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THE VOICE OF THE CHANNEL

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ON A CLOUD



Anita

Anita Joseph
Editor

What's the most talked about, most ambiguous, most underutilised and most misunderstood technology today? No guesses, it's the cloud. Such has been its evolution that when it began, it was referred to as "a cloud," now, however, it is being referred to as "THE" Cloud. Today, its benefits transcend the commercial and percolate down to every aspect of our lives-right from the social media we use, down to the movie streaming services, to using apps on cloud-enabled devices.

In the business world, nowhere is the impact of the cloud more apparent than the channel, where it's changing the way partners manage, deploy and sell products and services, while positioning themselves as market-ready. As far the channel is concerned, cloud is a major paradigm shift. Not only is it about efficiently packaging, marketing and selling products, but it's also essentially about how partners consume technology. In fact, cloud is so big, that it's on its way to controlling all of the elements that keep IT service providers in business, and this fact is dawning on everyone's minds. Just.

Our focus feature in this issue tackles the cloud and its impact on the channel and how it continues to hold sway in all business decisions and actions. The cover story with Danna Bethlehem, director, product marketing, access management at Thales, addresses the need for a Zero-Trust approach in cybersecurity. In addition, we've got interviews with ManageEngine, DME ProLink, AVEVA and Logitech about different technological trends and how they continue to change the way we do business.

Our news updates and highlights will keep you in the know about everything in the channel world. We also have an exclusive Op-Ed where Tim Lovejoy, VP Government & Private Cloud at Rackspace Technology EMEA, discusses how the smart sourcing trend is emerging as a popular option for making organisations more agile in the management of their IT estates.

In short, we have a power-packed September issue that you're sure to enjoy. Happy Reading!



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GIGABYTE & INGRAM MICRO JOIN HANDS FOR MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA HPC MARKETS

GIGABYTE Technology, an industry leader in Enterprise server solutions and professional/consumer workstations, has announced a new agreement with Ingram Micro, the global technology and supply chain services provider.

In order to address the fast-rising demand for high-performance and customisable compute solutions in the Middle East and Africa markets, Ingram Micro and GIGABYTE will work hand-in-hand on server systems and workstations that are benchmarked against strict criteria and purposed for a wide range of end use cases and across all industry verticals. Ingram Micro will be building solutions with its integration team and providing local customer services for technical support and RMA requests, in order to meet high expectations by the region's customers for optimal delivery lead time and critical service SLA.

Dr. Ali Baghdadi, SVP & chief executive Ingram Micro META Region; and EMEA Cyber Security, said: "We are delighted to announce the distribution agreement with GIGABYTE. The need for High Performing Computing has never been greater, especially in times when speed is paramount. We are confident that the alliance with GIGABYTE will help Ingram Micro partners build flexible,

workload- optimised data centre solutions, provide businesses with different options to scale up and out, achieving the goals they envisioned and thrive in the modern data world".

Thomas Yen, Sales Director of GIGABYTE Technology NCBU EMEA, says: "We are seeing strong market dynamics in the region's HPC/ AI market segments at a tremendous growth pace. Time to market is critical for success, and shortening that time for new technologies is GIGABYTE's specialty. We believe that Ingram Micro's solid knowledge in end use cases and applications will help GIGABYTE in the region for providing customers with best experience in choosing the right solutions. The technical expert team at Ingram Micro knows well how to leverage GIGABYTE's USPs: system configuration flexibility, dense compute density, and great price-performance balance. With its large network of VARs and system builders, Ingram Micro is well-positioned to become the region's lighthouse for GIGABYTE's diverse HPC offering and brand positioning strategy. And GIGABYTE will provide product and price support to Ingram Micro the best way it can".



Dr Ali Baghdadi

AVAYA & MICROSOFT ANNOUNCE INTEGRATION OF MICROSOFT AZURE COMMUNICATION SERVICES WITH AVAYA ONECLOUD CPAAS



Avaya, a global leader in solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration, has announced a strategic relationship with Microsoft to create a powerful set of joint cloud communications solutions to define the future of customer and employee experience.

Benefitting from the complementary strengths of both companies, the joint solutions include Avaya's award-winning1 Avaya OneCloud CPaaS (Communications Platform as a Service) now integrated with voice, video, chat and SMS capabilities of Microsoft Azure Communication Services for combined global reach, scale and functionality.

Additionally, Avaya and Microsoft have strengthened the integration of Avaya OneCloud™ CCaaS and Microsoft Azure:

- Globally expanding availability of Avaya OneCloud CCaaS (Contact Center as a Service) hosted in Azure
- Avaya OneCloud CCaaS natively integrated with Microsoft Teams via the Microsoft Teams Connected Contact Center Certification Program
- Avaya OneCloud CCaaS integration with Microsoft Dynamics 365
- Avaya SBCs is now certified for Microsoft Teams Direct Routing and Media Bypass and are designed to complement Avaya's OneCloud CCaaS solutions

"The global collaboration with Avaya is an example of how Microsoft, collaborating with other industry leaders, is meeting businesses' requirements for integrated communications solutions that transform customer and employee experience," said Scott Van Vliet, corporate vice-president, intelligent conversation and communications cloud, Microsoft. "This relationship benefits from the combined strengths of the two companies to connect businesses to their customers via powerful communication experiences across platforms – all with the resiliency, enterprise-grade security and cloud scale of Microsoft Azure," he added.

LOGITECH LAUNCHES ZONE TRUE WIRELESS & ZONE WIRED EARBUDS



Loubna Imenchal

Logitech is helping professionals stay clear, confident and connected in the next phase of hybrid work with the launch of its Zone

True Wireless and Zone Wired Earbuds, the first targeted to be certified by all three major cloud video conferencing platforms—Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and Zoom Video Communications, Inc.

Logitech Zone True Wireless earbuds upgrade video calls with the shape and fit users love, combined with the powerful audio that professionals need. Equipped with a premium noise-cancelling mic and active noise cancellation feature, Zone True Wireless provides crystal clear audio for every call, regardless of surrounding distractions. This, along with a minimalist, modern design, enables a stylish look and a high-quality sound on video that helps users stay in the zone.

"Zone True Wireless and Zone Wired Earbuds will enable executives in the Middle East to embrace the hybrid working model by enhancing their ability to communicate and collaborate seamlessly across devices", said Loubna Imenchal, head of video collaboration for AMECA region (Africa, Middle East, Turkey, and Central Asia). "Professionals will also be able to improve their online training and learning experiences with these innovative earbuds, which can boost concentration by cancelling distracting noise while providing unprecedented levels of comfort and convenience".

Zone True Wireless will be available in two colors, Graphite and Rose. The earbuds provide wearable comfort, connection across devices and perfect clarity on every call.

Logitech Zone True Wireless and Zone Wired Earbuds will be available globally in Fall 2021 with an \$MSRP of \$299 and \$99, respectively. The Rose Zone True Wireless Earbuds will initially be available exclusively on Logitech.com.

WORLD'S FIRST CLOUD-NATIVE, FULLY INTEGRATED CASH MANAGEMENT PLATFORM FOR MENA BANKS LAUNCHED IN UAE



Manish Maakan, CEO, iGTB

The world's first cloud-native, fully integrated cash management platform, powered by microservices and Open

Banking APIs for banks in Middle East & North Africa has launched in the UAE. 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, recently announced its completely reimaged Digital Transaction Banking on a cloud platform. iGTB, with origins that can be traced to Citibank, has three decades of experience in transaction banking technology. Currently 90+ banks globally and 30+ banks in MENA region trust iGTB for their digital cash transformation.

This platform is powered by comprehensive product coverage across cash management, payments, account services, self-onboarding, liquidity & virtual accounts and is offered across three easy-to-consume bundles – the CashNow plan, the CashXtra plan, and the CashPower plan. Each bundle tailored specifically for banks at various stages of their transaction banking digital maturity, with an innovative pay-as-you-grow pricing model. The bundles are specially curated with iGTB's thorough repertoire of user journeys and domain packs built up from its large client base, designed to accelerate sales cycles for banks, increase stickiness across their client segments and impact the customer experience with a fully digital 360 offering. Banks will now be able to capture stable, predictable corporate & SME fee revenues in weeks rather than months.



Victor Madueno

EMAKINA MENA PARTNERS WITH LEADING CUSTOMER DATA PLATFORM TEALIUM

Full-service digital agency Emakina MENA has announced their new technology partnership with Tealium - the industry's leading customer data platform. As customer

data plays an increasingly central role in the business decisions brands make today, this alliance was a natural step forward for Emakina MENA.

"Our partnership with Tealium will strengthen our ability to deliver state-of-the-art customer experience, developments, integrations and

marketing activations - helping our Middle-East clients transition from a 3rd party dependency to a 1st party data-model. As opposed to other regions, the Middle East requires significantly more complex customer segmentations, which require technology solutions that will ease marketers' lives, facilitate business decisions, and first and foremost impact bottom-line results," said Victor Madueno, client service director at Emakina MENA. As "The User Agency," Emakina's decision to join forces with Tealium is powered by the knowledge that in the Middle-East's fast-paced consumer market, customers must be at the center of every brand's decision.

SERVICENOW TO ACQUIRE INDOOR MAPPING DISRUPTOR MAPWIZE TO MAKE HYBRID WORK FOR EVERYONE

ServiceNow, the leading digital workflow company that makes work, work better for people, has announced that 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.

"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.



Blake McConnell

TAEKNIZON INKS DEAL WITH WALLPOST SOFTWARE TO PROVIDE ERP SOFTWARE FOR SMES

With higher penetration of cloud-based software solutions the new partnership between Taeknizon, a fast-growing Private Cloud provider in the Middle East & Asia, and US based WallPost, a cloud-based ERP solution provider is timely.

Especially designed for SMEs, Taeknizon will serve as resellers for the solution in the UAE and centralised activation partners for the ME region excluding Qatar.

Easy to install and supported by free implementation service and 24/7 technical support, the WallPost solution offers a suite of integrated mobile friendly applications



Andrew Doxsey and Anithan Chandran

which captures, manages and interprets data from across business operations.

By integrating all departments and functions on a single system, users of WallPost can maintain complete control and transparency.

This is strengthened by customers receiving the highest level of data security, where Taeknizon will host customer data within its TAEKNI Cloud infrastructure in its TIER 3 datacentre within the UAE.

NEXANS TELECOM & DATA OPENS NEW OFFICE IN SAUDI ARABIA



Arafat Yousef

Nexans Telecom & Data division, a supplier of end-to-end network infrastructure solutions, has announced the opening of its office at Al Muruj in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. In addition to the Nexans Middle East hub in Dubai, this move increases Nexans presence in the Middle East, while bringing it closer to its customers and channel partners. The expansion, a natural evolution of Nexans growth strategy, will enable it to provide

better, more tailored services to clients in Saudi Arabia and wider region, which includes its latest fiber and copper structured cabling solutions, data centre solutions and Fibre-To-The-Office concept. While there is increasing demand for flexible and scalable networking solutions inside commercial office buildings, Healthcare and Airport infrastructure, but also data centres, now enterprises are also looking at future sustainability and carbon footprint.

“Even within the region, and in Saudi Arabia, a hybrid workforce is increasingly becoming a reality in 2022 and beyond. Data centres and commercial networking systems are now required to cope with increasing demands for changes like the usage of more applications along with the convergence of networks. This ongoing transformation requires urgent attention to be paid to existing infrastructure and planning for the changes ahead,” said Arafat Yousef, managing director – Middle East & Africa, Nexans Data Network Solutions.

RAYCOM TECHNOLOGIES LAUNCHES ‘EVERYTHING AS A SERVICE’ IN GHANA, POWERED BY AVAYA ONECLOUD



Fadi Hani

Raycom Technologies, a leading ICT provider, has launched ‘Everything as a Service’, a transformational offering that delivers cloud-based Unified Communications and Contact Center services powered by Avaya across Ghana.

The offering, which equips Ghanaian businesses to contend with fast-moving digital transformation requirements, is already providing value for leading organisations in the country, including Vodafone Ghana and GCB.

“When it comes to delivering stand-out customer experiences, particularly in a post-COVID era, flexibility is key for us. We need to be flexible enough to add agent capacity at times of peak demand; flexible enough to enable agents to work from anywhere at times of reduced travel; and flexible enough to quickly spool up new services that will add value to the customer journey. RayCom and Avaya have given us this flexibility with ‘Everything as a Service’,” said Mildred Abbey, BSS Manager at Vodafone Ghana.

Fadi Hani, vice-president – Middle East, Africa & Turkey, Avaya, said: “This significant agreement with Raycom Technologies meets our joint customers’ demands for greater flexibility and faster time to market as they aggressively pursue their digital transformation strategies. With ‘Everything as a Service’, we look forward to supporting Ghanaian businesses as they not only meet customer and employee experience expectations, but actively go about setting new standards of excellence.”

COHESITY APPOINTS GREGG PETERSEN AS MEA LEAD



Gregg Petersen

Cohesity has appointed Gregg

Petersen as regional director for its operations in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region. Petersen will focus on empowering regional businesses in UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, and South Africa to easily and effectively back up, manage, protect, and derive value from their data through Cohesity’s next-gen data management solutions.

Petersen, a prominent figure in the MEA IT industry, brings 14 years of relevant experience to Cohesity, including his most recent role at Rackspace. He will work closely with channel and ecosystem partners as customers in the MEA region embrace modern, cloud-native data management solutions.

“I’m thrilled to join the Cohesity team,” Petersen said. I think that we have an exciting opportunity ahead of us, not just to grow Cohesity in MEA, but to grow our partner’s and customer’s business and to contribute to the overall digital transformation of our countries and our region. Years of digital investment have left MEA organisations with multiple siloed stores of data. This fragmentation inhibits their ability to effectively utilise or derive insight from their data and thus poses a fundamental barrier, not just to digital transformation, but to protection against external threats such as ransomware and corporate espionage. Cohesity enables businesses to unlock the full potential of their most valuable asset, their data – that’s something that MEA businesses can use to their advantage to be more competitive while offering exceptional customer experiences,” he added.

ORACLE TURBOCHARGES PROCUREMENT TO HELP CUSTOMERS REDUCE COSTS

Oracle Fusion Cloud Procurement—part of Oracle Fusion Cloud Supply Chain & Manufacturing (SCM) and Oracle Fusion Cloud Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)—is a product suite that manages an organisation's complete source-to-settle cycle. It is designed to help customers minimise risk, reduce costs, enforce compliant spending, and simplify supplier management and contracting.

To help customers improve operational efficiency and successfully reduce costs, Oracle is introducing several significant updates to Oracle Procurement, including:

Complex Procurement: A new capability that helps organisations procure services and manage risk by helping ensure that contractors and subcontractors comply with negotiated payment terms. Complex Procurement also provides transparency into services spend across payment milestones, and is only made possible with a complete, end-to-end suite of applications.

Spend and Procurement

Analytics: A new product that gives customers a holistic view of procurement and supplier performance across the entire organisation. Spend and Procurement Analytics help drive cost savings and efficiency by enabling users to view key spend metrics within a single dashboard—without complex data integration.

Spend Classification: A new capability that helps procurement professionals better understand their organisation's spending patterns and gain an accurate overview of buying activity. Spend Classification can remove manual effort and reduce human error by using machine learning to organise spend data into logical categories.

DataFox Supplier Intelligence: A new product that helps customers verify supplier data during onboarding and gain real-time insight into supplier health through alerts, as well as risk indicator scores. By using data generated by the AI and machine learning capabilities within Oracle DataFox Data Management, DataFox Supplier Intelligence can deliver current and accurate supplier profile data and risk indicator insights.

NTECHLAB LAUNCHES MULTI-OBJECT RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY



NtechLab, leaders in video analytics, has launched FindFace Multi, a detection technology that uses an advanced algorithm to recognise not only faces, but also silhouettes of people and cars.

This update to its flagship product is a step change for security experts in their fight against crime and also an invaluable tool for commercial planners. Another distinctive feature is its ability to support many video streams and facial database entries, ensuring the system offers unrivalled scalability.

Andrei Telenkov, CEO, NtechLab, said: "The solution is of serious interest to our clients and potential customers, because practically none of our competitors has a similar platform for multi-object video analytics, when cameras can be configured for different types of objects, and at the same time one camera can process several different types of objects at once."

Silhouette recognition allows FindFace Multi users to count and search, as well as track movements, with high accuracy the numbers of people moving through an environment as well as identifying individuals. The algorithm also takes into account markers such as height and the colour of clothes and accessories. The vehicle recognition function determines the body type, colour, manufacturer and model of a car, as well as searches its license plate. Even if license plates, or parts of the vehicle are not visible or obscured, the system can still identify a car.



Uday Shankar Kizhepat

WSO2, leaders in digital transformation technology, has announced the expansion of its Middle East and Africa presence with its newly opened office in Dubai, UAE. The company has also appointed Uday Shankar Kizhepat, as the vice-president and general manager (VP & GM) for the region to spearhead the organisation's expansion.

"As more businesses and governments in the Middle East and Africa engage with consumers and citizens online, we have seen a tremendous increase in demand for our open-source technology to support their digital transformation and deliver modern, secure digital services," said Dr. Sanjiva Weerawarana, WSO2 founder and CEO. "The addition of Uday and opening of the Dubai

WSO2 CONSOLIDATES MEA REGION PRESENCE WITH OFFICE OPENING IN DUBAI

office extend our commitment to supporting the digital initiatives of these enterprises across the MEA region."

As the VP and GM of the MEA Region at WSO2, Uday is responsible for overall ownership of regional growth, including go-to-market strategies, investments, and staffing. As a certified cloud practitioner & digital change champion, Uday also has extensive knowledge about enterprise-level solutions in the market and their positioning in various verticals.

"With his deep understanding of these enterprises' needs and strong track record of growing businesses, Uday will be instrumental in expanding our operations to help customers successfully navigate their digital transformation efforts," Dr. Weerawarana said.

QUALYS ENTERS INTO AGREEMENT TO ACQUIRE TOTALCLOUD



Sumedh Thakar

Qualys, Inc., pioneers and leading providers of disruptive cloud-based IT, security and compliance solutions, has announced that it has entered into an agreement to acquire TotalCloud, a cloud workflow management and no-code automation platform.

Upon closing, this acquisition will further strengthen Qualys' Cloud Security solution

allowing customers to build user-defined workflows for custom policies and execute them on-demand for simplified security and compliance. To implement a workflow in a multi-cloud environment, users simply drag and drop componentised blocks to build any flow of actions to achieve a particular output, such as a compliance check or remediation.

"With the accelerating adoption of cloud technologies, organisations are looking for ways to simplify cloud security visibility and remediation with easy to automate workflows," said Sumedh Thakar, president and CEO of Qualys. "The acquisition of TotalCloud will allow Qualys to bring visual cloud remediation workflow technology to the Qualys Cloud Platform, underscoring our continued innovation in Cloud Security."

We are excited to welcome TotalCloud employees, including its founder Pradeep Kumar, to the Qualys family," Thakar added.

SAVOYE APPOINTS ALAIN KADDOUM AS MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR ME OFFICE



Alain Kaddoum

Leading global warehouse automation integrator and software publisher, Savoye has announced the appointment of Alain Kaddoum as its Middle East managing director. With Kaddoum now on board, Savoye will enhance its long-term strategy to become one of the leading providers of supply chain solutions in the region, combining hardware and software according to customer needs such as manual, semi-mechanised, mechanised, highly automated, or robotised installations.

Commenting on the new appointment,

Frédéric Zielinski, Managing Director of Savoye EMEA, said: "Our team is proud to welcome Alain as our Middle East managing director. As we have observed from his previous experience, Kaddoum goes out of his way to ensure the success of any business he is involved in. Knowing his leadership caliber and industry expertise, paired with our support and ambitious vision, we are confident that Savoye is ready to impact the region's supply chain industry even beyond our greatest expectations."

Kaddoum said: "I am excited to join Savoye and enjoy seamless collaboration with the team to strengthen our presence in the Middle East through our innovative warehouse automation and software offerings. The company has a lot of potential and has a big role to play within the region's supply chain, especially that the industry is continuously evolving to accommodate new trends and to cater to the changing needs of partner industries. Together, we will develop and integrate the most efficient solutions for Savoye and add value to all of our customers."

ZEBRA TECHNOLOGIES INTRODUCES FIRST WI-FI 6-ENABLED MOBILE COMPUTER



Zebra Technologies Corporation, an innovator at the front line of business with solutions and partners that deliver a performance edge, has announced the new TC52ax mobile computer with support for Wi-Fi 6. The TC52ax also features Workstation Connect, a new software solution which enables users to turn Zebra mobile devices into mobile-driven workstations. The solution can help improve worker efficiency, simplify infrastructure, and improve return on investments in retail, manufacturing and warehouse environments.

The TC52ax is ideal for price check and item lookup, inventory and cycle counts, line busting, merchandising, and buy online pick up in store (BOPIS) and buy online, pick up at curbside (BOPAC) applications. With Wi-Fi 6 on the TC52ax, manufacturers can increase bandwidth and capacity, allowing for greater throughput speeds and quicker response time, even when multiple devices are being used on the same network.

Zebra's TC52ax offers advanced range scanning options using IntelliFocus™ to help workers capture distant top shelf and up-close barcodes to drive productivity. In addition, the TC52ax is Zebra's first Android™ 11-based enterprise mobile computer featuring Device Tracker. This beaconing technology enables companies to track and find a misplaced device even when it is turned off or the battery is dead.

Don't let ordinary computer performance slow you down.

Crucial[®] SSDs deliver impressive speed and fierce data protection with sequential reads up to 3400MB/s. Whether you're at your desk, in the studio, or in game, we deliver the quality and superior support you've come to expect from Crucial. Engineered with NVMe[™] technology, our range of SSDs includes advanced features like dynamic write acceleration, full hardware-based encryption, and adaptive thermal protection to keep your data safe while enhancing system reliability. With thousands of validation hours, dozens of qualification tests, our SSDs are backed by world-class Micron engineering and innovation.



HUAWEI ADS ENHANCES ECOSYSTEM WITH NEW FEATURES



HUAWEI Ads, one of Huawei's fastest growing platforms that brings advertisers access to over 700 million users worldwide, has launched a range of new features to enhance advertisers' reach across the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region.

Offering exclusive access to advertisement placements and premium untapped inventory, HUAWEI Ads supports BETA version of targeting applications not on HUAWEI AppGallery, and third-party tracking support for partners like AppsFlyer, Adjust, Kochava, and Sizmek. The new features also support impression tracking and optimize the process

of creating and converting web tracking metrics to measure advertising performance.

Additionally, the platform now enables advertisers to apply their own analysis tool online, helping to automatically activate conversions.

Advertisers also have the freedom to customize their negative keyword lists and include marketing API to conveniently manage their advertisements and ensure marketing efficiency. They will also experience supply-side platform (SSP) that supports web page traffic access and realisation of third-party media AP.

HUAWEI Ads allows customers to advertise using Huawei's application ecosystem, as well as through Huawei's partnerships with top global apps. Through HUAWEI Ads, clients and brands receive high-quality content and user data for precise targeting.

VIDEONETICS ANNOUNCES TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION WITH COM-SUR



Videonetics, the world's first AI & DL powered Unified Video Computing Platform (UVCP™) announces the integration of its Intelligent VMS 3.0 with COM-SUR, the world's only CCTV video footage auditing, smart backup, and standardized intelligent incident reporting software.

The technology integration empowers users to carry out auditing and review of CCTV video feeds in real time, creating exceptional intelligent incident reports for quick escalation and resolution of an incident with a unified, future-ready, and unprecedented enterprise class functionalities of Intelligent VMS 3.0.

"COM-SUR, the world's first unique

reporting by the seamless integration with the Intelligent VMS 3.0 of Videonetics, delivers a force-multiplier, as a powerful CCTV surveillance tool," said Gautam D. Goradia, Founder and CEO of COM-SUR.

"This synergistic partnership will effectively demonstrate to users, for diverse home/industry applications, tangible benefits ranging from security to productivity. The homogenous interaction between a video management system and the COM-SUR software makes auditing of a footage very easy, shrinks the data size, and creates actionable incident reports for timely intervention and corrective actions," he added.

3-in-1 feature-rich software enabling meaningful auditing, smart backup, and standardized intelligent incident

KASPERSKY RECEIVES EUROPEAN MSP INNOVATION AWARD FOR MOBILIZING PARTNERS DURING PANDEMIC



Kaspersky has won the award for Best Managed Services Partner (MSP)

Program – for the second year running – at the 2021 European MSP Innovation Awards from Channel Partner Insight. With the pandemic putting pressure on every business to perform and succeed in an uncertain climate, this accolade is testament to the enhanced support Kaspersky has given channel partners over the past year, to help them better compete in the market.

The European MSP Innovation Awards are independent and based solely on innovation and achievement of companies in the European channel over the past year. Among a high standard of entries, Kaspersky's submission stood out by clearly demonstrating its commitment to partners with continuous innovation of its United Partner Program.

Launched in 2019, the comprehensive program has gone from strength to strength, forming the backbone of partner support and providing a foundation from which to grow customer base and revenue streams. During the past 12 months, Kaspersky has introduced several new steps to help European partners overcome the challenges of the pandemic – from additional education initiatives and training to new sales tools. The judges praised how Kaspersky incentivizes partners and helps build real traction for MSPs and their offerings.

It is this ease of doing business, and strength and quality of its partner program that also saw Kaspersky rank in top spot by independent analyst firm, Canalys – for the second year running – in its annual channel satisfaction benchmark. The Canalys Worldwide Vendor Benchmark awarded Kaspersky the highest overall rating of 87.8%, seeing it outperform all other vendors. The benchmark is an objective comparison of channel partner programs, measuring how vendors perform in a number of key categories. Kaspersky received over 679 reviews from the channel for its program, an increase of 588% over the past 12 months.

LEADING THE WAY IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Sami Abi Esber, President – Midis System Integration, Board Member - Midis Group, tells RME why the MENA region is an exciting place to be in right now, with the strides it is making in digital transformation.



Sami Abi Esber

How would you describe the digital transformation journey of the MENA region?

Where does it stand today?

Currently, in the MENA region, there is a consensus over the need for digital transformation between high-level decision makers, regulators, private sector business leaders, and end-users. At the same time, citizen and residents are more connected than ever, with the massive rise in the number of smartphones, which represent a key element in the consumption of various digitally transformed services as well as the generation of data needed for digital business models. So, I'm not surprised that the digital transformation market in MENA is forecasted to reach \$2.8 billion(1) by 2025.

Economies like the KSA and the UAE are setting high standards. Take the Emirates Blockchain Strategy 2021 for example — it aims to blockchain-enable 50% of government transactions. Where else can you see such large-scale, ambitious transformations happening?

In Saudi Arabia, The Kingdom's progression towards a new and improved method of accelerating the stages of development related to Digital Transformation, are being demonstrated through projects like NEOM & Red Sea which illustrate a "new vision of what the future should be" using "Digital Innovation"

We see many countries adopting a national strategy to enable digital transformation, while other countries are having limited initiatives in specific sectors critical to their economy. It is also worth noting that the private sector is instrumental in the adoption of digital transformation. This is driven by the need to improve key performance indicators using digital technology as well as enhance the customer experience. We also see some excellent work in the start-up community where new business models enabled by digital technologies are emanating from the MENA region

and making its presence in the global market. There are a number of unicorns that emanated from the region, and for these types of start-ups and Unicorns, youth empowerment via incubators and accelerators is inextricably tied to the success. So, overall, I must say, it is an exciting time to be in the MENA region, and to note that digital transformation is a journey and not a destination by itself, as once you transform, technology will further evolve, enable new scenarios and there will be a need for a second wave of transformation and so on. We are at the beginning of the journey in MENA region, but certainly making interesting strides.

How can organisations focus on innovation while staying ahead of technology trends and achieving their digital transformation goals?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to digitalisation. Organisations must develop their own in-house vision, provisioning for future possibilities and changes. Such proactiveness may not pay immediate dividends, but when it does, it will be worth it. For instance, organisations that had flexible working policies and required tools in place before the pandemic were well-equipped to immediately pivot to complete remote working. No productivity was lost in transition.

Leaders must factor in all employees and departments in digital transformation strategies, because every organisational function now carries scope for technology adoption. Innovations happen at the intersections. So, it is of great consequence that all opinions and ideas are brought to the table. I believe, when all is said and done, digital transformation is about creating a company culture that is conducive to exploring new technologies and responsive to changes. Innovation is a big word, and it has to be an organisational culture to support and encourage innovation from the very top. Innovative ideas, however, can come from anywhere in the organisation. Actually, it typically comes from the fringe. It is often



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS A JOURNEY AND NOT A DESTINATION BY ITSELF, AS ONCE YOU TRANSFORM, TECHNOLOGY WILL FURTHER EVOLVE, ENABLE NEW SCENARIOS AND THERE WILL BE A NEED FOR A SECOND WAVE OF TRANSFORMATION AND SO ON."

complex to transform an innovative idea to an executable, value creating business, and it is the role of the management to guide the process to achieve success, and if it is not going to be successful then to "fail fast" and not drain your resources in pursuing a failed idea. Differentiating between which innovative ideas needs the stamina and support to succeed and which should be allowed to fail fast is a mix of business acumen, experience, intuition and an art.

The real challenges of digital transformation lie with the organisation, its people and its leaders. How do you think business and tech decision makers within an organisation can collaborate, to homogenise the digital transformation journey?

This is a great question and the short

answer is that nowadays, every business at its core, is becoming an IT business! Sounds like a bold statement, it is not. Think of any business, and see how it can be impacted in its innovation, competitiveness, reach, customer experience, operational efficiency by the use of digital technologies. If you are in retail, insurance, banking, real estate, manufacturing, transportation, government, education or any other industry, there is so much that you can do with digital technology, and you can no longer say that the business side needs to collaborate with tech decision makers, because tech is an integral part of the business or tech is essentially what will create value for the business, so they need to think as ONE! The question then becomes, how would that practically work and what would be the roles given existing organisational structures? The tech role would be to “listen and educate,” listen to the business challenges, understand the landscape, and at the same time “educate” the business on new possibilities today using digital technology and do that in simple understandable terms. The “business” would then be able to frame the value creation model in the digital world, then they can both identify strategic transformation initiatives and work together across organisational boundaries to make it happen. Some organisations create the role of a Chief Digital Officer, or a Chief Transformation Officer, to facilitate such work.

While digitally transforming, is it possible for organisations to re-engineer their business processes without significant cost escalation? How can they maximise their digital outcomes without breaking the bank?

Globally, by 2023, the direct spending on digital transformation is projected to reach a total of \$6.8 trillion(2). The question we need to ask ourselves here is: What do these organisations know that others don't? If anything, they are investing in a future where they can rake in multi-fold returns. And at the current rate of transformation, that future is not too distant.



But that doesn't mean you have to break the bank; you just have to make well-informed decisions, choose the right technologies and service providers, and foster long-term service relationships. As spending increases, organisations must find ways to leverage digitalisation and cut costs. For example, centralisation of software infrastructure, IoT and AI-led maintenance and inventory management, or any efficiency-driven approach, will lead to savings; which can offset the increased digital transformation expenses. Like in anything, there is always “low hanging fruits”, and it is always a good idea to capture these at the outset, as they will help you realise either additional revenues, or optimise cost, hence fund the transformation. There is also amazing technologies like RPA (Robotic Process Automation), that can very quickly help organisations slash business process cost and optimise the processes.

What is your advice to companies in the region that are looking to accelerate their digital transformation goals? What is the most important aspect they must consider?

The MENA region is well-positioned to make great strides in the global digital order. I say this because we were relatively late to the digital party, but now that we are here, we are

taking an energetic approach to digital transformation. In other words, we are not jumping on the digital bandwagon; we know for the most part, what works and what doesn't, based on our learnings from early adopters.

So, what I'd like to tell organisations is that there is a vast untapped potential, and you cannot go wrong by accelerating your digitalisation; you will only have more time to course-correct and enhance your competencies. But the important aspect is to not lose sight of the bigger picture, because the day you plant the seed is not the day you eat the fruit. I suggest you start with the “no brainer” activities, as if you don't, all your competitors will, and you will be at a disadvantage. Second, think of one additional unique value creation initiative using digital technology that will set you apart from the rest, and invest in parallel in both; the no brainer and the unique value creation initiative. 

<https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/middle-east-and-north-africa-mena-digital-transformation-market-size-2021-consumer-demand-developments-plans-industry-impact-and-forecast-till-2030-2021-07-08?tesla=y>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/870924/worldwide-digital-transformation-market-size/>

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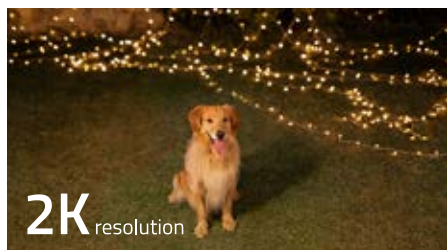
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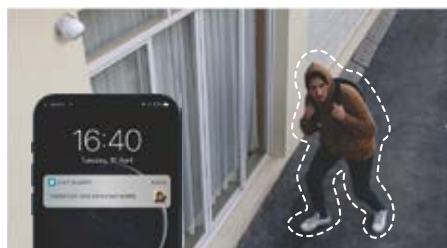
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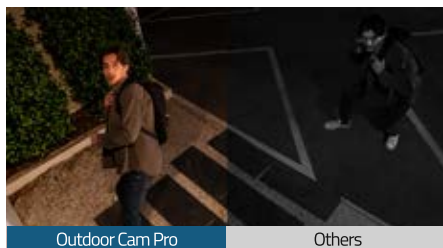
Equipped with a 32GB memory card and on-device AI, Outdoor Cam Pro offers security that is ready out of the box.

*The device can support up to 128G.



Notifies You Only When Needed

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CHANNELLING THE CLOUD

Cloud is a major business enabler and channel partners can no longer afford to ignore the immense potential that it holds. Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller Middle East, examines.



Maya Zakhour, Channel Director – Middle East and Africa, Italy & Spain at NetApp



Shane Grennan, Regional Channel Director for Enterprise and Alliances at Fortinet Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan



Sandrine El Khodry, vice-president Middle East & Africa at Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise



Eugene Kim, Director of Global Product Marketing & Strategy, Cisco AppDynamics



Lucas Jiang, GM at TP-Link MEA FZE

What's the most talked about, most ambiguous, most underutilised and most misunderstood technology today? No guesses, it's the cloud. Such has been its evolution that when it began, it was referred to as "a cloud," now, however, it is being referred to as "THE" Cloud. Today, its benefits transcend the commercial and percolate down to every aspect of our lives-right from the social media we use, down to the movie streaming services, to using apps on cloud-enabled devices.

In the business world, nowhere is the impact of the cloud more apparent than the channel, where it's changing the way partners manage, deploy and sell products and services, while positioning themselves as market-ready. As far the channel is concerned, cloud is a major paradigm shift. Not only is it about efficiently packaging, marketing and selling products, but it's also essentially about how partners consume technology. In fact, cloud is so big, that it's on its way to controlling all of the elements that keep IT service providers in business, and this fact is dawning on everyone's minds. Just.

How organisations are transforming

Sandrine El Khodry, vice-president Middle East & Africa at Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise puts it thus: "Cloud

is far more than an architecture: it has to be understood as a completely new business model which enables organisations rethink the way they communicate with their customers, how they equip their employees with borderless and ubiquitous collaboration services, and ultimately how they adopt an outcome-based strategy for lasting, trusted and profitable relations."

When the pandemic hit, cloud shot into prominence like never before. With the sudden surge of virtual workloads, the need to manage humungous amounts of data became paramount and suddenly cloud provided the answer: with its ability to rapidly transfer data back and forth and scale up or down as required, it provided the miracle solution that businesses needed to survive and thrive.

"Cloud architecture has proven its efficacy during this pandemic by empowering organisations to distribute their workload across multiple cloud environments. A multi-cloud infrastructure offers businesses a robust set of cloud options to solve rigorous challenges across a diverse range of computing and business functions," says **Lucas Jiang, GM at TP-Link MEA FZE**. "Businesses are now moving from a single cloud set-up to a multi-cloud infrastructure that allows them to maintain a hybrid cloud environment which enables a combination of security and cost savings simultaneously."

According to **Shane Grennan, Regional Channel Director for Enterprise and Alliances at Fortinet Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan**, public cloud helped prevent our economies from collapsing, especially in the last 18 months since the pandemic. "Throughout the last 18 months, public cloud has enabled applications to scale dramatically and reliably, when they needed to most. Globally we have seen a conversion of in-person interactions to virtual ones, through a surge of collaboration, shopping and entertainment solutions, driven by a need to limit physical interactions in varying degrees. As millions around the world strived to remain productive, fight the pandemic and fight boredom, cloud has enabled video conferencing, remote project collaboration, e-commerce, education, gaming and streaming video companies to meet spectacular and unplanned-for, demand in a way that would have been impossible a decade ago," he adds.

Redefining the channel

The who's-who of the channel industry say partners must be willing to constantly adapt and change, as more and more businesses accelerate their journey to the cloud.

"As businesses continue to migrate to the cloud, there is a pressing need for more adaptability to suit the unique

requirements of different processes for different businesses," says **Maya Zakhour, Channel Director – Middle East and Africa, Italy & Spain at NetApp**. "We can see more multi-cloud and hybrid-cloud adoption. We are also expecting cloud to play a central role in PaaS and SaaS to enable businesses get access to a number of services."

Experts also say the channel must clearly articulate what the cloud can do for businesses if they are to accelerate sales momentum. It is, therefore, vital for channel partners to become digitally empowered and empower their customers as well as their staff about adopting a cloud-first attitude alongside the more conservative approaches. And since cloud forms the crux of digital transformation with its scalability and flexibility, it's obvious that partners must capitalise on this trend for their own longevity. Managing the multiple

layers and different approaches to the cloud is by no means easy, but it must be done. In fact, it is now abundantly clear that those partners that have adapted to the changing customer demands will flourish, being able to take advantage of the various opportunities that arise.

Eugene Kim, Director of Global Product Marketing & Strategy, Cisco AppDynamics says full-stack observability is a way for technologists to manage the sprawling IT estate and the increased complexity created by the cloud. "Full-stack observability builds upon the traditional domain monitoring solutions that organisations currently use, and provides them with the ability to have complete visibility, insights, and actions to deliver exceptional digital experiences and maximise business impact. For channel partners, as their customers ramp up adoption of cloud and modern applications, this presents an opportunity. They can become trusted advisors to their clients and work with technology vendors to deploy full-stack observability platforms that will enable technologists to better prioritise and deliver the biggest impact for their business," he adds.

Another way for channel partners to boost their presence on the cloud is to become solution providers. As Lucas Jiang puts it, becoming cloud service providers will allow vendors to harness the massive opportunity and long-term business value that cloud provides them. "Cloud-based services impact major areas within the channel - they eliminate cost, phase

CLOUD IS FAR MORE THAN AN ARCHITECTURE: IT HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS A COMPLETELY NEW BUSINESS MODEL WHICH ENABLES ORGANISATIONS TO RETHINK THE WAY THEY COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR CUSTOMERS AND HOW THEY ADOPT AN OUTCOME-BASED STRATEGY FOR LASTING, TRUSTED AND PROFITABLE RELATIONS."



BUSINESSES ARE NOW MOVING FROM A SINGLE CLOUD SET-UP TO A MULTI-CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS THEM TO MAINTAIN A HYBRID CLOUD ENVIRONMENT WHICH ENABLES A COMBINATION OF SECURITY AND COST SAVINGS SIMULTANEOUSLY."

out scale and reliance barriers and enable businesses, big and small, to compete more successfully. For resellers, cloud services are opening doors to recurring revenue streams, and helping them build a sustainable business model that is more focused on building integrated solutions. Cloud is expected to bring incredible value-addition and a seamless lifecycle experience for customers. In the future, more IT services will be delivered from the cloud, providing traditional resellers with the opportunities to expand their offering and amplify their profits from delivering cloud services."

However, as they say, nothing comes without awareness and the in-depth knowledge needed to stay ahead of the game.

"Partners must look for vendors with the right knowledge, deep skills and clear strategic plan and understanding of the cloud technology and its evolution in the future," says Sandrine El Khodry. "Reliability and resilience are key to a strong cloud communications strategy. When deploying UC efforts, it's important to make sure that you have the support of a vendor with the needed skills and understanding of the end-to-end solution," she adds.

According to Shane Grennan, cloud is a disruptive

technology which also impacts existing Go-To Market (GTM) models. "It is allowing the emergence of new channels (Born-in-the-cloud) who focus exclusively on the cloud. We have started to see that the expertise these channels bring to cloud adoption and migration makes them the first choice for customers, above traditional partners who have been slow in building cloud practices."

He adds that the emergence of cloud marketplaces, allow end customers to purchase and consume cloud services direct through Pay-as-you-Go (PAYG) models, without going through a channel. "These co-exist with models that do involve the channel, but the trend is for customers to favour PAYG, forcing channels to upskill and develop more Professional Service offerings, rather than relying on margins made on the sale of products. For these reasons, every reseller needs to understand the shift and their potential role in it, and actively take steps to make that it a reality. Don't wait and find yourself losing out to this major business opportunity."

Sustainability is another aspect that channel partners cannot overlook. As Maya Zakhour points out: "From an impact point of view, sustainability is going to be a key area where cloud will bring about significant impact and so will Edge computing which is also an emerging trend that focuses on making localised datacentres for data consumption where it's needed the most by making data management and storage close to the source. This presents the channel with immense opportunity to grow their businesses.

The right approach

Ultimately, there is no right or wrong approach, it's entirely up to the partners to decide how they would like to tackle the cloud, depending on what makes sense in their context. Communication and market segregation will prove to be beneficial here, as partners will be able to properly allocate resources to where it matters most.

Point is, cloud can no longer be ignored, neither can cloud-centric channel business strategies.

WILL SD-WAN INCREASE OPPORTUNITY IN THE CHANNEL?

Simon Pamplin, chief technologist, WAN Edge EMEA at Aruba Silver Peak, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company, examines how channel partners can maximise the growing demand for SD-WAN.



Simon Pamplin

Over the past year, the pandemic has been a catalyst for accelerated digital transformation and companies are now working hard to adapt and maintain the pace they set themselves. Alongside several other challenges, the new 'work from anywhere' mandate has been a prevailing shift that businesses have had to embrace. Remote working is the new norm, and the net has widened in terms of business locations; instead of being fixed, viable 'office' settings could now be coffee shops, homes, shared spaces, and pop-up venues. This has altered the concept of a branch office; while the apps used are the same, the way they are accessed and secured is different, which is putting increased pressure on organisations to transform their WAN and security architectures.

Many organisations have tried to manage this shift by stretching their legacy router and firewall-centric infrastructure that simply can't sustain the pace and aren't flexible enough for modern applications primarily hosted in the cloud. As a result, there is a growing demand for SD-WAN, which relies on a cloud-first architecture. But how can channel partners maximise SD-WAN as a growth opportunity? And what should they look out for when it comes to identifying potential customers?

A New Conversation

One of the key benefits of SD-WAN is that it aligns the network to the desired outcomes of the business. The network is built around the needs of the business and the software creates an agile virtual network enabling acceleration and innovation that can't be matched by traditional networks. With SD-WAN automation and intelligence, the network becomes self-driving, simplifying processes and driving efficiencies that ensure business leaders can get on with running their companies instead of worrying about the accessibility and security of their business applications.

This shift in approach presents a huge opportunity for channel partners – particularly those who have sold traditional networking. Instead of talking to IT departments about new network 'products', resellers can now speak to business leaders about WAN and security transformation that will enable them to deliver on broader company goals and objectives, and gain time to market advantages. This means partners can target a new audience with a fundamentally new approach to unifying network and security architectures, instead focusing on addressing strategic business challenges for customers rather than simply reselling networking gear.

An entry to cloud

Businesses across every sector are considering some form of digital transformation, but this is often accompanied by concerns around complexity and disruption. SD-WAN eradicates those concerns – with the Aruba EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform, for example, it's now possible to extend the network into AWS, Azure, Google or Oracle with a few mouse clicks, meaning businesses don't need to worry about embracing a hybrid or multi-cloud strategy. This level of simplicity makes SD-WAN an attractive proposition for businesses considering cloud migration and gives partners another opportunity to have a strategic business discussion with customers.

Furthermore, as partners continue



INSTEAD OF TALKING TO IT DEPARTMENTS ABOUT NEW NETWORK 'PRODUCTS', RESELLERS CAN NOW SPEAK TO BUSINESS LEADERS ABOUT WAN AND SECURITY TRANSFORMATION THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO DELIVER ON BROADER COMPANY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, AND GAIN TIME TO MARKET ADVANTAGES."

supporting customers in their adoption and evolution of WAN and security transformation, they will have the ability to establish profitable SD-WAN business practices that will fuel their own growth and profitability in a sustainable manner. To ensure resellers succeed throughout their SD-Wan journey, they should partner with a trusted provider that offers ongoing training and certification.

SD-WAN-ready Businesses

Of course, cloud transformation is a broad brush to target companies with but there are ways to narrow the focus. Businesses most ripe for SD-WAN will be those struggling to sustain high quality of experience for

end users or those with latency issues. Partners should listen for customers who are currently unable to deliver consistent application performance, or who are complaining about application availability, which has an inevitable impact on productivity and trade. These are all signals that SD-WAN would provide a viable solution.

It's also a good time for partners to re-engage with businesses that put major projects on hold due to COVID. Though many initiatives were accelerated during the pandemic, enabling SD-WAN to deliver almost instant agility and speed to help businesses sustain and improve operations, a large number were postponed or cancelled entirely. In those cases, companies now find themselves trailing behind their digitally savvy peers and losing competitive advantage. Partners should encourage conversations with customers to identify the need for increased efficiency, particularly for those still holding back on transformation projects.

Furthermore, as businesses continue their shift to the cloud, many are struggling with how to segment and secure cloud-destined application traffic. SD-WAN presents an opportunity to discuss both WAN and security transformation and how to help businesses to deliver edge to cloud network security. Addressing this issue also has significant business ramifications.

The Bright Side

The good thing about SD-WAN is that it's sector agnostic, so resellers have a vast target market and addressable market to serve. SD-WAN is driven by business needs and will benefit any geographically distributed business, which casts the net wide in a post-pandemic world. As organisations continue their journey down the road of digital transformation, the need for agility and speed at the Edge will only accelerate. With SD-WAN ripe for picking, partners should be able to maximise market opportunity and ensure their customers can achieve business goals in a digital-first world. 

CONNECTING PEOPLE

Loubna Imenchal, head of video collaboration for AMECA region (Africa, Middle East Turkey & Central Asia), Logitech on the growing importance of video collaboration and the immense potential of technology to bring people closer. A Reseller Exclusive.



WHILE ORGANISATIONS WILL NO DOUBT RETURN TO HAVING SOME FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS AND LIMITED BUSINESS TRIPS, VIDEO CONFERENCING WILL REMAIN A PILLAR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND HYBRID WORK.”

Tell us about the importance of video collaboration for organisations.

There is no doubt that organisations across all verticals have accelerated their digital transformation journey since COVID-19 hit. Hybrid models of operating have become the norm, and teams have been forced to work and collaborate in more innovative ways. As part of their broader transformation plans, and given the current scenario, organisations increasingly understand the value of video collaboration tools to keep teams connected and collaborate effectively — with each other, and with partners and clients.

In the current situation, with restrictions on people's movement having an impact on the ability of organisations to collaborate, video collaboration tools have an important role to play in helping organisations execute their plans effectively, and they can overcome these obstacles by investing in the right video

conferencing tools for their needs.

In the past 18 months, video conferencing went from being an optional solution to a 'must have' solution. As the trend continues to gather momentum, it becomes even more imperative for organisations not to be left behind.

Before the pandemic, executives travelled to physical meetings and used video conferencing only occasionally — usually for calls with colleagues or clients in another city or overseas. But now the situation has transformed, and video conferencing has become the primary means of holding meetings. Furthermore, organisations in the Middle East increasingly understand the importance of having the best possible quality audio and video to enhance their meetings and to make a good impression on partners and customers.

As the Middle East begins to emerge from the pandemic we expect to see demand remain strong. While organisations will no doubt return to having some face-to-face meetings and limited business trips, video

conferencing will remain a pillar of communications and hybrid work.

Organisations will also scrutinise the value of face-to-face meetings and business travel with more zeal than before, and management will be acutely aware that executives can take part in more video conferencing meetings than face-to-face meetings on a given day. The potential productivity gains and cost savings are enormous.

In terms of engendering a culture of collaboration, video conferencing tools are also an important tool for keeping your workforce active, engaged, and connected with their colleagues. This is important for people working remotely and can have an impact on an organisation's ability to retain talented staff.

What advice would you give to young women colleagues in the tech industry?

The technology industry has always been male-dominated, and while the gender balance is slowly improving, there remains a lot of work to be done. For many young women interested in a career in technology, this imbalance can be intimidating.

The advice I would like to give to young women is: follow your interests, have confidence in your abilities, and be persistent, because you have as much right to develop a career in technology as anybody else. Also, the sector needs you! Diversity is good for business and good for society, so you will be helping develop the sector and paving the way for more women to follow in your footsteps. There are also plenty of mentors who can help you on your journey and advise you on how to tackle any perceived barriers you encounter.





The rewards of pushing outside your comfort zone are always worth it.

What initially led you to work in the technology field, and what do you most like about it?

There are many things I like about working in the technology sector. One of the main aspects is working at the bleeding edge of innovation: It is inspiring work that fulfils a real need. Technology drives the way the world functions and the way people live. It is a must in the present and it creates the future.

Technology is a broad, diverse sector with countless opportunities to develop

and grow. This makes it the ultimate 'portable' career, meaning you can find a suitable, interesting role almost anywhere. From app development to computer forensics, cyber security to web design, the range of job roles and industries that fall under the technology umbrella is huge.

I've always believed that it is important to feel like you are making a positive difference to society through your career. Many technology roles help make the world a better place, either by improving people's lives, helping businesses to operate smarter, or boosting efficiency and saving energy.

Aside from this, it is also a pleasure to have a role where you see tangible results from your efforts. It is hugely satisfying to see a large, complex project reach completion, and see the difference it makes to the customer.

I particularly enjoy contributing across different sectors, especially the education sector, and providing this generation the option of mobility and flexibility to work and study from everywhere.

More specifically, in my current role as Head of Video collaboration for AMECA region (Africa, Middle East Turkey, and central Asia) at Logitech, I believe that connecting people through technology is a valuable mission. Along with my team I am helping to enhance peoples' relationships and give them the freedom to choose their way of working and studying.

Tell me about your education and career path to date.

I started my career with Alcatel North Africa while pursuing my MBA at Ecole

des Ponts Business School and later moved to FedEx as managing director for the MENA region, which gave me valuable insights and perspectives on multiple industries, and a strong understanding of the MENA region.

In 2008, I joined Honeywell as business unit director and had the chance to work closely with an excellent management team who proved to be great career mentors. In 2018, I joined Johnson Controls as VP of the EMEA region, before taking on my current role with Logitech, an organisation that is a true technology leader and has a great culture.

Who have been your strongest influences in life?

My mother influenced me greatly from a very young age: seeing her raise three children while gaining a college degree and running a family business taught me a lot about motivation and multitasking. She was an inspirational role model who always told me that I can achieve anything in life through persistence, ethics and responsibility.

What do you like to do when you are not working?

When I'm not working, I like to spend quality time with my family.

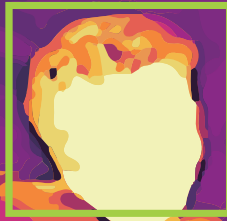
I am also conducting research for a book I intend to publish on the last three generations - Generation X, Millennials and Gen Z, their relationship with technology, and our journey to become a data-oriented society. I am fascinated by this topic and how technology is transforming our lives, society, and the way we perceive ourselves.

I also enjoy scuba diving — it is a great release to explore beneath the surface of the ocean. It's a different world and gives you a new perspective on life. 



IN TERMS OF ENGENDERING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION, VIDEO CONFERENCING TOOLS ARE ALSO IMPORTANT FOR KEEPING YOUR WORKFORCE ACTIVE, ENGAGED, AND CONNECTED WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES."

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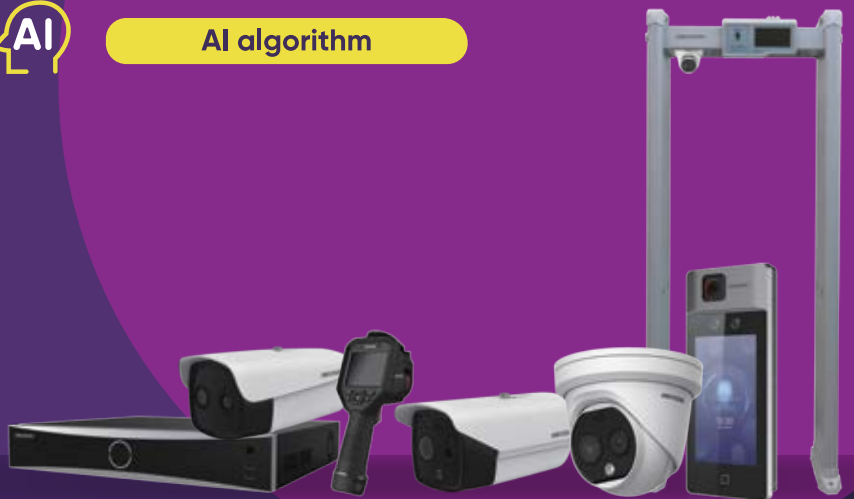
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LOOKING AHEAD

Sasrik Vallath, division manager, DME Prolink, tells Anita Joseph that the company plans to focus on enhancing customer experience and identifying new opportunities, going forward.

Halfway thru 2021, what are some of the key learnings? 2020 provided the world with new dimensions of work and a different level of expectation about B2B relationships. At DME Prolink, our roadmap has been to address a larger vertical of ethernet systems and our conviction in the value what we sell, and we have been able to position ourselves on multiple projects across different verticals. We opened a distribution channel that helps us reach out to more customers across the region. Our extensive solutions consist, among others, of a comprehensive 25-year warranty that offers enhanced customer acceptance across the region.

What is your outlook for the next two years? How are you planning to strengthen your channel partnership to tackle challenges? In 2020, we invested our time in identifying new horizons of passive infrastructure selling space across continuously changing market dynamics. Our efforts focused on recognizing gaps that will be created by the eviction/acquisition of several companies.

Today, business meetings have transformed to rooms demanding higher bandwidth usage. The new Wi-Fi 6 technology deploys an extended usage of physical infrastructure. Passive Optical Networks that bring 40G to the desk is the new normal. New technologies not only address the demand for higher bandwidth, but also help to significantly optimize CAPEX and OPEX. From the introduction of Control and AV Cables to the existing product line that included ethernet copper cables/connectivity, fiber cables/connectivity and the Cabinet range, we offer our channel partners an unparalleled extensive one-stop-shop solution.

With the support of our partners in Oman, Bahrain and Qatar, we have conveyed and provided support to some extremely significant projects. As the next step of our expansion, we look forward to offering our support in KSA and Africa as well.

How do you think you can make a difference going forward?

Over the years, we have focused on developing a strong support team to address concerns, especially for end-users. Not only do we

manufacture high-end products, but we also ensure that end-users are offered the fullest performance capacity throughout the entire lifetime of the product. We have also enhanced our post sale audit team so that they can be deployed on-site during installation and provide reports to end-users about compliance with industry best practices. We help design large scale IT infrastructure projects optimising cost, enhancing scalability and assuring a full-fledged robust system. Our training and enablement facility has won high praise and appreciation from consultants, end-users and partners.

With digital transformation gathering momentum, what are some of the challenges your company is facing, if at all, in this journey and how are you addressing it?

Seamless integration and scalability play a significant role in the acceptance of the technological advancement adapted by the company, mainly due to changes in work-life and health, extensive usage of virtual communication and innovative ideas of resource monitoring and performance enhancement. We



**NOT ONLY DO WE
MANUFACTURE HIGH-
END PRODUCTS, BUT WE
ALSO ENSURE THAT END-
USERS ARE OFFERED THE
FULLEST PERFORMANCE
CAPACITY THROUGHOUT
THE ENTIRE LIFETIME OF
THE PRODUCT.”**

support our customers with an open platform on digitisation initiatives, with an extensive range of copper, fiber, cabinets with management and monitoring solutions, offering high-end reliable connectivity to the new components of their digital strategy. By offering robust high bandwidth infrastructure, we facilitate unified transformation across business models and operational processes, with a significant positive impact on customer experience. 



TOO MANY NETWORKS AND APPLICATIONS CURRENTLY RUN ON AN “ASSUMED TRUST” SYSTEM, WHICH CAN BE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY HACKERS WITH DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES.

Danna Bethlehem, Thales

A QUESTION OF TRUST

Danna Bethlehem, director, Product Marketing, Access Management at Thales, tells Anita Joseph, editor, Reseller ME, why organisations should increasingly be looking at Zero-Trust as a holistic security approach that wants to save their enterprise.

With more than 10 years' experience in product leadership roles, Danna Bethlehem currently leads product marketing for Thales's authentication and access management solutions. Prior to joining Thales, Danna held product leadership positions in several startups ranging from financial services to security. While at Thales, Danna has contributed to the evolution of the company's IAM solutions, from MFA, through cloud-based authentication and identity-as-a-service giving her a broad perspective of the IAM market.

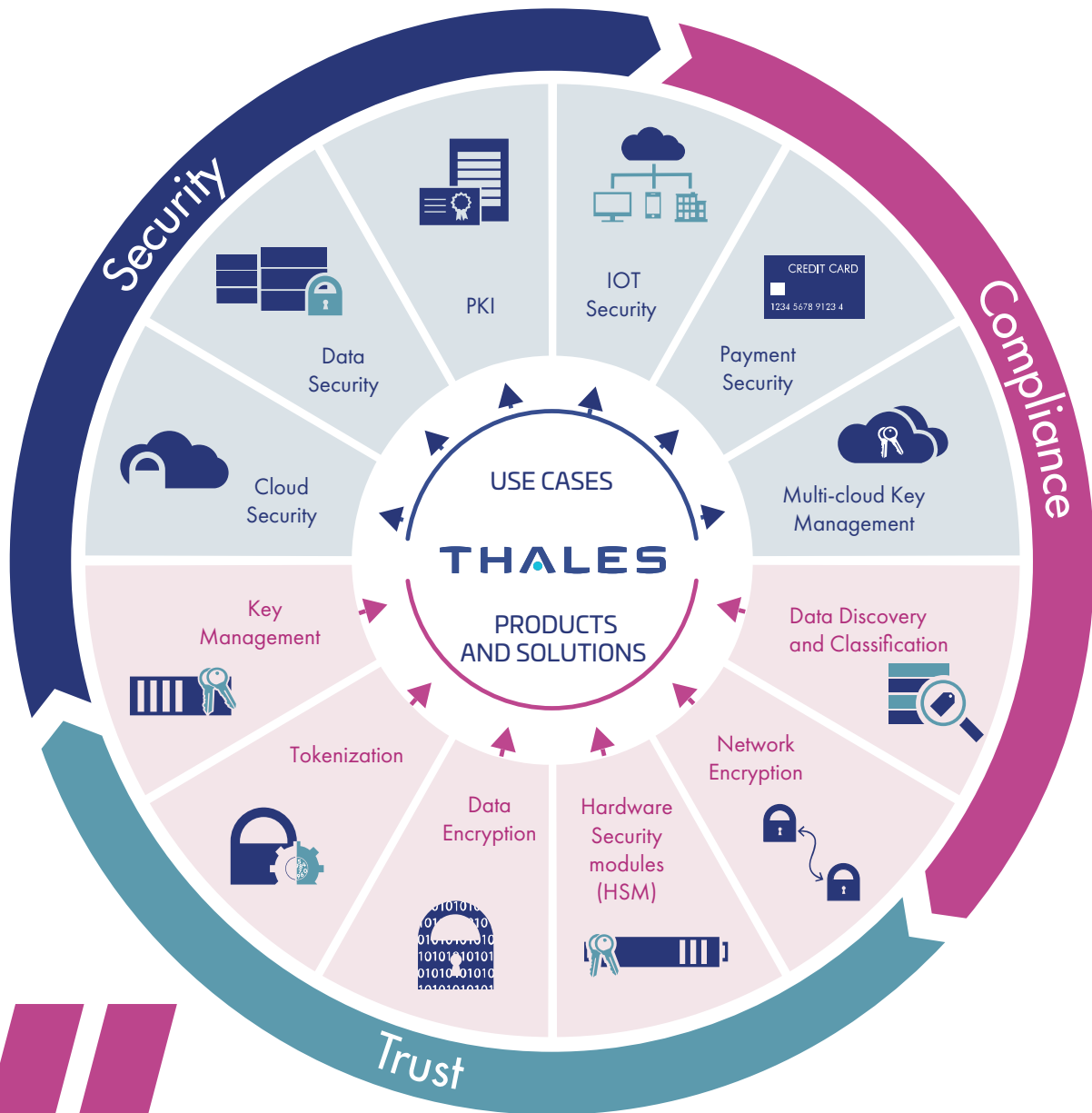
The rapid acceleration of digital transformation and remote working brought on by Covid-19, together with the proliferation of disruptive technologies, have made traditional boundaries of corporate networks disappear. Businesses no longer have sole control over a closed network, as the pandemic has shifted people from offices into dispersed environments.

As a result, organisations have had to increase their reliance on cloud platforms. Many are combining different methods across public, private, hybrid cloud, and on-premises solutions. This has made multicloud, in one form or another, an increasingly essential part of everyday operations for many businesses.

These rapidly changing and fragile ecosystems represent a real security challenge for businesses, as threat actors look to expose the vulnerabilities of distributed workforces operating in remote environments. Legacy security policies and practices based on trust have now been rendered obsolete. Organisations should increasingly be looking at adopting a Zero Trust approach to their security operations.

Nothing is trustworthy

Now more than ever, the ability to access data from any location and on any device is a top priority for enterprises. However, using a traditional castle-and-moat security concept, people are unidentifiable and trusted once inside corporate networks – with the power to access sensitive data. Too many networks



ZERO TRUST HELPS BUSINESSES TO MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF SECURITY REMOTELY, WITHOUT THE NEED FOR A PHYSICAL LOCATION TO AUTHENTICATE ACCESS.

and applications currently run on an “assumed trust” system, which can be taken advantage of by hackers with disastrous consequences.

A Zero Trust model is based on the tenet “Never Trust, Always Verify” and views trust as a vulnerability – any user or device looking to access confidential data cannot and should not be trusted by default. Zero Trust is not a specific technology, rather a strategic, initiative-based security system that requires strict and continuous identity verification

and control of data in the cloud to minimise trust zones.

With more companies now making the move to the cloud alongside the shift to homeworking, organisations are going to be exposed to new threats that go beyond their current or previous security strategies. Zero Trust helps businesses to maintain a high level of security remotely, without the need for a physical location to authenticate access. Allowing organisations to grow securely in the cloud and adapt to the



THERE IS NO 'SILVER-BULLET' WHEN IT COMES TO ACHIEVING A ZERO TRUST SECURITY MODEL. INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISES WILL NEED TO ADAPT THEIR STRATEGIES BASED ON THEIR SPECIFIC BUSINESSES NEEDS AND CONSTRAINTS.

remote and dispersed environments in which we now operate.

This precedent also goes beyond individual organisations; the impacts can be felt far wider. Recent high profile cyber-attacks, such as the Colonial Pipeline cyber-attack, have reaffirmed the lack of resilience to security threats many industries still face. This incident was a strong reminder of the potential benefits of Zero Trust in mitigating the effects of ransomware, as the entry point was a legacy VPN. With Zero Trust it might have been possible to stop the attackers navigating inside the network, whereas with a VPN once attackers are 'through the door' they're already in a very strong position.

Zero Trust, multiple barriers

Accomplishing the principle surrounding Zero Trust is not without its challenges. Businesses will have to evolve their previously established perimeter security policies into location-agnostic ones. A

significant challenge to achieving



Zero Trust is finding solutions that cover identities and data end-to-end. SafeNet Trusted Access, Thales's cloud-based access management and authentication service, is a strong starting point for effective Zero Trust security implementation. Enforcing access decisions dynamically at the application access point, irrespective of where the user resides and the device they are using.

Another core barrier businesses face when starting their Zero Trust journey, is the balance between locking down access without interrupting workflow. People require access to sensitive data in order to work and collaborate and businesses leaders will need to ensure that a drop in productivity doesn't become an unwanted side effect. To combat this, organisations need to by start identifying the most sensitive data and critical touchpoints. Those can be subjected to stricter access controls, such as multifactor authentication, without widespread disruption.

However, the biggest challenges for businesses is understanding that achieving Zero Trust is an ongoing journey that has multiple steps. Though there are some foundational technology capabilities that are a must, organisations tend to equate Zero Trust to implementing a single

capability. There is no 'silver-bullet' when it comes to achieving a Zero Trust security model. Individual enterprises will need to adapt their strategies based on their specific businesses needs and constraints. Choosing the appropriate strategies and technologies that match the specific needs of their business.

An ongoing collaboration

Businesses are navigating a volatile and complex world and adopting a Zero Trust model of cybersecurity will enable them to continue to conduct operations safely amidst the uncertainty. However, it must be understood that a Zero Trust model is only achieved through shared understanding and a collaborative approach at every level of business.

As home working will likely remain the dominant method for most business in the foreseeable future, the Zero Trust model must be established as a company mindset and not just a framework. This includes sparking conversation with employees about the purposes and benefits of this security concept and providing leadership support. Business leaders and decision makers must specifically outline priorities and set measurable goals related to the Zero Trust model, in order to achieve success. 

UNLOCKING VISIBILITY

Bachir Moussa, regional director MEAR, Nozomi Networks, speaks to Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller ME, about how the OT landscape is becoming increasingly converged and how Nozomi Networks is stepping in to empower customers unlock visibility across this connected architecture.

How are digitalisation and the Industrial Internet of Things redefining traditional enterprise OT systems?

Digitalisation and Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) are enabling transformation in two ways: first, it's changing the way organisations think about managing their operational networks. It's also changing the way systems are connected and deployed. If we look at the first part-the systems-we can see that IIoT & digitalisation are making them more efficient. It's making them more connected, and it's changing the way they have been deployed in the past where they used to be segregated and not connected to the outside world. This means that things can be done quicker and that an organisation can have an enterprise-wide strategy that includes OT, rather than just IT as it was in the past. This does open up the potential for security risks, however, that can always be managed.

From a thought process perspective or changing the mindset of how people have been working in this space, in the past they were focused on

keeping the lights on and keeping the system operating which is very, very important in the OT space. Today, they are now leveraging IIoT devices and converging OT and IT networks to keep the lights on with greater operational efficiencies and without any impact. OT leaders & OT teams are now operating and working with the rest of the organisation from a digitalisation perspective. It's changing the way they work and the way they collaborate.

With environments becoming more connected & converged, do you think companies are actually investing in advanced cybersecurity solutions, and if not, why?

The short answer is, yes, they are. If we look at this region, they've actually been investing a lot in this space. I regularly sit down with my friends in the cybersecurity industry and talk with them about this specific topic. I find that they are seeing that their business is growing, because this convergence is causing organisations to make sure they secure their environment. As a result, they have to invest in cybersecurity to ensure that they keep operating without any impact. Plus, we'll always keep going back to COVID-we'll always mention remote



AT NOZOMI NETWORKS, WE BELIEVE THAT VISIBILITY IS THE TRIGGER TO ALLOW YOU TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT AND RELEVANT CYBERSECURITY INITIATIVES IN YOUR ORGANISATION."

access-how people are working from home. Remote access is very important, but secure remote access is what keeps businesses running and operating.



How does Nozomi Networks, empower customers with solutions and tools to unlock visibility across their OT, IoT and IT architectures?

At Nozomi Networks, we believe that visibility is the trigger to allow you to provide the right and relevant cybersecurity initiatives in your organisation. Currently, one of the challenges we see in the space of OT visibility is that there is still a lot of

work being done manually and in a legacy way where environments and databases of solutions they have or their assets is all tracked manually, in Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. We empower the OT teams by giving them automated and real time visibility across the OT, IoT and IT architectures. We let them know everything that's happening in the network. And in a way, this visibility turns into an asset

management tool. This empowers them to make decisions more accurately and in real time because they're now up to date with what's happening. Plus, it allows them to take the burden away from doing things manually, into operating in a more efficient manner and allowing them to be part of the digitalisation program of the organization. So, we give them the power to make the right decisions while freeing up their time to be more digitalised and enabled.

How will SaaS impact OT security and will it change the way OT security and the way visibility is provided and managed?

The trend that we are seeing in the region is OT visibility and Security as a Service- organisations are reaching out to experts in this space to offer managed services solutions, and asking them to give them the security and visibility of OT-as-a-service. This is the first step, we are working with those managed service providers to enable them to provide the service to organisations. In addition, our Vantage SaaS offering is already available. So, there are two ways organisations can work with it. One, they can continue the trend that they're doing now, of reaching out to the experts, and the experts will work with us around our SaaS offering (Vantage) to help provide those offerings to the organisations, or two, if the organisation is ready on its own to manage its OT environment, they can connect directly to our SaaS Vantage offering and do all the management and deployment, and have global visibility from one location to everything that's happening in their space.

Finally, another important point about SaaS is that organisations are becoming interconnected, not just in one geographical region, but across the globe. SaaS is enabling that to happen, because you can have someone in the UAE managing their network in South America, for example, or someone in the US managing part of their network that's in Europe. So, SaaS breaks down geographical barriers and allows organisations to manage everything from any location, but at the same time, it has to be secure and meet all the other requirements that organisations have. 

SMART SOURCING: THE NEW DAWN OF PUBLIC SECTOR IT

In a Reseller exclusive, Tim Lovejoy, VP Government & Private Cloud at Rackspace Technology EMEA, discusses how the smart sourcing trend is emerging as a popular option for making organisations more agile in the management of their IT estates.



SMART SOURCING CAN PROVIDE A FRUITFUL MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN FULL OUTSOURCED AND IN-HOUSE DELIVERY OF IT SERVICES THAT MAXIMISES THE BENEFITS OF BOTH WORLDS TO CREATE A FUTURE-PROOFED TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT."

Public sector organisations have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic as they strive to serve citizens. In many ways their challenge has been attenuated by legacy technologies which have made the move to home working difficult. Most however have risen to the challenge, stretching budgets, skills and capacity.

Many have also embarked on digital projects and, in common with many other industries, this has accelerated the adoption of cloud architectures. In doing so, many have realised they need and want to govern their IT differently so that they consume services in the right way at the right time.

As a result, we are seeing a new trend of 'smart sourcing' emerging. Smart sourcing is being portrayed as a way of taking control, making organisations more agile and flexible in the management of their IT estates, and giving them the freedom to innovate rapidly as new technologies come online.

So, following the catalysing effect of the pandemic on a new era of public sector IT, what exactly is smart sourcing, and what steps do public sector organisations need to take to achieve it?

The current landscape

Outsourcing IT has been seen a popular solution by many industries. The opinion being that it would improve performance and reduce cost and risk as a result of having third parties manage operations.

However, many organisations have learned that, while outsourcing can bring them the required performance in the short-term, over the longer-term it's vitally important to retain key knowledge. To avoid a vicious cycle of reducing capability and a greater dependency on third-party providers.

As a result the trend is increasingly shifting to one of insourcing and smart sourcing. This empowers public sector organisations to take control of their technology by rebuilding in-house skills.

Yet despite the long drive behind the government's cloud-first strategy, there is still debate around the best way to harness cloud technology. A debate more challenging because no two organisations have the same estate and architecture as starting points. So as a crucial first step, each needs to understand the status quo and the desired destination, in terms of services and technology.



Tim Lovejoy

This shift has occurred alongside a significant drive to take up cloud services. While not all digital leaders in the public sector are convinced by the 'cloud-first' approach, most do recognise the intrinsic role cloud has in their plans. As a result, we're seeing many organisations now moving specific sets of data and applications into public and private cloud repositories. This trend has been accelerated by the pandemic, to the point where it is unlikely there is any organisation in the public sector that has not looked at, or isn't looking at, cloud and the best way to source its technology requirements.

Getting smarter with IT

The accelerated adoption of cloud, coupled with a growing appreciation of the need to bolster in-house IT expertise, is encouraging more public sector organisations to consider smart sourcing, as a more flexible approach that allows scope for procuring the 'best of breed' solutions.

Smart sourcing can provide a fruitful middle ground between full outsourced and in-house delivery of IT services that maximises the benefits of both worlds to create a future-proofed technology environment. It can also help organisations find the right blend of cloud platforms, hybrid and on- premise systems to create

a multi-cloud approach that meets their unique demands, while balancing investment in external and internal skills – paying for the former only when there is real value in doing so, and building up the latter to increase their control over the long-term.

With the flexibility and agility required in today's digital world, smart sourcing is a continuous process, not a one-off event. It is a "mindset" that empowers IT leaders to get the best combination of technology services and suppliers for their organisation as their needs evolve. It requires smart thinking to get the most from the plethora of cloud options available - treating multiple suppliers as a menu from which to find the right fit for their organisation.

Getting on the road to smart sourcing

One of the first steps to smart sourcing is to map the organisation's current services and technology architecture, including that in any existing outsourcing contract. This is the best way to track how it is performing, its effect on users and citizens, and begin to understand how it can be managed for optimum results. A thorough understanding of the organisation's information architecture is also key, along with assessment of the critical or commodity nature of each element. Inevitably, as elements change there are impacts on other parts of the whole – knowing exactly which components fit where is essential to making a good start.

Secondly, it is vital that public sector organisations ensure their skills and knowledge are retained and invest in education, especially because retaining a core internal team offers a degree of agility. In the main, smart sourcing is around out tasking and not out sourcing so knowledge is rarely impacted.

Choosing the right path for your organisation

Ultimately, while big changes in technology and business management can open up new opportunities, there is no one single approach that is likely to provide the best solution for all public sector organisations. As a result, many are now coming to realise the benefits of smart sourcing to get both the benefits of in-house and third-party skills, as well as maximise the benefits of the cloud services they leverage. 

UNLOCKING PERFORMANCE INTELLIGENCE

In an exclusive tête-à-tête with Anita Joseph, Kerry Grimes, head of global partners, AVEVA, discusses how the software leader's merger with OSIsoft has enabled industrial companies to accelerate digital transformation by leveraging the power of Performance Intelligence.

Tell us more about the merger with OSIsoft. What is AVEVA's positioning here?

We have recently completed the acquisition of OSIsoft with a focus on Performance Intelligence. Since then, we have been working diligently to connect the product sets and properly position our strategies together. We're also leveraging the PI System to unlock the power of Performance Intelligence for our customers.

AVEVA's core business revolves around both asset performance and operations lifecycles. The asset performance lifecycle goes horizontally across an organisation and focuses on the designing, building, operating, analysing as well as maintenance of plants. The operations lifecycle is all

about control and intersects the asset performance lifecycle, making it as a quadrant, if you had to picture it. Performance Intelligence is at the heart of that intersection.

This is because Performance Intelligence is all about the collection and use of plant information and applying that data for intelligence to understand better the performance of plant assets, their lifecycle and its related operations. This is an exciting value proposition for our customers.

The OSIsoft merger makes us the largest industrial automation software company out there. We're also the largest software company that's transacted in the UK. This has secured our place in the FTSE 100 as the top UK software company.

What was AVEVA's performance like before you closed the OSIsoft

acquisition and how has this move changed things?

Even before we had closed on the acquisition, AVEVA boasted a greater than 10% growth in the second half of our fiscal year as the world started coming out of the pandemic. We expect this year also to be one of high growth as businesses seek intelligent automated solutions to operate successfully in the digital-first landscape.

Collectively with PI System software, AVEVA is now \$1.6 billion in terms of overall revenues. And if we look at the current market cap of the company, it's hovering around \$11 billion or so – and we're doing really well in terms of company performance too.

What is the new direction for the company post the merger with OSIsoft and how will it affect the channel in particular?

We're going to be introducing Performance Intelligence to our channel partners. Until recently, our focus was to move our distributors beyond Wonderware where they had concentrated on, into becoming AVEVA Select, which made our entire portfolio available to them.

We're starting a pilot right now with different AVEVA Select partners to sell The PI System. So, we're working on bringing a salesperson from OSIsoft to connect with opportunities with our partners, so that we can jointly sell. This is an on-the-job training for partners, so they can learn about The PI System. We are also now selling this together as a positioning around Performance Intelligence because it adds to what we do at AVEVA. So, there's a number of different connection points.

Very soon after the close of our quarter, we will outline the six key areas that we're connecting into The PI System.



COLLECTIVELY WITH PI SYSTEM SOFTWARE, AVEVA IS NOW \$1.6. BILLION IN TERMS OF OVERALL REVENUES. AND IF WE LOOK AT THE CURRENT MARKET CAP OF THE COMPANY, IT'S HOVERING AROUND \$11 BILLION OR SO – AND WE'RE ALSO DOING REALLY WELL IN TERMS OF COMPANY PERFORMANCE.”

We're also working hard towards the next step of including The PI System as part of our enterprise bundle.

So, this way, we'll have an entire story from the Edge that we're really good at – in terms of capturing data and controlling plant equipment – to now taking the data that's stored at a site and bringing this up into the cloud using OSIsoft Cloud Services. This will all be part of what we're calling AVEVA Connect. This is our cloud strategy, and this is how we'll be integrating the OSIsoft narrative into our cloud story – which will all be a part of AVEVA Connect.

What about partner programs for distributors & system integrators – what can we look forward to?

We're working hard on improving our systems integrator program. We



have over 4,000 systems integrators around the world and so one of our immediate priorities is building a tighter connection directly with them.

Our systems integrator program has always been managed by our distributors. Now what we've elected to do, is to give our systems integrators access to our partner platform. This gives them direct access to AVEVA marketing material as well as demos and customer-use information, so that we're getting a direct connection with our SIs. We're going to be doing a lot more marketing directly to our SIs and guide them to be an additional demand generation engine, outside of the work we do with our distributors.

Having said that, there is no intent to have a direct commercial relationship with our SIs –that's going to be through our distributors. Our distribution network is really key to us in terms of how they support all our customers. One of the things people ask me is whether



WE'RE WORKING HARD ON IMPROVING OUR SYSTEMS INTEGRATOR PROGRAM. WE HAVE OVER 4,000 SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS AROUND THE WORLD, SO ONE OF OUR IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES IS BUILDING A TIGHTER CONNECTION DIRECTLY WITH THEM."

the focus on SIs is a precursor to taking distribution out – this is not in the cards at all. Our distribution network is very close to us and they do an exceptional job of supporting our customers.

Our objective is to shorten the time and the lifecycle of our connection to systems integrators, so that they can be driving more products for us. The aim is also to gain more mindshare with our systems integrators who work with so many other companies. As AVEVA software is agnostic, it's important to work with these SIs because then they can think of ways to integrate our solutions with other vendors' offerings to deliver stronger business outcomes for customers. While we already work with many industry automation participants, OSIsoft also had many OEM agreements. We're going to leverage those to expand our coverage directly with some of these industry automation players and work closely with them. 

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TACKLING A COMPLEX SECURITY LANDSCAPE

Mathivanan Venkatachalam, vice-president at ManageEngine, on the 2021 Digital Readiness Survey and the effect of remote working on the threat and security landscape.

In a post-pandemic world, are companies actually giving more priority to data protection than they did before?

Yes, organisations are giving more priority to data protection and cybersecurity now than they did before the pandemic. ManageEngine recently conducted a study, The 2021 Digital Readiness Survey, to understand the effects of remote work on organisations and found that 83% of respondents revealed that remote workers led to an increase in security risks. And 56% of the survey respondents said that they modified their security strategy to address these risks.

A majority of CISOs are now dealing with security issues because of

devices that are no longer bound by a perimeter. They are implementing infrastructure-level changes with respect to architecture, adopting new tools for extended detection and response (XDR), disaster recovery, employee device monitoring, and Zero Trust strategies. Organisations are also taking initiatives to train their employees on cybersecurity best practices.

What is the main security concern that companies have when it comes to implementing new technologies like AI?

Although AI-based security tools are great at identifying complex threats, they are not foolproof. Cybercriminals use adversarial machine learning

inputs to pollute security engines. This often results in actual attacks evading detection and causing a corporate data breach.

What can companies do to improve their cybersecurity infrastructure/posture?

With cyberattacks rapidly evolving in complexity, the level of security that was once sufficient is now inadequate. Evolving security tools like endpoint detection and response (EDR) and XDR are required to detect threats at the earliest and remediate them. Given the noticeable rise in ransomware attacks during the pandemic, organisations should implement disaster recovery tools to ensure sensitive corporate resources are backed up.



SECURITY TEAMS SHOULD IMPLEMENT A ZERO-TRUST NETWORK ACCESS MODEL TO ADDRESS PERIMETER-LESS SECURITY, THROUGH WHICH EMPLOYEES CAN ACCESS CORPORATE DATA ANYWHERE, FROM ANY DEVICE.

Security teams should implement a Zero-Trust network access model to address perimeter-less security, through which employees can access corporate data anywhere, from any device. Similar to trusting employees based on authentication and authorisation, devices and apps that access corporate data should be verified, and controlled access to resources needs to be provided contextually. If the trust score obtained based on the device's security posture is low, access to resources should be granted with the least privilege.

What are some of the latest cybersecurity trends and how is Manage Engine gearing up for this?
With devices no longer bound by a perimeter, we realised the need for a Zero Trust tool that grants users access based on the security score of their devices. We are currently building a tool to help organisations seamlessly integrate the Zero Trust security model into their ecosystems.

During the pandemic, organisations faced a surge in ransomware attacks, with some estimating an almost 500% increase. We are building our own EDR solution that will help organisations identify attacks that evade the preventive layers of security, and automatically respond to threats by removing or containing them.

In our study, 78% of organisations revealed that remote workers download software without obtaining approval from the IT department; this shadow IT mainly included mobile-specific applications (40%), online meeting tools (38%), and document sharing solutions (31%). It is likely that users have become more comfortable using these new tools to improve their productivity while working from home and might continue using these solutions even after the pandemic. With tools like ManageEngine Desktop Central and DataSecurity Plus, organisations can monitor and control the use of unapproved resources. 

PARTNERING FOR STRENGTH

Bejoy George, managing director – MediaSys & Hsueh-Li Wang, EMEA BDM, NCBU – GIGABYTE tell Reseller Middle East about their newly forged partnership and what it means for the region.

GIGABYTE is a frontrunner in the distribution of computer hardware, known for its innovation-centric approach. Can you tell our readers a little more about your presence here both in the UAE and across the Middle East region?

Bejoy George – MediaSys

Mediasys was formed in 2001 and has two decades of experience within the UAE and Middle East region, providing the world's leading integrated digital content creation tools & solutions to leading players in the broadcast, animation, graphics and architectural design industries. We also support several significant projects with academic institutions and government entities. We pride ourselves in providing total solutions and complete technical consultation & support services in HPC hardware and system integration.

Hsueh-Li Wang – GIGABYTE

GIGABYTE has been providing server hardware products to the UAE market mainly via distributors who are based outside the region. The end customers are spread across industrial

segments such as oil & gas, education, government, AIoT, FSI, FMCG and many others. As of now, GIGABYTE does not have any physical presence in the region and it is planning to expand into the UAE and the KSA with local staff and demo experience centres. For other parts of the Middle East region, GIGABYTE is actively seeking competent channel partners who are willing to benefit from exclusive/preferential business conditions in exchange for developing a market strategy. The business potential is yet to be leveraged by GIGABYTE.

GIGABYTE Technology recently entered into a new partnership agreement with solutions provider & distributor Mediasys. What are the primary objectives of the collaboration?

Bejoy George – MediaSys

We are pleased to enter this new and exciting collaboration agreement with GIGABYTE, especially with the massive growth of AI and the demand for HPC booming in this region. We believe in focusing our strengths and extensive expertise towards the common goal of enhancing customer experience and satisfying the growing demand. This partnership will bring premium sales experience, unique compute solutions, and reliable customer service. We also

believe this alliance will lead to key business opportunities and growth for both Gigabyte and Mediasys. GIGABYTE servers are among the best, giving a comprehensive solution in the HPC and AI market and our team is looking forward to some valuable future projects in the region.

Hsueh-Li Wang – GIGABYTE

We are seeing fast growth in the region within the HPC, AI, Virtualization and AIoT business domains, and the key to gaining market share for us is a combination of quick response to projects, total solution proposal and deep understanding in end-use cases via local presence. For this reason, we need a local partner who not only has solid integration experience in server hardware and knows end use cases well, but also has established trusted relations with project decision makers. Most importantly, we want to provide top-tier pre- and after-sales experience to the region's customers, and this is where MediaSys comes into play. MediaSys will be a reliable partner who can respond to stringent service level agreement conditions (e.g., next-business-day, 24/7 response, 4-hour critical service, etc.), provide proof-of-concept hardware tests in their test lab, and promote GIGABYTE total solutions

in collaboration with third party hardware and software vendors.

There has been exponential growth across the region in high-performance computing and AI infrastructure. How are GIGABYTE Technology/Mediasys leveraging their expertise to help customers and partners manage this shift to make better-informed business decisions?

Bejoy George – MediaSys

With our established position in the regional market and wide recognition from customers across various industries for technical consultancy and reliable service and support, we are now partnering with GIGABYTE to bring added value to the region through unique HPC, AI and Virtualisation compute solutions. In order to respond to the rapid growth in demand and development of HPC and AI infrastructure in the region, this partnership will make sure that customers will always receive expert knowledge and information in order to make well-informed purchase decisions.

Hsueh-Li Wang – GIGABYTE

HPC compute technologies are constantly evolving and becoming ever more complex, both at the hardware and software levels. This is mainly due to the nature of changing end-use cases, enormous amounts of data involved, and third-party optimisation tools. Customers often find themselves facing confusing choices when it comes to the best solutions, sometimes without any guidance from solution providers or with little expert advice, as this knowledge is split over multiple topics. The partnership between GIGABYTE and MediaSys aims to fill this gap in the customers' decision-making process: we hope to not only present product specifications, but also fully offer our joint know-how by understanding each use case and the business case behind it. Such approach requires experience in matching the total solution with the customers' workflow and infrastructure, which could be a time-consuming process and even frustrating to customers. To deliver such approach, GIGABYTE's decades of experience in hardware design and MediaSys's

extensive expertise in software applications will be offered to customers to help them make informed decisions.

Can you tell us more about the Mediasys HPC Test Lab – and also what role GIGABYTE Technology/Mediasys is going to play in terms of helping to provide customers with access to state-of-the-art technologies and proof-of-concept testing?

Bejoy George – MediaSys

With timely access to the latest GIGABYTE HPC compute servers and workstations as the lab's building blocks, we aim to support the region's customers with guidance, expertise and the best possible experience



THIS PARTNERSHIP WILL BRING PREMIUM SALES EXPERIENCE, UNIQUE COMPUTE SOLUTIONS, AND RELIABLE CUSTOMER SERVICE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THIS ALLIANCE WILL LEAD TO KEY BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND GROWTH FOR BOTH GIGABYTE AND MEDIASYS.”

to make well-informed purchase decisions. The HPC Test Lab will allow us to provide our customers with consultation services, configuration of lab equipment for case specific end uses, and guidance through a solution validation process. Additionally, we would like our lab to be equipped with a wide range of server models that can address various use cases over time. Our primary commitment is to assist our customers and ultimately help them do what they do best.

Hsueh-Li Wang – GIGABYTE
GIGABYTE will provide MediaSys

with preferential commercial conditions and timely access to the latest HPC compute technologies, including the latest state-of-the-art NVIDIA GPU, in exchange for MediaSys's effort in bringing their HPC Test Lab to the forefront of the region's market and making the lab experience an essential part of the customers' decision making. The lab shall be equipped with HPC servers, workstations, and edge servers based on CPU and GPGPU compute specifications. MediaSys will be able to offer either remote access to the lab hardware, or provide test hardware delivered at the customer site, if necessary. Some of GIGABYTE's future exclusive solutions and NVIDIA's latest GPU solutions shall also be showcased in MediaSys's HPC Test Lab. NVIDIA GPUs, like the NVIDIA A100 Tensor Core GPU delivers unprecedented acceleration at every scale to power the world's highest-performing elastic data centers for AI, data analytics, and HPC. Powered by the NVIDIA Ampere Architecture, A100 is the engine of the NVIDIA data center platform. A100 provides up to 20X higher performance over the prior generation and can be partitioned into seven GPU instances to dynamically adjust to shifting demands. Available in 40GB and 80GB memory versions, A100 80GB debuts the world's fastest memory bandwidth at over 2 terabytes per second (TB/s) to run the largest models and datasets.

What are your key customer segments or industry verticals?

Bejoy George – MediaSys

Our key customer segments and industries include media & entertainment, architecture, gaming, research & education, telecommunication, oil & gas and government.

Hsueh-Li Wang – GIGABYTE

Our key customer segments and industries include higher education and research, financial service institutions, government, oil & gas, transportation & public infrastructure, manufacturing & engineering, biomedical sciences, media & entertainment, cloud service providers, telecommunication, and gaming. 

SCHNEIDER ELECTRIC PROMOTES MICHEL ARRES AS VP OF IT CHANNEL & ALLIANCES FOR SECURE POWER DIVISION

Michel Arres, who was the former VP of Secure Power Division for DACH at Schneider Electric, is now responsible for driving business effectiveness and growth, while creating strategic relationships and improving customer satisfaction across international markets.



Michel Arres

Schneider Electric, leaders in digital transformation in the areas of energy management and automation, has promoted Michel Arres to take on the role of Vice President, IT Channel and Alliances, International under its Secure Power Division. The International zone covers seven regions including South America, Middle East & Africa, CIS, India, East Asia, Japan, and Pacific. Arres has over 28 years' experience in the channel space and has held leadership roles, providing vision and direction to the channel team which consists of distribution, alliance partners, marketing, and strategy.

"Michel is no stranger to the Secure

Power Division, working successfully with the company for nearly three decades. He is ready to embark on this new journey and has shown his capabilities successfully leading DACH region for Secure Power Division in Europe. I certainly look forward to working with him in delivering innovative and transformational solutions across industries. I am confident that he will play a pivotal role in shaping the company's channel and growth strategies," said Natalya Makarochkina, senior vice-president, Secure Power International Operations.

Michel Arres, who was the former Vice President of Secure Power Division for DACH at Schneider Electric, is now responsible for driving business effectiveness and growth, while creating strategic relationships and improving customer satisfaction across international markets.

"It is truly an

honour to assume this role and I'm excited to work with the team, our partners and customers to drive digital transformations. I hope to continue the great work across our international markets with focus placed on collaboration and innovation as well as a partner-first approach as we move forward. Through vendor-agnostic and data-driven digital solutions, I strongly believe partners can increase profitability and be equipped with further support across offers for new and expanding markets while also adding value to their customers,"

Arres said.

"We will also continue to move towards a sustainable future for the planet and ensuring life is on in an all electric, all digital world. My goal is to drive the power of digitisation in energy management through strong alliances that will lead to profitable growth revenue for the company," he added. 



I STRONGLY BELIEVE PARTNERS CAN INCREASE PROFITABILITY AND BE EQUIPPED WITH FURTHER SUPPORT ACROSS OFFERS FOR NEW AND EXPANDING MARKETS WHILE ALSO ADDING VALUE TO THEIR CUSTOMERS."

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LOGITECH EXPANDS VIDEO COLLABORATION PORTFOLIO

Tap IP and Tap Scheduler have been designed to help make scheduling and joining video meetings remarkably easy, as many hybrid workers return to office.

Logitech has expanded its video collaboration portfolio with Tap IP, a network-based meeting room controller and Tap Scheduler, a purpose-built meeting scheduling panel for any meeting space. Fully integrated with leading collaboration platforms and connected by a single Power over Ethernet (PoE) cable for clean, simple installation, Tap IP and Tap Scheduler were created to help make scheduling and joining video meetings remarkably easy as many hybrid workers return to the office.

“The current touch controller market has a Goldilocks problem: a high end that’s complex, expensive, and largely proprietary; and a lower end dominated by consumer tablets that were not designed with enterprise requirements like remote device management, security, and cable management,” said Scott Wharton, general manager and vice president, Logitech Video Collaboration. “Tap IP and Tap Controller were designed from the ground up to provide secure, enterprise-grade performance; elegant design including sleek cable retention; and compatibility with the major market service players -all at an affordable price.”

Meetings start with just one touch with Logitech Tap IP, a touch controller for Microsoft Teams Rooms on Android, Zoom Rooms, and other popular video conferencing services that - together with a Logitech conference cam - deliver a reliable, consistent experience from room to room. Logitech Tap IP delivers the same one-touch meeting join functionality as Logitech Tap, at a lower cost and easier installation via IP-based connection to the network. With clean and secure cable management plus flexible mounting options, Tap IP can be smoothly and securely installed virtually anywhere in the meeting room. Featuring a sleek, intuitive design, Tap IP has just the right presence in the room, so teams can focus on collaboration.

Making it simple to find and claim the right meeting space in the office, Tap Scheduler’s spacious 10.1-inch touchscreen allows for easy reading of meeting information, and its built-in lighting system signals room availability from a distance. Placed just outside the meeting room, participants can use Tap Scheduler to quickly claim rooms for ad hoc meetings or book them in advance. It is compatible with Teams,

Zoom Rooms, Robin, and Meetio, a cloud-based meeting room management company recently acquired by Logitech. Designed for deployment at scale, Tap Scheduler is easy to install for virtually any collaboration space, with included mounts to help secure the panel to various surfaces, and cable management for a professional and tidy setup.

In a move that extends Logitech’s video collaboration ecosystem into a complete solution of hardware, software, and services, Logitech now also offers customers a comprehensive, all-in-one service plan for Logitech video collaboration solutions, Logitech Select. Designed to help IT professionals maximise uptime of their video solutions, Select offers 24/7 solution support, next-business-day Advanced RMA and exclusive Insights and



MEETINGS START WITH JUST ONE TOUCH WITH LOGITECH TAP IP, A TOUCH CONTROLLER FOR MICROSOFT TEAMS ROOMS ON ANDROID, ZOOM ROOMS, AND OTHER POPULAR VIDEO CONFERENCING SERVICES THAT - TOGETHER WITH A LOGITECH CONFERENCE CAM - DELIVER A RELIABLE, CONSISTENT EXPERIENCE FROM ROOM TO ROOM.

Alerts functionality in Logitech Sync, Logitech's video conferencing device management platform. Customers with 50 or more rooms covered by Select also enjoy the benefits of onsite spares and a dedicated Customer Success Manager.

Pricing and Availability

Logitech Tap IP and Tap Scheduler are available Fall 2021 globally, each with an MSRP of \$699. Tap IP will be compatible with Microsoft Teams Rooms on Android, Zoom Rooms Appliances, PC-based Zoom Rooms, and RingCentral Rooms. Tap Scheduler can be installed as a Teams panel, Zoom Rooms Scheduling display, Robin-powered scheduling panel, or with Meetio. Compatibility with additional partners will be available for both devices after launch.

About Logitech

Logitech designs products that have an everyday place in people's lives, connecting them to the digital experiences they care about. Almost 40 years ago, Logitech started connecting people through computers, and now it's a multi-brand company designing products that bring people together through music, gaming, video, and computing. Logitech's video collaboration goal is to make video meetings accessible to every business and every individual, without sacrificing quality. We want to video-enable every meeting room, every workspace, and every home. Find Logitech and more on its video collaboration products at www.logitech.com/vc, the company blog or @LogitechVC. 



NIGINA

BENDER

HEAD OF MIDDLE EAST ENTERPRISE, JABRA



YOUR IDEAL MORNING ROUTINE

There's no life before coffee, they say. Whether it's coffee/tea, a good night's sleep, a good breakfast, or dropping my twins off at the kindergarten and having a bit of exercise-all of it gets me going, before I start the computer. Nevertheless, as a working mom with three small kids, this ideal morning is sometimes difficult to achieve.



A RECENT ACHIEVEMENT YOU'RE PROUD OF

Professionally, contributing to regional growth despite organisational changes and the pandemic happening at the same time, which required me to stretch myself and cover two roles at the same time. Personally, overcoming my fear of deep waters.



FIVE THINGS YOU CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT

Most importantly, my family. However, my most handy tools I use every day are my Jabra Evolve2 85 headset for the office, my Jabra PanaCast 20 camera, my Jabra Noise Guide (sharing home office with my husband) and my mobile.



THE MOST UNDERRATED TECHNOLOGY TREND IN YOUR OPINION IS

The use of professional headsets and video cameras for conferencing, which are essential tools in modern day office work. Think about intelligent noise cancelling and noise management, AI supported. For example, our professional headsets optimised for office use, which help with better enhanced customer experience while making audio and video calls by integrating with video conferencing tools like MS Teams, allowing the headset to mute/unmute etc. Or, everyone using webcams for both private and professional purposes, while their evolution and development goes unnoticed. It's just there and used.



FIVE GOALS YOU THINK ARE WORTH PURSUING IN THE POST-COVID SCENARIO

- Set strategies and create protocols for:
1. travel vs. meeting virtually
 2. working from home vs. working from office
 3. online vs. offline processes
 4. digital vs. traditional sales
 5. marketing and events
 6. remote vs. onsite leadership.

A NEW WAY TO EVALUATE HCI MARKET SHARE

Tonya Chin, SVP corporate marketing and IR & chief communications officer at Nutanix, on IDC's Software-Defined Storage Controller Software Market Share.



Tonya Chin

The hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) market has been on a fast journey over the past few years. Starting as a hardware-centric market focused on the simplicity of procuring datacenter hardware and software in one fell swoop, it quickly shifted as software-centric technology vendors and customers alike realised the biggest value—and innovation—was in the software. This is probably not surprising to those closely following the HCI market now but then it was a big change in the IT industry, as it evolved to embrace software-defined offerings.

This shift also came with challenges, particularly that of evaluating market share. At the beginning of 2020, I shared my thoughts on the effectiveness of IDC's Converged Infrastructure Tracker, calling for a re-evaluation of their methodology to separately focus on software sales, without accounting for hardware. We knew these numbers would tell a very different story, and

were eager to share this with the market at large.

I'm ecstatic to share that IDC just released their Software-Defined Storage Controller Software Market Share, which encompasses the HCI software market along with software for block, file, and object offerings. Here, as I have long asserted, Nutanix is clearly the market leader with 25% of the market, well ahead of the nearest competitor at 15%.

This has been the result of extensive work from IDC to completely reevaluate a quickly evolving market. One that required rethinking the status quo to keep up with the pace of technology innovation and sales. We're deeply grateful to IDC for realising that there was a gaping hole in the market when it came to HCI software, and bringing this project to completion while giving Nutanix the credit that we long knew it was due.

What is Software-Defined Storage Controller Software?

According to IDC, the Software-Defined Storage Controller Software market

is part of a new market share report by IDC focused on Software-Defined Infrastructure (SDI). From IDC:

"SDI refers to logically pooled resources of compute, memory, storage, and networking, which are managed by software with minimal human intervention. SDI systems are independent of the underlying hardware, as long as the hardware meets certain technical specifications. The underlying hardware in SDI systems are industry-standard, commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products that have enterprise-grade certifications."

IDC divides the SDI market in three areas: software-defined compute software, software-defined networking software, and software-defined storage controller software (SDSCS). The last one, SDSCS, includes and combines block, file, object, and hyperconverged software offerings that enable the creation of a storage system.

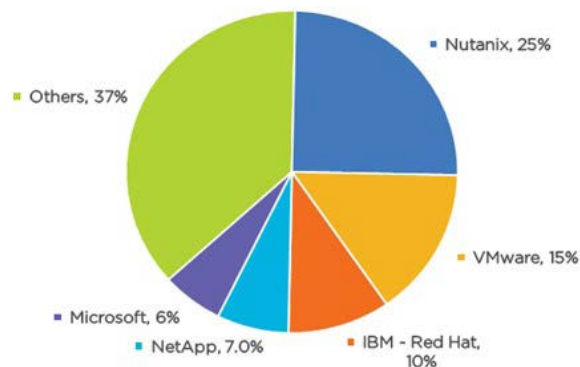
Here, IDC shares:

"SDS-CS is the core software that virtualises and pools the storage resources across different servers that comprise the SDS. SDS-CS provides for data persistence, a set of data services (snapshots, replication, etc.), and a method of data organisation (block, file, and/or object) along with one or more defined access methods (block, file, and/or object). Another way to describe an SDS system is that it has modular building blocks, uses industry-standard hardware platforms, and typically employs distributed, scale-out architecture."

While this is a broader view than just HCI, HCI software represents the vast majority of the market included in this new view. This is also the cleanest view of the HCI software market. The only public one that allows the industry to compare the largest HCI software vendors without estimated hardware sales impacting, and in fact determining, market leadership calculations.

For now, I want to thank IDC for all their work, and share a heartfelt congratulations to the Nutanix team, our customers and partners for all the hard work that led to this significant recognition. 

2020 Software-Defined Storage Controller Software



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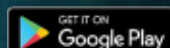


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