in fact, it is very much the contrary, with beginners being the most prevalent demographic in terms of users on the platform.

"We're the Bloomberg of data for cryptocurrency, and it's free, so you can sign up and start out as a beginner. You can't trade on our platform today, but we have something that we call So-Signal, that is a subscription form and



I think the UAE has a great opportunity when it comes to blockchain, green technology and cloud storage, because we believe that decentralised cloud storage will be the future in blockchain."

when you utilise that we have 80% accuracy in trades. 70% of our users are beginners, and they are primarily based in Asia. In that market, they typically follow trades and KOLs that are experts. They opt not to take an independent approach to trading, and prefer to listen to someone else, and our platform allows them to access all the information they need regarding cryptocurrencies and trades," said Lind.

Lind believes that a key market differentiator for SoBitX will come when they launch a new feature based to their platform in October, and he believes that this will make them unique compared to other crypto trading asset managers

"I can't say we are unique in terms of using data, as lots of exchanges use data. However, I do think we are unique in the sense that we approach the market in a very different way, but also, we have a very exciting new product coming in October, which is based on aggregated trading. This means you will have one account and you can trade on any exchange globally, or several of them at the same time, and this will make us truly unique in comparison to our market rivals," said Lind.

With Lind at the helm, and with the environment in Dubai certainly 'friendly' towards cryptocurrencies and blockchain, the future looks bright for FTFT and its SoBitX platform. **crme**



Huawei Named a 2021 Gartner Peer Insights Customers' Choice for Primary Storage Arrays

One of three vendors placed in the upper-right quadrant of the Gartner Peer Insights 'Voice of the Customer': Primary Storage Arrays " quadrants



OceanStor Dorado All-Flash Storage

Source : Gartner Peer Insights 'Voice of the Customer': Primary Storage Arrays, By Peer Contributors, 12 May 2021.

The GARTNER PEER INSIGHTS CUSTOMERS' CHOICE badge is a trademark and service mark of Gartner, Inc. and/or its affiliates and is used herein with permission. All rights reserved.

Gartner Peer Insights Customers' Choice/Peer Insights constitute the subjective opinions of individual end-user reviews, ratings, and data applied against a documented methodology; they neither represent the views of, nor constitute an endorsement by, Gartner or its affiliates.



All Flash Storage



Read More

ClickShare

Conference, Collaborate, Click!

Discover the new ClickShare Conference

Let the new ClickShare Conference transform your remote meetings. Gone are the frictions when you host a conference from your laptop, or the struggle trying to use cameras and other meeting room equipment. Simply launch the ClickShare Collaboration App or plug in the ClickShare Wireless Conferencing Button. In less than 7 seconds you are ready to go.

