INSIDE Channel opportunities in cybersecurity

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Enterprise CHANNELS MEA

ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS ADVISORY FOR CHANNEL PARTNERS

PAGES 48
VOLUME 12 | ISSUE 11
JULY 2024
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TUNING INTO THE FUTURE

Mindware taps the nexus of AI, cloud, and cybersecurity for growth.

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New realms of growth

The cybersecurity market in the Middle East was worth around $14.8 billion last year. Research data from Markets and Markets suggests it will balloon to around $23.4 billion by 2028. The increasing frequency of cyber-attacks in the region has made it imperative for businesses to invest in advanced protection platforms and security technologies such as cloud security, XDR, and IAM. This is emerging as a lucrative market for channel partners who can play a vital role in bolstering the cyber resilience of their customers. Over 90% of security spending will go through the partner community, which needs to play the role of trusted advisors. The cybersecurity vendor landscape is highly fragmented, and businesses are looking to consolidate the number of vendors they work with. Given the shortage of skills and budget constraints, especially in the SMB space, there is an increasing demand for managed services around 24/7 monitoring and incident response. Don't let these opportunities go begging if you are a channel player.

In this edition's cover story, we feature Mindware, highlighting how some forward-thinking VADs in the region are adapting to the evolving tech landscape. Mindware has strategically organized itself around various solutions, including AI, cloud, security, and infrastructure, to stay at the forefront of technological innovation. We hope you this story inspires you.

On a different note, the rising tide of AI is sweeping across all industries. This is driving a surge in demand for AI-driven solutions, from infrastructure to PCs. According to Canalys, the potential AI-powered business opportunities for channel partners are projected to reach $158.6 billion by 2028. Channel partners – be it VARs, SIs or distributors- have a prime opportunity to add AI capabilities to their portfolio and offer customised solutions to their customers. As AI continues to evolve, early adopters in the channel will be strategically positioned for success in the coming years.

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PRINTED BY
Al Ghurair Printing & Publishing LLC.
Masafi Compound, Satwa, P.O.Box: 5613, Dubai, UAE

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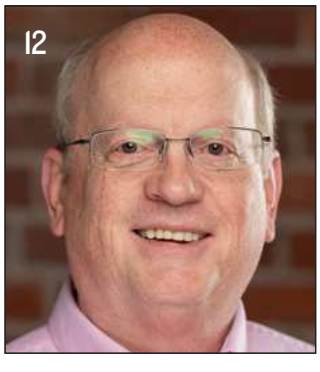

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Innovative minds unite at The World CIO 200 - Egypt Edition

The prestigious World CIO 200 – Egypt Edition, part of the globally renowned series celebrating the top 200 CIOs, concluded successfully in Egypt. Organized by the GEC Media Group, the event brought together leading technology professionals, innovators, and thought leaders to discuss and explore the latest advancements and challenges in digital transformation and global innovation.

The event began with an inspiring Welcome Keynote by Anushree Dixit, Global Head of GEC Media Group. Dixit emphasized the critical role of technology leaders in shaping the future of digital transformation and innovation.

Following the welcome address, Dr. Mohamed Hamed, Chief Technology Officer & Chief Information Officer at Platino Group (elSallab Ltd), delivered the Country Inaugural Keynote Dr. Hamed provided valuable insights into the evolving technology landscape in Egypt and the strategic initiatives essential for driving digital growth.

The morning session featured a thought-provoking panel discussion titled "Unleash the Might: Creating a Unified Vision." Moderated by Mona Ali, Data Analytics and Insights Manager at AXA, the panel focused on the importance of aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision for transformation. The panel included prominent industry leaders:

- Dr. Mohamed Elfwakhry | IT Director, IT Director
- Essam Elsayed Ahmed, IT Director (CIO), Sinai Cement (Vicat member)
- Khalid El Ghazouli, Sr. Digital Transformation and IT Manager, Sky Logistics and Sky Ports
- Germin Abouel Atta, Chief Information Officer, The British University in Egypt
- Eng. Mahmoud Hosny, Head of Information Technology, Hassad for Agriculture

This discussion emphasized the need for collaborative efforts in achieving unified goals within diverse organizational structures.

The Vendor Keynote provided attendees with innovative solutions and strategies to tackle current technological challenges. This was followed by the second panel discussion, "Globalization and Digital Transformation," moderated by Mona Lisa Singh, Senior Information Technology Manager. The esteemed panellists included:

- Eng. Sherif Gad, CTO, Masary
- Eng. Adel AbdelNour, General Manager IT CIO Digital Transformation and Smart Cities, Ministry of Housing
- Eng. Maged Ezzat, Head of IT Operations, Emaar Misr

The panel explored the intersection of globalization and digital transformation, highlighting key strategies to navigate and leverage these trends for organizational growth.

After another Vendor Keynote the final session, "Collaborative Innovation," was moderated by Dr. Mohamed Hamed. The panel featured distinguished academics and industry experts:

- Prof. Ghada Amer, Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Misr University for Science and Technology
- Prof. Mona Nasr, Dean of Thebes Higher Institute of Computer & Management Sciences, Thebes Academy
- Dr. Lobna Al Komy, Datacenter Operation Manager, Khwarizm Consulting
- Mona Murad, Head of Instructional Technology, Futures Language School

This session emphasized the critical role of collaborative efforts in driving innovation across various sectors.

The World CIO 200 – Egypt Edition was a resounding success, offering a dynamic platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among Egypt's leading IT professionals. The GEC Media Group looks forward to continuing this momentum and further contributing to the global CIO community through future editions of the World CIO 200.

The World CIO 200 KSA edition - A visionary triumph

The World CIO 200 Summit KSA edition concluded with remarkable success, gathering some of the industry's most influential leaders and experts for a day of insightful discussions and networking.

The event began with a welcome keynote by Jeevan Thankappan, Managing Editor of GEC Media Group, followed by the Country Inaugural Keynote delivered by Eng. Mohammed Mahnashi, Founding Board Member of CaaS. These opening addresses set the tone for a day focused on innovation, leadership, and transformative digital strategies.

Anas Haj Kasem, Director of Growth Advisory in ICT Practice at Frost & Sullivan, presented on "Innovate to Elevate: Transformative Digital Strategies for the Next-Gen CIO," highlighting the importance of innovation in the digital age. Ali El Kontar, CEO of Zero&One, followed with an inspiring talk on "The Three Commitments of Exceptional Leaders."

A notable panel discussion moderated by Adnan Rafique Ahmed, Business Continuity Lead at Maaden, focused on creating a unified vision and the importance of aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision for transformation. The panel featured Eng. Abdulaziz AlOraij, CTO at KABI, Hatem Fatallah, Risk Management Manager at a leading investment organization, and Dr. Ahmed Balkhair, Co-Chair and Advisory Board Lead at ZIMAM.

The event also featured a Vendor Keynote by Salah Aldin Farhan, Territory Sales Manager at BARCO, and a panel discussion on "Gen AI – Use Cases, Infrastructure Readiness, and Adaptability" moderated by Ayub Aldakael, Director of Risk & Compliance Management in the Government Sector. Panelists included Dr. Mustafa Qurban, IT Consultant at King Fahd Military Medical Complex, Awais Ahmad, IT & PMO Director at e& enterprise, Nezar Alturki, CIO at the Ministry of National Guards in Saudi Arabia, and Ayman AlJabrti, Sr. Account Manager at EBTTIKAR.

Post-lunch sessions included Mark Kelly, Business Development Manager at Resecurity, discussing modern intelligence to eliminate threats, followed by Imran Abdulla, GM of Middle East and Africa at Orbus Software, who spoke about accelerating enterprise transformation with practical AI.

The event concluded with a series of success stories presented by a CIO panel moderated by Shejab El Najjar, Chief Operations Officer at CODE IT. The panel included Hazem Jarrar, CTO at King Faisal Foundation, Dr. Sulaiman Alturki, CEO of Jawraa, Wissam Al Adany, Group CIO at ADES Holding, and Asim Badhuralam Syed, IT Director at Sanabel Al Salam Food Manufacturing Company. Abdul Rehman, Regional Sales Director at SolarWinds, wrapped up the event with a presentation on AIOps.

Kuwait edition of The World CIO 200 Summit spotlights tech innovation

The World CIO 200 Summit's Kuwait edition concluded successfully today. It brought together the country's top IT leaders for a day filled with insightful discussions, innovative ideas, and a shared vision for the future of technology. The event showcased the dynamic and rapidly evolving landscape of information technology in Kuwait and beyond.

The Country Inaugural Keynote was delivered by Yousef Elkordi, Group Head of Information Technology at City Group Co. KSCP. Yousef's keynote highlighted the transformative power of technology and the critical role CIOs play in driving innovation within their organizations.

A key session of the event was "Unleash the Might: Creating a Unified Vision and Stressing the Importance of Aligning Diverse Stakeholders Around a Shared Vision for Transformation," moderated by Husain A ALNakkas, Director of Information Technology at the National Assembly of Kuwait. The panel featured prominent industry leaders, including Omer Yildirim, Chief Technology Officer at UPayments; Walid Laamarti Bousmaha, Chief Technology Innovation Officer at Hadi Hospital; and Abdullah Adhami, CIO at American Technology Consultant Company LLC. The discussion focused on the challenges and strategies for aligning various stakeholders to achieve a unified vision for technological transformation.

Another panel discussion on "Agility and Adaptability: How CIOs are Enabling Organizations to Pivot and Innovate Rapidly to Stay Ahead of the Curve," followed this. This session was moderated by Yousef Elkourdi and featured Yedhu Vijayan, Regional Manager IT at Gastronomica; Imran Anwar, IT Manager at Alghanim Healthcare; Syed Amjad Ali, IT Manager at Hassans Optician Co; Mohammad Akram, IT Manager at Al Salam Hospital Co; and Aneej Thomas, IT Manager at Al Jazeera Real Estate Development Company. The discussion highlighted how agility and adaptability are crucial for organizations to remain competitive in a fast-paced digital world.

The World CIO 200 – Kuwait edition provided an invaluable platform for IT professionals to network, share insights, and explore the latest trends and technologies shaping the future. The event underscored the importance of innovation, collaboration, and strategic vision in navigating the complexities of the digital age.

As we wrap up this inspiring edition, we extend our heartfelt thanks to all the speakers, participants, and sponsors for their contributions and support. We look forward to continuing this journey of innovation and excellence in the upcoming editions of The World CIO 200 Summit.

Transformational insights and innovation at The World CIO 200 – Oman Edition

The World CIO 200 – Oman Edition, an integral part of the global series recognizing and celebrating the top 200 CIOs across the world, successfully concluded its event in Oman. Hosted by the GEC Media Group, the event gathered top technology leaders, experts, and visionaries from various industries to discuss and explore the latest trends and challenges in digital transformation and innovation.

The event commenced with registrations followed by a warm welcome note delivered by Diana Fonseca, Project Specialist at GEC Media Group.

The Country Inaugural Keynote was delivered by Abdullah Al Barwani, CISO of Omantel. Al Barwani shared his expert insights on the current cybersecurity landscape and the strategies essential for safeguarding organizational assets in an increasingly digital world.

The highlight of the morning was the panel discussion titled "Unleash the Might: Creating a Unified Vision," moderated by Amjid Ali, CIO of Al Ansari Group. The session stressed the importance of aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision for transformation. Esteemed panellists included Bhupendra Pant, CIO & General Manager IT at Oman Trading, Maher Sulaiman Almaskari, Head of Operational Technology at Khimji Ramdas Group, Hussain Al Awati, Head of IT Change & Innovation at National Bank of Oman (NBO), Laila Al Hadhrami, Executive Director of Oman IT Society (OITS), and Sanjeev Madavi, a Digital Transformation Expert. Each shared their perspectives on achieving unified goals amidst diverse organizational structures.

Imran Abdulla, GM for the Middle East and Africa at Orbus Software, followed with a compelling presentation on "Accelerate Enterprise Transformation with Practical AI" Abdulla provided actionable insights into leveraging AI for driving enterprise-level transformations.

The next session, "Empowering Global Talent," moderated by Dr Salim Al-Shuaili, Director of AI & AT Projects Unit at MTCIT, emphasized the critical need for fostering a diverse and globally capable workforce. Panellists Dr Amjed Al-Thuhly, CEO of FutureTech, Dr Sulaiman Al-Hasni, Deputy Dean of Global College of Engineering and Technology, and Dr Younis Al-Anqoudi, Senior Manager-Head of ICT at TRANSOM Handling, discussed strategies for nurturing talent that can drive transformational change irrespective of geographical boundaries.

The event concluded with a thought-provoking session titled "SynergAIze Your Digital Transformation," presented by Nicholas Tay Chee Seng, Chief Technology Officer EMEA at SANGFOR TECHNOLOGIES. Seng's insights into integrating AI with digital transformation strategies provided attendees with innovative approaches to enhance their digital initiatives.

The World CIO 200 – Oman Edition was a resounding success, offering a platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among the region's leading IT professionals. The GEC Media Group looks forward to continuing this momentum and further contributing to the global CIO community through future editions of the World CIO 200.

World CIO 200 Summit in Bahrain: A day of digital transformation and innovation

The Bahrain leg of the World CIO 200 Summit was held today at the Art Hotel in Amwaj Islands. The event was graced by the presence of HH Shaikh Salman bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, VP of the General Sports Authority, who presented the awards to the CIO 200 winners.

The summit was kicked off by Dr. Jassim Haji, president of IGOAI, who spoke about the digital transformation trends in the country and the increasing adoption of emerging technologies such as AI.

This was followed by a panel discussion on 'digital transformation – pioneering innovation and achieving sustainable growth.' The discussion, moderated by Ahmed Saleh Albalooshi, Managing Director of Fintech IT Consultations, explored various facets of digital transformation, featuring Humood Al Humood, Director of Information Technology at the Ministry of Finance and National Economy; Anas Kamaluddin, Head of Technology for Strategic Operating Business Units at Yusuf Bin Ahmed Kanoo; and Tareq Abdulrahman Mejhem, Head of IT at the Ministry of Interior. The panelists unanimously agreed that digital transformation strategies need to keep evolving and driving business growth.

As part of the sponsor keynote, Imran Abdulla, GM for the Middle East and Africa at Orbus Software, spoke about how dashboards use AI for the translation of business questions into queries and for chart code generation.

The final panel of the day focused on GenAI use cases with leaders from the academic world. Moderated by Mahmood Aladraj, Chief Executive of VirtuThinko, this panel featured Dr. Fadheela Abbas Hussain, Assistant Professor with a PhD in Computing and Information Sciences at the University of Technology Bahrain; Dr. Hassan Kadhem, Associate Professor of Computer Science at the American University of Bahrain; and Sini Raj, Tutor in BICT - Database at EDICT Polytechnic. Fousing largely on the disruptive impact of GenAI in the education sector, panelists debated about the way to adopt this transformative technology with policies around governnance and monitoring.

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Enhancing security operations with AI-driven SOC insights

Bob Hansmann,
Sr. Product Marketing Manager – Security at Infoblox

Security Operations Centers (SOCs) are facing significant challenges. The SANS 2023 SOC Survey reveals that 60% of SOC analysts are overwhelmed with increasing workloads, and 65% are considering a job change within the next year. Additionally, 55% of organizations miss critical alerts daily, and 64% of analysts spend over half their time on redundant manual tasks. These findings highlight the urgent need for innovative solutions to enhance SOC efficiency and resilience against evolving threats.

Enter SOC Insights, a groundbreaking AI-driven security capability integrated into Infoblox's DNS Detection and Response (DNSDR) solution, BloxOne Threat Defense. SOC Insights is designed to address the persistent challenges faced by modern SOCs, leveraging advanced analytics to distill vast amounts of network and security data into actionable insights to empower security analysts to better prioritize and respond to threats more effectively.

One of the standout features of SOC Insights is its ability to mitigate alert fatigue by consolidating hundreds of thousands of security alerts into a dramatically smaller, more manageable set of insights. (One customer reported over half a million alerts resulting in only 24 insights.) By applying AI-driven analytics to DNS activity, asset information, DNS threat intelligence, and security events, SOC Insights correlates those events, prioritizes them based on many factors beyond typical malware risk rankings, and provides recommendations for swift resolution. This not only accelerates threat detection and response but also alleviates the strain on overburdened SOC analysts.

Moreover, SOC Insights plays a pivotal role in bridging the gap between security and networking teams, offering enhanced visibility into network activity. Networking teams benefit from improved DNS and network stability and resilience as BloxOne Threat Defense identifies and addresses threats at the DNZS layer. Furthermore, SOC Insights identifies configuration errors, high-risk activity, and other behaviors helping organizations fortify their security posture and mitigate risks proactively.

The impact of SOC Insights extends beyond immediate benefits, contributing to a proactive security stance. Leveraging DNS intelligence, organizations can reduce the risk of C2 and malware in attacks by a staggering 92%, as revealed by the Cybersecurity Directorate at the NSA. And hunted DNS intelligence helps disrupt attack infrastructure, often composed of tens of thousands of domains, enabling customers to block many attacks even 2-3 months before threat actors actually launch attacks using those domains. This proactive approach not only mitigates breaches but also fosters a healthier work environment for security analysts, combating burnout and bolstering retention rates.

In addition to its formidable capabilities, SOC Insights revolutionizes the broader security ecosystem. By sharing AI-driven insights and other relevant data with other security tools, SOC Insights maximizes the ROI of existing security investments and enhances the effectiveness of the entire security stack. This collaborative approach strengthens defenses, empowers organizations to stay ahead of emerging threats, and augments the overall security posture.

In conclusion, SOC Insights represents a transformative leap forward for the SOC, empowering security teams to navigate the complex threat landscape with confidence and agility. By harnessing the power of AI-driven analytics, organizations can reinforce their cybersecurity defenses, streamline operations, and safeguard their digital assets against evolving threats. As the cybersecurity landscape continues to evolve, SOC Insights stands as a beacon of innovation and resilience in the fight against cyber adversaries.

Epicor study: High-growth businesses lead AI adoption in supply chains

Vaibhav Vohra,
Chief Product and Technology Officer at Epicor

In the 2024 Agility Index by Epicor and Nucleus Research, almost half of companies in manufacturing, logistics, and retail sectors identified rising costs as their top supply chain challenge. Over half are leveraging AI, automation, or machine learning for supply chain management, with 63% of high-growth businesses already using generative AI to tackle costs and operational issues effectively.

Nucleus Research surveyed more than 1,700 supply chain management leaders worldwide to understand how they are leveraging powerful technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning to thrive while navigating challenges like supply chain disruptions, escalating costs, and skilled labor gaps. The study also uncovered anticipated future investments in these technologies.

"When workers are empowered to spend more time innovating — what humans do best — that's where the real value creation happens. That is agility," said Vaibhav Vohra, Chief Product and Technology Officer at Epicor. "Our 2024 Agility Index underscores the growing adoption of AI and other automation technologies as an essential factor in enabling supply chain businesses to better thrive and compete. These cognitive capabilities are coming together to empower workers and their businesses to more readily adapt to shifting market conditions and better serve their customers."

Survey respondents indicated they are integrating generative AI into digital supply chain operations across various functions such as product descriptions, customer service chatbots, natural language querying, reporting, and in-application assistance. Specifically, the adoption of generative AI in customer service chatbots, noted by 72 percent of organizations, is highlighted as the most prevalent use case. This widespread implementation is attributed to the technology's ability to streamline customer interactions across various sectors.

Similarly, 67 percent of organizations currently employ generative AI for crafting product descriptions, leveraging the technology's capacity to analyze customer sentiment and forecast market demand. This enables a more informed approach to product design and feature development. .

Secureworks on transforming cybersecurity in the Middle East region

In an exclusive interview with Mayuresh Kothari, Technical Director, Secureworks, he discussed about company's transformative impact on the cybersecurity landscape in the Middle East.

You were a part of Secureworks for 5 years and left to join another leading cybersecurity for a short stint. Why come back to Secureworks?

For two reasons - the first one is the platform and the vision. To explain that, let me go back a little bit to when Secureworks started building this platform. When it comes to open XDR, our vision was to have this vendor-agnostic cybersecurity tool that would allow logs or data to be ingested without any limitations. Even when we were thinking of a name for this tool, we called it threat detection and response. Remember, this was before XDR, as a term itself, was coined. This means that we were very much in sync with where the industry and organizations at that time were heading. So we've stayed true to that vision. However, one thing that I've noticed in the past few years is that a lot of organizations that got on this bandwagon have veered away or diverged from this open XDR vision, but not Secureworks. We've continued to build and develop that, and today we have this fantastic platform called Taegis XDR that allows us to deliver that open XDR vision.

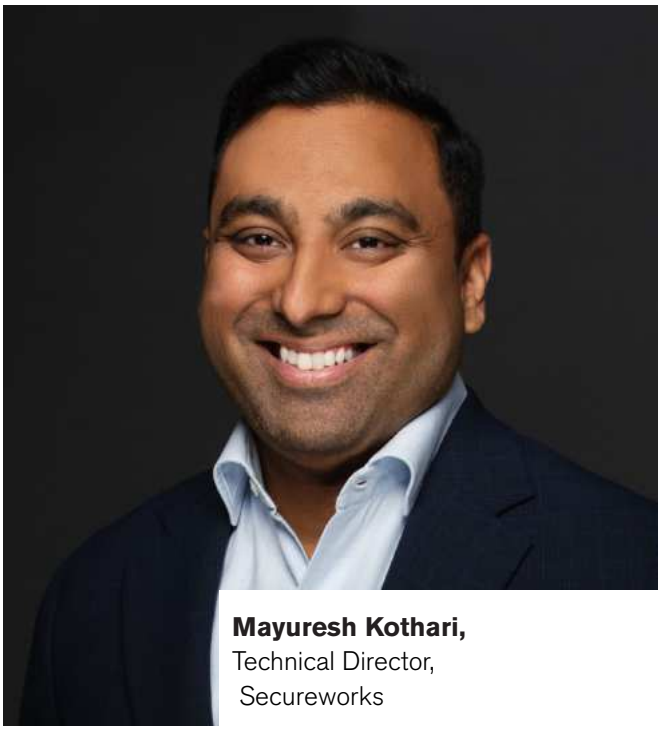
Reason number two is, obviously, people and culture. Secureworks has always had some of the smartest people in cybersecurity working globally. Here in the Middle East, we are building a team that works towards community inclusivity and teamwork, not just amongst ourselves but with our partners and customers as well. I want to build, develop, and continue doing that.

Given your excitement around the vision of Secureworks, can you elaborate why you see this being differentiated from others in the region?

To understand our vision, we first need to look at what we are trying to solve. The key problems for our customers today can be addressed with a combination of technology and human intelligence. That is crucial. What I mean by that is, not everything can be accomplished from a technology standpoint alone, and not everything can be solved by humans alone. This is where our platform comes into the picture.

Another important aspect is our learnings from the past 20-plus years of delivering managed security outcomes. Over these years, we have gathered valuable insights and integrated them into our platform. For instance, we have addressed complexities in operationalizing a SIEM, and the differences between ticketing and triaging, by engineering these learnings into our platform, allowing us to deliver outcomes far more effectively.

Today, we have an open XDR, vendor-agnostic platform that can integrate data from your network, IT stack, OT stack, cloud, and vulnerability information to provide effective, measurable security outcomes. This comprehensive approach is what excites me about Secureworks' vision.



Mayuresh Kothari,
Technical Director,
Secureworks

What partnerships are you looking forward to grow and cultivate in the region?

So we look at partnerships in a very interesting way. First of all, because we are not just a product vendor, but also a service provider; we want to ensure that our partners are able to deliver similar levels of service and add value to our customers.

One of the things that is very important when it comes to partnerships is how together the security outcomes that the customers are looking for are achieved in the best possible way. What I mean by best possible is not just what is the right way to go about it, but also how justifiable it is from a cost perspective for our customers. So that's number one.

The other partnerships are with other security vendors. Now, as we discussed earlier, cybersecurity is a team sport. We cannot be a single player. It's not a single player challenge, right? If I were to equate it with sports, when it comes to managing cybersecurity outcomes, all organizations will have multiple vendors, multiple technologies deployed. We are not of the view that you need to rip and replace things or that you need to only work with us and no one else. That's not how it works. We've realized that the better we are at doing things with others, the better it is for our customers. So our other partnerships will involve working with like-minded vendors to deliver what is of greatest value to our customers.

Industry-first innovations in the Pure Storage platform help customers keep pace with AI's rapid evolution

Pure Storage introduces new capabilities in its platform, revolutionizing how IT and business leaders deploy AI, enhance cyber resilience, and modernize applications.

The Pure Storage platform delivers agility and risk reduction to organizations with a simple, consistent storage platform and an as-a-service experience for the broadest set of use cases across on-premises, public cloud, and hosted environments. At the heart of the platform, the often imitated but never duplicated Evergreen® architecture brings continuous and non-disruptive upgrades helping enterprises adapt to dynamic business environments. With the industry's record number of concurrent SLAs, customers get the reliability, performance, and sustainability their business requires.

"The Pure Storage platform delivers unparalleled consistency, resilience, and SLA-guaranteed data storage services, reducing costs and uncertainty in an increasingly complex business landscape," said, Charles Giancarlo, Chairman and CEO, Pure Storage.

Charles Giancarlo, Chairman and CEO, Pure Storage

Pure Storage announced new innovations in the platform including:

- First-of-its-Kind Storage Automation: Pure Fusion™ unifies arrays and optimizes storage pools on the fly across structured and unstructured data, on-premises, and in the cloud. Now fully embedded into the Purity operating environment designed to continually get better over time via non-disruptive upgrades, the next generation Pure Fusion will be available across the entire Pure Storage platform to all global customers.
- Industry-First Generative AI Copilot for Storage: Extending Pure Storage's leadership position as the innovator in simplicity, the first AI copilot for storage represents a radically new way to manage and protect data using natural language. This leverages data insights from tens of thousands of Pure Storage customers to guide storage teams through every step of investigating complex performance and management issues and staying ahead of security incidents.

Nutanix widens coverage for cloud native users with expanded Project Beacon

Thomas Cornely, SVP of Product Management at Nutanix

We announced Project Beacon a year ago to share our vision for decoupling applications and their data from the underlying infrastructure to truly enable application mobility across clouds. As we shared this vision with customers over the last year, we saw an opportunity to expand the scope of the project to benefit the developers building Kubernetes-based modern applications across clouds and the operators tasked with deploying, securing and managing these Kubernetes environments.

Developers building new applications need fast, easy access to resources and services on reliable, scalable infrastructure. These include both infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) data services such as blocks, files and objects, as well as more advanced platform-as-a-service (PaaS) data services such as databases, streaming, caching, and increasingly AI inference endpoint services.

The challenge with existing cloud native storage services just like with platform data services is that they are native to just one particular public cloud. This means, for example, developers and operators who want to deploy an application that was built on AWS, and relies on Amazon's native storage services, to another public cloud or a private cloud will need to find an alternative storage solution and rewrite the application logic.

Finally, for an application to be easily portable between clouds and on-premises, it falls to Kubernetes Platform Engineering teams to deliver consistent Kubernetes platforms with these data services across all these environments, and do so in a way that is secure, complies with enterprise policies and ideally remains manageable over time.

Expanding Project Beacon

The recently announced Nutanix Kubernetes Platform will on day one delivers a unified management plane for CNCF-compliant Kubernetes distribution, including cloud-native Kubernetes services such as EKS, and AKS. With a single pane of glass, Platform Engineers will be able to consistently deploy, secure, manage and operate large fleets of Kubernetes clusters, across on-premise and public clouds.

For infrastructure data services, we are expanding the scope of Project Beacon to include cloud native block and file storage services that can be consistently managed natively in public clouds, in on-premises private data centers, and at the edge.

This will give platform teams and developers building and running modern applications seamless, fast, and secure access to the same powerful data and storage services no matter where they choose to deploy.

StarLink announces distribution agreement with Zscaler to advance zero trust security solutions

StarLink is excited to announce a new distribution agreement with Zscaler™, a global leader in Zero Trust security. This partnership signifies a key step forward in both companies' commitment to enhancing cybersecurity and delivering robust cloud security solutions to customers.

As digitalization advances and AI applications become more widespread, the complexity and sophistication of cyber-attacks continue to grow. In response to this inevitable trend, StarLink aims to address this challenge by offering the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange platform™ to its partner network and their clients to deliver enhanced cybersecurity protection.

StarLink has a proven track record of helping enterprises strengthen their cybersecurity resilience. With a comprehensive range of cybersecurity technologies and services, this partnership with Zscaler will further enhance StarLink's

Ahmed Diab, StarLink & Brian Marvin, Zscaler

ability to provide tailored solutions that address the unique challenges faced by businesses today.

"We are excited to partner with StarLink as an authorized distributor of Zscaler's Zero Trust Exchange™ platform in the Middle East," said Phanneth Wood, Vice President, Global Distribution Sales at Zscaler. "As we continue to expand our presence in the Middle East, Zscaler's partnership with distributors like StarLink is crucial in ensuring our growing customer base has the support needed to strengthen their Zero Trust strategies."

Ahmed Diab, COO of StarLink, said, "As the region's 'Trusted Advisor,' our mission is to empower customers with top-tier cybersecurity solutions. To achieve this, we aim to fortify our portfolio with robust offerings. Collaborating with Zscaler will jointly enable us to cater to customer's cybersecurity requirements and enhance their digital transformation experience."

The distribution agreement between StarLink and Zscaler will empower enterprises in the Middle East to fortify their cybersecurity posture and effectively address key challenges such as remote secure access, employee internet security protection, and data loss prevention. With Zscaler's comprehensive security cloud platform, enterprises can confidently navigate the public cloud, private cloud, or hybrid cloud environments, safeguarding their valuable assets from end to end.

VAST Data achieves high-performance storage solution certification for NVIDIA Partner network cloud partners

John Mao, Vice president, Technology Alliances at VAST Data

VAST Data's platform receives high-performance storage certification for NVIDIA Partner Network cloud partners, solidifying its role in AI cloud infrastructure and enhancing collaboration with NVIDIA for future AI advancements.

VAST provides a unified set of storage and data services that empowers cloud service providers (CSPs) to offer a comprehensive catalog of data-centric offerings that are deeply integrated with NVIDIA technologies. Uniquely designed to meet the stringent requirements of large-scale AI cloud infrastructure, the VAST Data Platform supports training and fine-tuning AI models of all sizes and modes, ranging from multimodal and small language models with less than ten billion parameters to the world's largest models consisting of over one trillion parameters.

"This certification with NVIDIA builds on VAST's already tremendous success with CSPs as the de facto AI data platform solution for large-scale, cloud infrastructure," said John Mao, vice president, Technology Alliances at VAST Data.

With seamless scalability and industry-leading uptime, the VAST Data Platform enables service providers with capabilities that span the complete AI pipeline – from multi-protocol data ingest, accelerated data preprocessing for feature engineering, and high-performance storage for model training with fast checkpoints and restores to edge data management for model serving and end-to-end cataloging to meet audit and compliance requirements.

The VAST Data Platform offers CSPs:

Service Provider-Grade Reliability: The VAST Data Platform helps observed production systems realize 99.9999% availability.

Secure Multi-Tenancy: With a zero-trust framework, per tenant data encryption, flexible network segmentation, and robust audit capabilities, VAST enables CSPs to deliver secure cloud services at scale.

Fine-Grained Workload Isolation: With granular quality-of-service policies that prevent multi-tenant I/O contention, the VAST Data Platform helps CSPs ensure numerous customers have the performance and data access they need for AI workloads from a single cluster.

Infrastructure Cost Savings: Service providers and enterprises alike can consolidate storage silos with an affordable single all-flash solution and eliminate the overhead of data copies and sprawl.

Improved Operational Efficiency: VAST offers robust APIs and SDKs, and all Day 2 operations (such as upgrades) can be performed online, leading to a better customer experience with fewer admins required.

Three-quarters of enterprises are working on AI-assisted business models

Generative AI was named the years' most exciting trend by respondents to F5's 2024 State of Application Strategy Report1.

The news comes as companies continue to build on digital transformation efforts to harness AI and machine learning in their decision making.

56% of those surveyed are more energized than ever about Generative AI, well ahead of other top trends such as IT centralization (40%), multicloud networking (35%) and application security (33%).

The report also found plenty of evidence that companies are acting on their intent. Three-quarters of respondents (75%) said they are working on digital transformation projects that F5 categorizes as "AI-assisted business", up from 61% in 2022, and just 17% in 2020.

According to F5's Digital Enterprise Maturity Index, this stage of digital transformation is where companies begin to apply AI and machine learning to data generated from their apps. This follows the preparatory stages of "task automation" (deploying apps to streamline manual processes) and "digital expansion" (modernizing, connecting, and scaling those apps).

Lori MacVittie
F5 Distinguished Engineer.

"In a world of technological innovation, digital transformation has no fixed destination. No one's ever done," said Cindy Borovick, Director of Market and Competitive Intelligence, F5

"As AI use matures and unforeseen technologies enter the scene, complexity, and hybrid IT will continue as the status quo. Clearly, the advantage will go to those that build a flexible IT stack capable of rapidly supporting new technologies and reaping the associated benefits. With the right foundation in place, those organizations can capitalize on all emerging innovations."

Unveiling the key findings of the SANS Institute 2024 cyber threat intelligence survey

The SANS Institute has released the 2024 Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) Survey, authored by cybersecurity experts Rebekah Brown and Andreas Sfakianakis. Amid rising covert activities, cloud breaches, and AI-driven attacks, this survey provides crucial insights for CISOs, CIOs, and security professionals. Understanding the latest trends and preparing for emerging threats is essential for organizations to protect their digital assets and maintain trust with customers and stakeholders.

As cyber threats continue to evolve in complexity and sophistication, this year's survey highlights pivotal insights that are essential for organizations aiming to bolster their defenses with groundbreaking insights into the evolving threat landscape, with a focus on the significant influence of geopolitical events, the burgeoning role of artificial intelligence, and the emerging dominance of threat hunting within CTI teams.

Geopolitical and Regulatory Influences

Geopolitics and new regulations are profoundly shaping CTI team activities. "The increasing frequency and complexity of global conflicts have made it essential for CTI teams to broaden their focus beyond internal issues," said Brown. "Our survey shows that 77.5% of respondents recognize the significant impact of geopolitics on their intelligence requirements, highlighting the need for adaptive and informed responses to external threats." Additionally, 74% of respondents emphasize the importance of adapting to new regulations, underscoring the necessity for CTI teams to stay compliant with evolving legal landscapes.

Andreas Sfakianakis,
SANS Instructor Candidate

Rise of Threat Hunting

For the first time, threat hunting has emerged as the top use case for CTI. This proactive approach to detecting unidentified threats has seen substantial reliance on the MITRE ATT&CK framework, with over 95% of respondents utilizing it for categorizing and communicating tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). "The prominence of threat hunting reflects a strategic shift in how organizations are leveraging CTI," Sfakianakis noted. "This approach not only enhances detection capabilities but also strengthens overall security posture."

Impact of Artificial Intelligence

AI is making significant inroads in CTI, with nearly one-quarter of respondents already leveraging AI in their programs and another 38% planning to adopt it. "Artificial intelligence is becoming a crucial tool for CTI teams, helping analysts prioritize and process vast amounts of information through advanced scoring and summarization techniques," said Brown. However, she also highlighted the growing concern about the adversarial use of AI, stressing the importance of preparing for AI-driven threats.

The Infinigate Group announces strategic investment in Wavelink

The Infinigate Group has made a strategic investment in Wavelink, a fast-growing IT distributor specialising in cybersecurity and mobility, with strong credentials in the Australian market. The investment provides Infinigate with a solid entry into the Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) market, as part of the company's global expansion.

The agreement was sealed on 4 July, with immediate effect.

The partnership between Infinigate and Wavelink is designed to fuel both organisations' growth plans. Infinigate gains a majority stake in Wavelink, who will continue to operate autonomously with the existing management team, retaining a significant share of the business.

Wavelink continues to operate under the Wavelink brand, which has built significant trust and recognition in Australia, adding the

Klaus Schlichtherle, CEO of the Infinigate Group & Ilan Rubin, CEO of Wavelink

"an Infinigate Group company" tagline, leveraging the power of the Infinigate brand. Ilan Rubin will continue to head operations in ANZ. Within the group structure, Ilan will report into Mahmoud Nimer, President MEA and APAC at the Infinigate Group, and co-founder of Starlink.

Founded in 1998, Wavelink is headquartered in Melbourne, with 55 staff nationally and has a portfolio of security and mobility vendors that offer partners complete solutions. Wavelink's DNA is centred on delivering vendors and partners technology expertise, local market knowledge, comprehensive enablement, support programmes and a range of industry-leading services. Wavelink has experienced a period of sustained double-digit growth over the last five years and is now ready to build on its strong foundations to boost its development.

Klaus Schlichtherle, CEO of the Infinigate Group commented: "The strategic investment in Wavelink opens up a door into a new important market for Infinigate, beyond EMEA, in line with our global expansion plan. Our ethos and business approach are a perfect match."

Dataiku and KPMG join forces to modernize analytics, propelling enterprises toward AI success

Dataiku and KPMG LLP have announced a strategic alliance to modernize analytics and accelerate the adoption of AI technologies by enterprises. The collaboration leverages Dataiku's comprehensive AI platform and KPMG's experience in cloud migration, platform modernization, and AI Governance, to help data leaders securely and efficiently advance their AI strategies (including Generative AI).

As enterprises seek to drive innovation and improve optimization, outdated analytics systems, underused cloud commitments, and the need for trusted AI and stringent AI Governance present new challenges. Establishing a robust data infrastructure is also essential for organizations that want to maximize the potential of cutting edge technologies. Through this strategic alliance, Dataiku and KPMG will help clients streamline their data and AI infrastructures, and foster secure, compliant technology deployments to meet the needs of the evolving market.

"Enterprises that want to fully unlock the transformative potential of AI need to tackle comprehensive platform modernization, and integrate advanced analytics with cloud-native

David Tharp, SVP of Ecosystems and Alliances at Dataiku

data architectures," stated Dr. Sreekar Krishna, National Leader of Artificial Intelligence at KPMG US. "Marrying KPMG's experience in technology strategy, cloud migration and modernization, AI Governance, and business-ready solutions with Dataiku's enterprise-ready platform to support data, machine learning, and Generative AI, will help our joint clients achieve their AI goals."

KPMG plans to incorporate Dataiku into its Digital Lighthouse service offerings and Modern Data Platform solution, with the goal of helping clients:

Modernize Legacy Data and Analytics Systems: Transition analytics platforms to the cloud, led by business-driven, cloud-aligned strategies that enhance security and compliance.

Maximize Cloud ROI: Efficiently deploy data and AI workloads that fully leverage cloud investments and committed spend, reduce waste and boost financial performance.

Operationalize AI at Scale: Implement robust DataOps and MLOps practices to develop, deploy, and monitor AI-enabled business solutions, while enabling clients to implement and operationalize governance policies.

Launch Secure, Cost-Effective Generative AI: Rapidly prototype and deploy Generative AI applications with Dataiku LLM Mesh, with a critical focus on value creation supported by the business knowledge and experience from KPMG.

"Generative AI will continue to disrupt industries and put pressure on C-suite executives at enterprise companies to adopt solutions that not only enhance AI capabilities, but also prioritize data security and governance," said David Tharp, SVP of Ecosystems and Alliances at Dataiku. "Our alliance with KPMG not only addresses the technological needs of modern enterprises to meet their business goals, but also ensures that these advancements are implemented in a secure and compliant manner."

Cloudflare's project Galileo celebrates 10 years of protecting at-risk organizations online

Cloudflare celebrates the tenth anniversary of Project Galileo, which offers free protection against DDoS attacks to at-risk public interest groups such as minority rights organizations, human rights defenders, journalists, and democracy programs. To mark the occasion, Cloudflare highlights the program's progress, statistics, and expanding recipient base.

As part of Cloudflare's mission to help build a better Internet, Project Galileo aims to protect free expression online by offering cybersecurity services like unmetered DDoS protection at no cost. Project Galileo was founded in 2014 after Cloudflare witnessed journalism and nonprofit sites being targeted by very large DDoS attacks. Such attacks flood sites with malicious requests with the intention of knocking them offline, with millions or billions of requests over a very short period of time. For organizations with small staff and budgets, these attacks often take down the site and prevent those in need from accessing the important work and services these organizations aim to provide.

Matthew Prince, Co-founder and CEO, Cloudflare

"Part of protecting the free and open Internet means making sure that civil society and political opposition around the world are not forced offline simply for speaking out or challenging those in power. Cloudflare is often the only defense standing between these vulnerable humanitarian, human rights, and journalism groups, and the people who want to take them down," said, Matthew Prince, co-founder and CEO, Cloudflare.

Server solutions for AI infrastructure: Organizations can accommodate speed and scalability demands with next-generation DRAM components

Dynamic Random-Access Memory has morphed into a modern-day phenomenon. Essential for IT systems and computing devices' operational continuity and sustainability, these memory devices have been continuously instrumental for peak performance, reliability, and capacity – no more so than for data centres or in business and enterprise environments.

Given their indispensable nature, the global DRAM market – valued at $61.21 billion in 2024 – is projected to exceed $170 billion by 2029, growing at the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 22.68%

From Asia and North America to Europe and the Middle East, demands for newfound speed and scalability have reached unprecedented levels. With organizations from every industry driving these demands, next-generation DRAM solutions are imperative, particularly with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure.

The AI revolution is transforming the DRAM market – driving the development of solutions even more advanced, innovative, and effective than their predecessors. These advanced DRAM solutions, specifically designed for data centers and AI workloads, offer greater speed, bandwidth, capacity, energy efficiency, and reliability. They are essential for supporting the growing complexity and scale of AI applications.

Khalil Yazbeck, Business Development Manager – UAE, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman, Kingston Technology

In turn, these trends have ushered in a new reality where DRAM solutions are concerned: they must accommodate AI infrastructure to meet surging speed and scalability requirements – by various means:

Memory & data architectures

AI features are increasingly enabling systems to carry out their role and responsibilities. With greater data capture and processing points, volume and bandwidth needs are also increasing exponentially. This means DRAM solutions are even more important for memory and data architectures.

Rewardz people leaders' summit in Middle East celebrates a decade of tech-driven employee experience leadership

Rewardz celebrates a decade of global leadership and ambition with its inaugural People Leaders' Summit in the Middle East. Held at the esteemed Taj Business Bay in Dubai, the summit convened nearly 100 HR and people leaders from the region, marking a significant milestone in Rewardz's journey of transforming workplace experiences through cutting-edge technology.

As a vanguard of HR innovation, Rewardz utilized this platform to express gratitude to its partners and senior leaders, while also envisioning a future where technology continues to redefine the workplace. The summit served as a catalyst for reflection on past achievements, celebration of collaborative successes, and a roadmap for future endeavors in the global HR landscape.

Themed 'Unleashing HR's Tech Potential', the summit delved into pivotal topics shaping the future of work:

- Tech-Infused HR Transformation: Discussions revolved around leveraging advanced analytics and AI-driven insights to revolutionize HR strategies, enabling organizations to adapt swiftly to evolving workforce dynamics and organizational goals.
- Next-Gen Workplace Cultures: Esteemed speakers from leading global companies shared insights on harnessing technology to build inclusive and high-performance workplace cultures, fostering employee engagement, retention, and innovation.
- Innovating Employee Experience with Tech: The summit showcased groundbreaking technologies and digital platforms designed to redefine employee experience and recognition, ensuring alignment with future-ready workforce expectations and organizational objectives.

Featuring an elite panel of speakers, including Suzanne Gandy, Director of HR at Bayut & Dubizzle; Fatima Alloghani, Emiratisation Director at Majid Al Futtaim; Firoze Akhtar, Manager HR, Employee Engagement & Programs at DHL Express UAE; and Fermin Diez, Chief Advisor at EngageRocket, the summit was moderated by Jaya Maru, Co-founder and CEO Middle East at Rewardz. Maru's visionary leadership exemplifies Rewardz's commitment to driving technological innovation in the HR domain.

Confluent launches Build with Confluent, the fastest path for system integrators to tap into the $60b data streaming market

Confluent announced "Build with Confluent," a new partner program designed to help system integrators (SIs) accelerate the development and marketing of data streaming use cases. The program includes specialized software bundles, expert support for certifying offerings, and access to Confluent's Go-To-Market (GTM) teams. This initiative aims to streamline and monetize real-time solutions built on Confluent's data streaming platform.

"We're sharing tens of millions of hours of collective data streaming expertise with partners to help them deliver the real-time use case offerings that transform customers' businesses," said Paul Mac Farland, SVP of Partner and Innovation Ecosystem, Confluent.

Paul Mac Farland, VP of Partner and Innovation Ecosystem, Confluent

Bring Data Streaming Use Cases to Market Faster

As part of the reimagined Accelerate with Confluent program, partners can deepen their collaborations to expand their businesses, open more opportunities for growth, and reach new audiences. They can build native integrations with Connect with Confluent, seamlessly help their customers transition away from traditional messaging systems and Apache Kafka® with Confluent's Migration Accelerator, and quickly develop streaming use case offerings with Build with Confluent. Now, any partner can work hand-in-hand with Confluent to meet the high customer demand for real-time customer experiences and applications.

A wide range of use cases have been built through early access to the program, including a GenAI bot for airline customer support, fraud detection against AI-powered voice phishing, automated limit increases for credit card users, and real-time telemetry analysis for freight optimization. This is only the start with more coming to market as SIs combine their industry expertise with the power of Confluent's leading data streaming platform.

Splunk report reveals $400b annual downtime cost for global 2000 companies

Splunk released a new global report "The Hidden Costs of Downtime," which highlights the direct and hidden costs of unplanned downtime. The survey calculated the total cost of downtime for Global 2000companies to be $400B annually, or 9 percent of profits, when digital environments fail unexpectedly. The analysis revealed the consequences of downtime go beyond immediate financial costs and take a lasting toll on a company's shareholder value, brand reputation, innovation velocity and customer trust.

Unplanned downtime — any service degradation or outage of a business system — can range from a frustrating inconvenience to a life-threatening scenario for customers. The report surveyed 2,000 executives from the largest companies worldwide (Global 2000) and showed downtime causes both direct and hidden costs as defined below:

• Direct costs are clear and measurable to a company. Examples of direct costs are lost revenue, regulatory fines, missed SLA penalties and overtime wages.

• Hidden costs are harder to measure and take longer to have an impact, but can be just as detrimental. Examples of hidden costs include diminished shareholder value, stagnant developer productivity, delayed time-to-market, tarnished brand reputation and more.

The report also highlighted the origins of downtime — 56 percent of downtime incidents are due to security incidents such as phishing attacks, while 44 percent stem from application or infrastructure issues like software failures. Human error is the number one cause of downtime and the biggest offender for both scenarios.

However, there are practices that can help reduce downtime occurrences and lessen the impacts of direct and hidden costs. The research revealed an elite group of companies — the top 10 percent — are more resilient than the majority of respondents, suffering less downtime, having lower total direct costs and experiencing minimal impacts from hidden costs. These organizations are defined as resilience leaders and their shared strategies and traits provide a blueprint for bouncing back faster.

AVEVA reveals insights from 2023 sustainability report and industrial intelligence index

AVEVA launched its 2023 Sustainability Progress Report and the first edition of the AVEVA Industrial Intelligence Index at London Tech Week 2024. The company advocates for ethical and impact-driven AI that increases creativity and efficiency for a more sustainable world.

In 2023, AVEVA continued to make progress on its core ESG framework objectives, including enabling the sustainable transformation of industry through its software, modelling environmental stewardship and ethical best practices, and fostering an inclusive workplace culture where every employee feels engaged and empowered to learn and grow.

This fourth edition of the report is AVEVA's first publication of ESG data and workstream advancements aligned to a calendar year reporting period. It details progress made in 2023 against three key pillars: Technology handprint, Operational footprint, and Inclusive culture.

Joanna Mainguy, Sustainability Accelerator Director, AVEVA

Technology handprint

"Beyond our efforts to reduce our own carbon footprint, we recognize that our biggest opportunity to make a positive impact and accelerate our journey towards Net Zero is through our core products, digital solutions that can help industries improve efficiency, circularity, traceability and resilience," said, Lisa Wee, Global Head of Sustainability, AVEVA.

In this regard, the company has developed a green new logo program that has supported in the first six months the deployment of clean tech activities for 25 customers. In addition, with 13 new case studies quantifying the reduction of emissions AVEVA software enables for customers, the company demonstrates how it walks the talk through tangible achievements contributing to sustainability. Last but not least, hackathons run in 2023 generated 80 sustainability-led technology ideas for future innovations.

SentinelOne transforms cloud security for AWS customers

Cloud security is a balance between an organization's drive to digitally transform and the need to secure a dynamic and fluid environment in an ever-evolving threat landscape. Ephemeral cloud environments such as serverless containers may be short-lived, but they present a real and growing security risk, and attackers can wreak havoc if they are unprotected. SentinelOne, a global leader in AI-powered security, today announced the launch of Singularity Cloud Workload Security for Serverless Containers, a new offering that provides real-time, AI-powered protection to secure containerized workloads running on AWS Fargate for Amazon ECS and Amazon EKS.

"As a long-time and strategic Amazon Partner Network member, we are committed to delivering market-leading innovations through simple integrations that enable customers to improve their security outcomes and change the game," said Brian Lanigan, Senior Vice President, Global Ecosystem, SentinelOne.

Ely Kahn, Vice President, Product Management, Cloud Security, SentinelOne and Brian Lanigan, Senior Vice President, Global Ecosystem, SentinelOne

And customers are seeing value.

As noted on PeerSpot by a Senior Software Engineer who uses SentinelOne Singularity Cloud Workload Security, "The visibility of workload telemetry is excellent, and the hunting capabilities are second to none. The most valuable feature is the ability to gain deep visibility into the workloads inside containers."

Securing Short-Term Resources

Ephemeral containerized workloads running on AWS Fargate allow rapid scale and deployment to refresh environments, offering business and technical agility. However, their short-lived nature does not automatically mean they are secure. While these resources may only live for minutes, attackers can compromise within seconds and look for opportunities to move to higher-value, longer-living resources ahead of the ephemeral resource being deleted. Adversaries can also gain an initial foothold elsewhere in a cloud environment and pivot to serverless container resources to conduct attacks, such as crypto-mining.

ASBIS signs a distribution agreement with Overland-Tandberg

ASBIS Middle East has recently formed a distribution agreement with Overland-Tandberg.This collaboration enables ASBIS to enhance its range of top-quality data storage solutions, catering to the rapidly growing segment with high user demand. The global Data Storage market was valued at $244.9 billion in 2023 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 17% over the next 6 years, reaching an estimated value of $932.2 billion by 2030.

The product portfolio includes solutions from the following vendor lines:

- Neo® Tape Archive Solutions (Tape Library, Tape Autoloader, Tape Drive & LTO Cartridge)
- RDX® Removable Disk (HDD/SSD) Solutions – Patented Technology of O-T
- Titan® Storage Solutions
- Olympus® Server Solutions
- Data Archival & Data Management Services & Solutions

These solutions will be available across the Middle East & Africa region.

"We are thrilled to share that ASBIS and Overland-Tandberg, a leading provider of data storage and archive solutions, have joined forces in an exciting collaboration. By combining Overland-Tandberg's advanced data storage solutions with ASBIS Group's extensive distribution network and local market knowledge, this partnership aims to provide valuable data storage solutions to customers throughout the Middle East. It's great to share a common goal with Overland-Tandberg and work together to enhance accessibility and personalization for our customers", said, Hesham Tantawi, Vice President at ASBIS Middle East

"We look forward to partnering with ASBIS Group to expand our presence in the Middle East. Their reputation for creating commercially viable solutions aligns perfectly with our values, and we are confident this partnership will benefit both companies and our customers", said, Ashok Kumar, Regional Sales Director – APAC + ME at Overland-Tandberg.

du to launch hyperscale cloud and sovereign AI services for the UAE government with Oracle Alloy

du will deploy Oracle Alloy to provide hyperscale cloud and sovereign AI services for the government and public sector in Dubai and the Northern Emirates. The signing ceremony occurred during the AI Retreat, under the patronage of H.H Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and attended by decision makers, industry leaders, AI experts, and global tech giants.

Oracle Alloy is a complete cloud infrastructure platform that enables Oracle partners to become cloud providers. With this platform, du can provide more than 100 Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) services together with its own value-added cloud services and applications. This will enable du to become the first local hyperscale cloud provider to offer a comprehensive set of cloud services branded under its portfolio.

The services will be customized to meet the specific needs of the UAE markets and industry verticals, while ensuring alignment with the UAE regulatory requirements. du will also use Oracle Alloy to accelerate its internal digital transformation strategy and ensure the full modernization of its internal IT and engineering ecosystem.

du will also benefit from Oracle and NVIDIA's collaboration, enabling du to offer sovereign AI capabilities and its new GPU-as-a-Service to government entities in Dubai and Northern Emirates. Oracle's distributed cloud, AI Services, and generative AI services, combined with NVIDIA's accelerated computing platform and software, will enable du to quickly deploy AI capabilities for its public sector customers.

Fahad Al Hassawi, CEO of du said, "The UAE is one of the fastest-growing cloud services markets in the world, and public sector entities in the UAE are rapidly embracing the benefits of the cloud, including added agility, efficiency, security, and access to the latest digital technologies such as AI and machine learning."

ServiceNow announces plans to launch UAE cloud, hosted on Microsoft Azure

ServiceNow is planning a UAE Cloud, hosted on Microsoft Azure. The company confirmed that the active build of this cloud region is underway, with a targeted launch in the first half of 2025.

The cloud offering is in line with ServiceNow's commitment to meeting the business transformation requirements of all business entities in the UAE, both public and private sector. ServiceNow will host its UAE cloud on Azure as part of the company's ongoing expansion of its global strategic alliance with Microsoft, which began in 2019.

"ServiceNow's UAE Cloud will accelerate the delivery and adoption of ServiceNow's intelligent platform for end-to-end business transformation for the UAE; particularly across government, financial services, energy, and telecom sectors. Upon launch of the UAE Cloud, our customers will be able to transform their operations and empower their employees like never before," said Mark Ackerman, Area Vice President, Middle East and Africa at ServiceNow.

"ServiceNow's hosting of its cloud on Azure in the UAE is a valuable step in supporting the nation's digital innovators and the business transformation goals of our customers," said Ahmed Hamzawy, Global Partner Solutions Lead for Microsoft UAE. "Our timely partnership with ServiceNow enables UAE entities to embrace digital transformation with a focus on compliance, security and agility, and we believe there has never been a more important time to optimize the strength of this integration."

With ServiceNow's single, trusted AI and data platform, customers can realize the full potential of AI across their business, fast. With generative AI (GenAI) embedded directly into the Now Platform, customers get out-of-the-box intelligence to support their business transformation.

Entrust enables governments to transform citizen interactions with digital identities

Entrust has launched of its Citizen Identity Orchestration solution. Governments now can streamline the delivery of public services through secure digital identities, embedding trust in every citizen interaction.

The innovative and modular solution from Entrust launches as governments worldwide experience increasing demands for seamless, transparent, and rapid service delivery. Digitalizing public services can help meet these expectations, but digital service channels must be more convenient and intuitive to use than existing options to be effective. And, as AI-driven identity fraud continues to grow, governments need to verify and authenticate citizens to access online services.

With this solution, citizens will benefit from reliable, transparent, and inclusive access to government services, augmented with a seamless and secure digital experience. Governments can esure the highest standards of security and privacy for digital government-to-citizen (G2C) interactions for seamless border crossing, benefits delivery, filing taxes, access to healthcare and more.

Tony Ball, President of Payment & Identity at Entrust

"Once you establish the identity of an individual online and provide the right infrastructure to trust that identity, you can unlock unlimited possibilities to empower citizens and businesses by enhancing government services, making them more convenient, accessible and secure," said, Tony Ball, President of Payment & Identity at Entrust.

Entrust Citizen Identity Orchestration solution adopts an identity-centric approach, designed to enable G2C digital transformation initiatives.

AHAD launches prevention-first MDR, expanding cybersecurity in META

AHAD has expanded its services with a new prevention-focused Managed Detection & Response (MDR) offering, designed as an alternative to traditional Security Operations Centers (SOC). This next-gen Managed Security Service Provider (MSSP) service is tailored for the Middle East, Turkey, and Africa (META) region, marking AHAD's strategic effort to strengthen its cybersecurity presence and address the evolving needs of businesses in the area.

This expansion emphasizes enhancing AHAD's ability to provide comprehensive cybersecurity solutions tailored to meet the specific needs of businesses in the META region. The Managed Detection & Response (MDR) / Managed Prevention & Response (MPR) Team is staffed with experienced security professionals and is equipped with state-of-the-art technology. This expert team is dedicated to real-time prevention, monitoring, detection, and response to cyber threats, offering clients exceptional security measures to protect their digital assets.

Muneeb Anjum, CEO at AHAD & Rohan Daniel Nair, COO at AHAD

"At AHAD, we're not just committed to protecting our customers; we're revolutionizing the way cybersecurity is delivered. Our Prevention-First Managed Detection & Response provide superior 24/7 Prevention, Detection & Response ensuring robust defence. Our mission is to empower businesses to thrive in the digital era with confidence; knowing that they are protected by the best in the field." stated Muneeb Anjum, CEO of AHAD.

"We are thrilled to unveil our new Managed Detection and Response (MDR) and Managed Prevention and Response (MPR) services as part of our MSSP offerings in the META region," announced Rohan Daniel Nair, COO of AHAD.

Mindware signs VAD partnership agreement with DDN

Mindware has partnered with DDN to distribute AI and multi-cloud data management solutions across the META region. This alliance aims to boost product adoption through Mindware's extensive regional channel network, enhancing their AI solutions portfolio and overall market presence.

Mr. Alexandre Boutin, AI Director at Mindware comments: "Mindware's AI Business Unit and its practices have expanded, now catering to a wide range of customers with diverse needs. As an AI Value-Added Distributor and trusted advisor, we felt the need to incorporate a vendor with a distinctive value proposition to meet various requirements, one of them being an Nvidia certified ecosystem partner for large SuperPOD projects, within and outside the realms of conventional AI/ HPC applications."

"With this new partnership with DDN, Mindware will offer solutions that accelerate AI and HPC apps at any scale, that are geared towards enabling organizations to manage large volumes of data efficiently, and to derive actionable insights from that data, ensuring high performance and reliability across various use cases," he continues.

DDN's storage and management solutions make deployment, management and scaling simple for even the largest AI applications, from edge to data centre to any cloud. It is the leading technology for scalability, performance and cost-effectiveness to ensure faster ROI and maximum utilization of compute resources.

Oliver Wyman report urges UAE grocery retailers to specialize amid market saturation

A major new report from Oliver Wyman highlights that the UAE's grocery sector has reached a new stage of modernization as competition intensifies.

However, the report also notes that the success of the UAE's "modern trade" grocers in capturing market share is pushing them to increasingly compete for like-for-like (LFL) growth by winning customers from competitors and increasing share of wallet with their existing customers. This dynamic creates the risk of market saturation and opens opportunities for market disruption.

Alexander Poehl, Retail and Consumer Partner, Oliver Wyman

The latest Oliver Wyman Customer Perception Map (CPM) survey, which tracks customer perceptions and habits in the grocery sector in different regions around the world, highlights that, in an increasingly saturated market, retailers are being pushed to differentiate themselves either by offering superior value or an exceptional offer, with only rare exceptions successfully balancing both, to stay competitive. The survey indicates that, as the UAE market has matured, customers have developed differentiated preferences compared to their peers in other GCC markets, creating both challenges and opportunities.

"Our recent CPM shows that, as the UAE market has matured, various customer segments now clearly prioritize different factors in their choice of retailer. In response to these changing preferences, we expect a stronger differentiation of formats to emerge. Some brands are focusing on a truly differentiated proposition supported by a premium customer experience, while other retailers are striving for a balance between value and quality of products," said Joe Abi Akl, a partner and the head of Oliver Wyman's Retail and Consumer Practice for India, the Middle East, and Africa (IMEA).

Dell Technologies, Aramco, and National IT Academy collaborate to upskill local talent in science and technology

Dell Technologies, Aramco, and the National IT Academy (NITA) have partnered to enhance Saudi Arabia's local talent with advanced science and technology skills. Their collaboration aims to offer students advanced training programs and certifications to build a skilled technology talent pool in the Kingdom.

The agreement was signed by Nabil Al-Nuaim, Senior Vice President, Digital & Information Technology, Aramco, Majed S. Al-Ghassab, Executive Director, NITA, and Mohammed Amin, Senior Vice President, Central Eastern Europe, Middle East, Turkey, Africa (CEEMETA), Dell Technologies.

As per the agreement, the four-month-long program "ITXcelerate" is designed to equip recent Saudi graduates in computer engineering, computer science, and IT with Dell Proven Professional Certification across areas such as storage management, data science, and AI. It also includes hands-on experience with on-site job shadowing and mentoring opportunities. This immersive program aims to go beyond theoretical concepts and arm local talent with the skills and knowledge required to excel and thrive in today's data-driven world.

It aligns with Saudi Arabia's vision to foster a vibrant tech ecosystem and equip its workforce with the skills necessary to contribute to the nation's technological advancement and economic prosperity. By combining their expertise and resources, the collaboration signifies a shared commitment to fostering a competent and future-ready IT workforce in Saudi Arabia.

Nabil Al-Nuaim, Senior Vice President, Digital & Information Technology, Aramco, said, "Aramco is pleased to be part of this agreement with Dell and NITA, as we collectively seek to elevate the Kingdom's technological offerings through talent advancement. By investing in the training and certification of local IT talent, we aim to meet the needs of the industry and position Saudi Arabia as a hub of IT innovation and excellence."

PROVEN Solution partners with Rashid Center to innovate special needs education

PROVEN Solution has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Rashid Center for People of Determination. The objective of the MoU is to implement and explore the use of virtual reality applications for attention and high-risk scenario trainings in students with ASD/ADHD who are over the age of 5.

Pavel Makarevich, VP of PROVEN Solution

Rashid Center is one of the oldest institutions in Dubai specializing in supporting the educational needs of children with a variety of disabilities. PROVEN Solution will deploy its Focus Pocus and Advent VR solutions aimed at enhancing the learning and development of children with cognitive disorders through focused and immersive experiences.

Pavel Makarevich, Vice President, PROVEN Solution said, " Our collaboration with the Rashid Center for People of Determination marks a significant milestone in our journey towards enhancing therapy and learning outcomes through virtual reality. We aim to revolutionize therapy and education by introducing innovative training programs tailored for children with cognitive disorders."

Shruthi Suresh, Assistive Technology Specialist at Rashid Center for People of Determination commented, "We are thrilled to partner with PROVEN Solution in our efforts to enhance the quality of our special needs education and ASD/ADHD therapy. We believe that the solutions will enhance our educational outcomes and foster the cognitive development of our students."

Microsoft's 2024 work trend index: Rising AI demand at work offers productivity opportunities

Organizations globally across industries have been forced to confront a new reality where employees, impatient with the pace at which their senior leadership has been adopting and deploying Artificial Intelligence across operations, have decided to bring their own AI tools to work. This is one of the key findings of Microsoft's fourth annual Work Trend Index (WTI) Report.

The report, titled "AI at Work Is Here. Now Comes the Hard Part" conducted in partnership with LinkedIn, provides a comprehensive view of how AI is not only reshaping work, but also the labor market more broadly. It revealed that three in four employees (75%) are already using AI at help them tackle their daily workloads; the use of Generative AI at work specifically has doubled over the past six months. The report also found that despite 79% of business

Zubin Chagpar, Senior Director and Business Group Leader, Modern Work and Surface Devices, Microsoft CEMA

leaders agreeing that their company needs to adopt AI to stay competitive, a lack of clear AI vision and pressure to showcase immediate return on investment (ROI) is stalling plans for widespread adoption. As a result, a significant number (78%) of employees, unwilling to pass over the many benefits of utilizing AI, are bringing their own AI tools to work. However, more than 50% of AI users say that they don't want to admit to using the technology at work for fear that their employers might think of them as "lazy" or "replaceable".

Zubin Chagpar, Senior Director and Business Group Leader, Modern Work and Surface Devices, Microsoft CEMA, said, "The biggest challenge now is for business leaders to take on a more agile approach when it comes to implementing AI to empower their employees, many of whom are struggling to keep up with the pace and volume of work today. Failure to do so will result in employees continuing to utilize their own AI solutions without the benefits that come from an organization's strategic use of AI at scale such as enhanced cybersecurity and data privacy."

Redington and Vertiv join forces to drive technology adoption and support IT deployments across Africa

Redington and Vertiv have teamed up in a strategic distribution partnership aimed at empowering channel partners across Africa with Vertiv's critical digital infrastructure and continuity solutions. The collaboration seeks to expand Vertiv's reseller network and maximize the transformative potential of its technology in the region.

The partnership leverages Redington's established presence and expertise in emerging markets, particularly in data centre transformation and artificial intelligence (AI), alongside Vertiv's industry-leadingpower and cooling technology, resources, and over 50 years of experience in critical infrastructure services. This powerful combination will unlock new opportunities for Vertiv to extend its reach within the regional channel market. The distributor's comprehensive reach across Africa, coupled with its strong in-house services team, will provide additional value to Vertiv's local channel partners and end users.

The partnership encompasses Vertiv's entire Integrated Solutions portfolio and IT channel product stack, spanning Africa. This

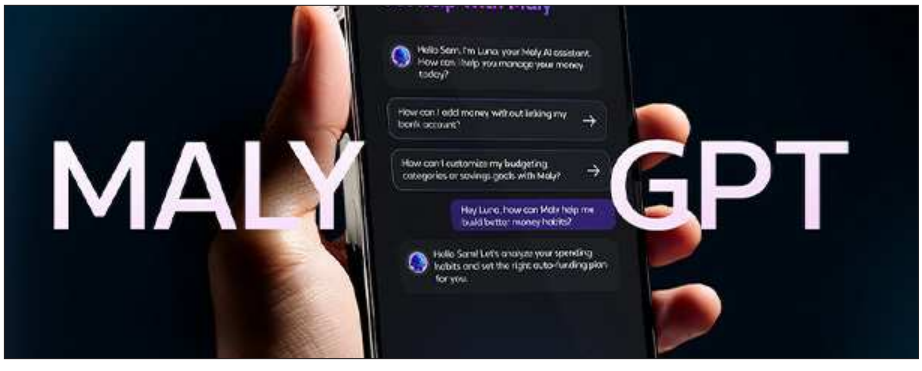
comprehensive offering enables Redington to deliver a complete suite of Vertiv's cutting-edge solutions to its extensive network of channel partners and end users.

"As Vertiv continues to expand its footprint across Africa, this strategic partnership with Redington marks a significant milestone in our journey," said Wojtek Piorko, Managing Director for Africa at Vertiv. "Africa is a critical region for Vertiv as a business, and we look forward to supporting local customers in meeting their efficiency, scalability and sustainability goals into the future, together with Redington."

UAE FinAI Startup launches MalyGPT, revolutionizing personal finance in MENA

Maly launched MalyGPT, MENA's first Generative AI Financial Assistant. With user permission, it analyzes spending, income, and financial activities to offer personalized advice and foster better money habits.

MalyGPT brings a suite of financial wellness tools right to consumers ,making it easier to make informed decisions about spending and financial targets. The platform, along with its new features, is crafted and fully developed by Maly's in-house tech and product team.



According to a recent PwC report, the potential impact of artificial intelligence in the Middle East is projected to reach US$320 billion by 2030. The annual growth in AI's contribution is expected to range between 20-34 per cent per year across the region, with the UAE and Saudi Arabia leading this growth.

The launch of MalyGPT comes at a critical time when financial literacy is recognised as a global challenge. Maly aims to address this challenge by offering a service that not only tracks expenses and liabilities, but also provides actionable solutions and wellness tools, filling the gap in the region's financial services.

"We believe this tool represents a new era in personal finance management," said Mo Ibrahim, CEO and Founder of Maly. "By leveraging open banking and our advanced data science models, Maly's AI provides always-on personalized financial advice and solutions that go beyond general guidance, delivering tailored financial planning and decision support to its users.

"Monitoring your savings and expenses can sometimes be overwhelming, with many individuals struggling to make informed financial decisions. Through MalyGPT, we aim to simplify this process, giving customers the flexibility to spend mindfully, highlight activities that are harmful to their budget, and develop long-term financial habits based on their unique lifestyle and savings goals."

TII to host world's leading quantum researchers at Quantum Technology Symposium

The Technology Innovation Institute (TII), will be hosting the world's leading researchers and quantum technology professionals at the TII Quantum Technology Symposium.

Following the United Nation's recent declaration to name 2025 as the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology, the introduction of this landmark event will bring together globally-renowned experts in the field to discuss the latest advancements and applications in quantum technology. As an official partner of the UN's initiative, TII's event will provide a platform for networking, collaboration, and the exchange of groundbreaking ideas to the global quantum community.

Through panel discussions and moderated sessions, research paper presentations, and robust debate, the TII Quantum Technology Symposium will explore the future impact of quantum science. Confirmed speakers already include:

- Dr. Artur Ekert, Professor of quantum physics at the Mathematical Institute, University of Oxford, and winner of Maxwell Medal and Prize (1995), Descartes Prize (2004), Hughes Medal (2007), Fellow of the Royal Society (2016), and the Micius Quantum Prize (2019).
- Dr. Rosario Fazio, Head of the Condensed Matter and Statistical Physics, International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, winner of the International "Luigi Tartufari" prize from the Accademia Nazionale Lincei (2016), the "Google Quantum Research Award" (2019) and an ERC Advanced Grant (2022).
- Dr. Piet O. Schmidt, Head of the Institute for Experimental Quantum Metrology, PTB, Braunschweig, Professor at Leibniz Universität Hannover, and member of the German Academy of Science and Engineering.
- Dr. John M. Martinis, Quantum Computing team leader at Google Quantum A.I. Lab and 2021 John Stewart Bell Prize winner.

Survey reveals only 20% of senior IT leaders are using generative AI in production

Dataiku's survey reveals a significant gap in business investments in Generative AI and the capacity of senior IT professionals to scale these investments effectively. In the next year, 73% of senior IT leaders plan to invest more than $500,000 in Generative AI initiatives, with 46% budgeting over $1 million. The findings also highlight that many IT infrastructures are not up to modern standards, hindering effectiveness and cost management.

Dataiku surveyed 200 senior analytics and IT leaders at enterprise companies across the globe in April 2024 to explore enablement against execution of Generative AI. Most agreed the proliferation of disconnected tools, lack of tech optionality, and outdated processes will intensify current challenges, such as data quality, governance, and risk management:

- Nearly half of respondents (44%) indicated that their current data tools do not fit their analytics and AI needs, and 43% reported that their current data analytics stack does not meet modern infrastructure standards. Another 88% do not have specific tools or processes for managing LLMs.
- Over three quarters of IT leaders agree that to modernize their data stack it means adding AI capabilities, followed by tool consolidation (65%).
- A majority of IT leaders (60%) said they use more than five tools to perform each step in the analytics process, from data ingestion to MLOps and LLMOps. Another 71% want five or less tools to reduce the burden of scaling projects with cobbled-together systems.
- Lack of governance and usage control can lead to compounding operational risk with a worrying portion of respondents (74%) still relying on spreadsheets for quick analyses, even as 62% have faced serious issues due to spreadsheet errors.

Conor Jensen, Field CDO - Dataiku

TechBridge teams up with DerSecur to introduce DerScanner to MEA market

TechBridge Distribution has partnered with DerSecur, marking a pivotal moment in cybersecurity for TechBridge's expansive network of channel partners and customers across the region.

G2, the world's largest and most trusted software marketplace, recognizes DerScanner as a High Performer for Static Application Security Testing (SAST), Dynamic Application Security Testing (DAST), and Software Composition Analysis (SCA).

Recently recognized by Forrester among notable SAST and SCA vendors, DerScanner is a leading application security solution that integrates Static Application Security Testing (SAST), Dynamic Application Security Testing (DAST) and Software Composition Analysis (SCA)within a single platform. Recognized for its user-friendly and seamlessly integrated approach, DerScanner aligns with the Common Weakness Enumeration (CWE) standards being a MITRE-certified solution. It supports an unparalleled number of programming languages (43), including polyglot applications, and significantly reduces false positives with its proprietary Confi AI technology.

DerScanner's comprehensive suite empowers organizations to identify vulnerabilities and undocumented features in the code of mobile and web applications, providing enhanced oversight of customer-facing application security.

DerScanner's Software Composition Analysis (SCA) component enhances application security by proactively identifying vulnerabilities and licensing issues in third-party and open-source components. Going beyond simple vulnerability scanning, it provides a data-driven health score for each package, enabling informed decision-making, efficient remediation, and avoidance of legal risks. With DerScanner SCA, organizations can confidently build secure, compliant software and minimize exposure to zero-day exploits and supply chain attacks.

Steve Lockie, Managing Director of TechBridge, said, "We are thrilled to partner with DerSecur and introduce DerScanner, their state-of-the-art application security solution to the MEA region. DerScanner's capabilities are crucial for securing fixed and mobile applications."

HARNESSING CYBERSECURITY BOOM

Industry leaders explore growth opportunities for channel in the rapidly expanding cybersecurity market.

The cybersecurity market is experiencing rapid growth, driven by the increasing frequency and sophistication of cyberattacks and heightened regulatory requirements. The global market is expected to grow from $217.9 billion in 2021 to $345.4 billion by 2026, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10%.

According to Gartner, end-user spending on security and risk management in the MENA region alone is forecast to total $3.3 billion in 2024, reflecting an increase of 12.1 percent from 2023. The rapidly evolving threat landscape and increasing frequency of attacks have made it imperative for organisations in the region to enhance their defenses by adoption advanced technologies and security solutions, making it a lucrative market for channel partners.

"Channel partners, including resellers, managed service providers (MSPs), and systems integrators, are essential players in this dynamic environment. They act as customers' consultants representing cybersecurity vendors on the ground, offering tailored solutions that address specific customer needs. Their roles encompass deploying security products and providing critical services like threat monitoring, incident response, and compliance management," says Meriam El Ouazzani, Regional Director, META, SentinelOne.

It is crucial for channel partners to identify new opportunities and offer innovative and effective solutions, enhancing their value proposition to their clients. Capitalising on these opportunities can help partners to drive business growth and differentiation in a competitive market. Additionally, being proactive in cybersecurity can foster stronger, trust-based relationships with clients, positioning channel partners as indispensable allies in the fight against cybercrime.

Steven Kenny,
Architect & Engineering Program Manager EMEA at Axis Communications

Charbel Ghostine,
Regional Channel Alliances Director – META East Med, Barracuda Networks

Rob Spee,
SVP of Global Channels & Alliances, BeyondTrust

Muhammad Zubair,
Cybersecurity Sales Consultant at Omnix International

Alessandro Porro,
VP of Global Channels, OPSWAT

Meriam El Ouazzani,
Regional Director, META, SentinelOne

Alessandro Porro, VP of Global Channels, OPSWAT, says emerging trends in cybersecurity present several new opportunities for channel partners, particularly through advancements in AI, digital transformation, and cloud technologies. AI enhances threat detection, vulnerability management, and response capabilities, enabling channel partners to offer advanced security solutions that proactively mitigate cyber threats. Automating repetitive tasks allows cybersecurity professionals to focus on strategic activities.

He adds that adopting digital transformation and cloud platforms also presents opportunities for channel partners to offer comprehensive security solutions tailored to businesses undergoing these changes. This includes securing cloud environments and ensuring compliance. Digital transformation also reshapes vendor partner programs, requiring alignment with modern technologies and cloud platforms. Channel partners can enhance their value proposition by integrating these trends into their offerings.

Steven Kenny, Architect & Engineering Program Manager EMEA at Axis Communications, says there are several trends that will directly impact security integration companies, such as the rise of IoT security, cloud security, and AI-driven threat detection. By understanding the associated threats and the operational risks that need to be addressed, there will be new opportunities.

"System integrators and security installers are already trusted by their customers to physically protect their most important business assets. Given these opportunities, these integrators can leverage their existing infrastructure expertise to expand into these areas, offering integrated solutions that combine physical and cyber protections. By doing so, they

can address the growing need for comprehensive security in an increasingly interconnected world, enhancing their value proposition and market position," he says.

Charbel Ghostine, Regional Channel & Alliances Director – META & East Med, Barracuda Networks, highlights a different perspective, emphasizing that the MSP (Managed Service Provider) model has become essential for channel partners aspiring to excel in cybersecurity. This model is not only scalable but also generates recurring revenue streams. Moreover, it elevates the partner's value by positioning them as the provider of not just comprehensive security solutions, but also the skilled management that ensures these are utilised to their full potential.

According to Muhammad Zubair, Cybersecurity Sales Consultant at Omnix International, the shift towards zero-trust models, which require continuous verification of user and device identity, creates opportunities for channel partners to offer consulting and implementation services. As organizations increasingly adopt cloud services, there is a growing demand for cloud security solutions, which channel partners can provide and manage.

He adds that AI and ML are becoming essential in threat detection and response. This allows channel partners to offer solutions that incorporate these technologies, significantly enhancing security postures.

This raises the question: How can channel partners identify and address the specific cybersecurity needs of their customers?

Rob Spee, SVP of Global Channels & Alliances, BeyondTrust, advices channel partners to perform detailed security assessments to understand the unique risks and requirements of each customers. "It is important continuously gather, analyse and share feedback to stay close to evolving customer needs and preferences. Also, different partners add different value. Including other partners in the buyer journey can provide better and faster outcomes for the customer."

El Ouazzani from SentinelOne recommends a structured approach, which includes thorough assessments, tailored solutions, and continuous support. This involves engaging in detailed discussions with customers to understand their business operations, critical assets, and existing security measures; conducting risk assessments and compliance audits with relevant regulations and standards, such as GDPR, HIPAA, or CCPA; and staying updated on industry-specific cybersecurity threats and trends specific to the customer's industry.

In a market crowded with many partners vying for cybersecurity opportunities, it is crucial for them to stand out by offering value-added services.

Porro from OPSWAT says channel partners can differentiate themselves by thoroughly understanding the security challenges faced by organizations and tailoring their offerings to address these pain points. Instead of offering ad-hoc solutions, partners should focus on providing comprehensive platforms that address the needs of modern organizations and meet the need of both IT and OT – all while streamlining processes.

Beyond product offerings, channel partners can provide value-added services such as assessments or integration support, demonstrating a commitment to the long-term success of a partnership and value of the investment. Another goal for channel partners should be to become trusted advisors to CISOs. By consistently delivering value, offering strategic guidance and providing a long-term vision, partners can establish themselves as allies when it comes to mitigating cyber threats.

Kenny from Axis opines physical security integration companies have the opportunity to differentiate themselves from the competition by demonstrating their understanding of the threats posed by cybersecurity and adapting their approach and offerings accordingly. This may include integrated security solutions that combine physical and cyber measures into a cohesive system.

He says they can provide 24/7 monitoring and incident response, ensuring continuous surveillance and rapid reaction to security incidents. Thorough risk assessments and audits help identify and mitigate vulnerabilities, while customized security plans address each client's unique needs.

Finally, offering managed security services to oversee and maintain security infrastructure, along with integrating advanced technologies such as AI, IoT security, and advanced analytics, further enhances security measures.

As the cybersecurity market races toward an anticipated $345.4 billion by 2026, channel partners are positioned at the forefront of this dynamic industry. Their role is crucial in navigating the increasingly complex threat landscape, driven by both the rapid evolution of cyberattacks and stringent regulatory requirements. Channel partners who embrace new business models and focus on scalable, recurring revenue streams are set to lead the charge.

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TUNING INTO THE FUTURE

In a highly competitive market, VADs must be dynamic and adaptable. Philippe Jarre, CEO of Mindware, discusses how the distributor identifies and capitalizes on emerging IT trends to turbocharge growth.

What is Mindware's approach in identifying and capitalizing and emerging IT trends?

Our organization is strategically structured around various solutions, including AI, cloud, security, and infrastructure. Within the infrastructure category, we manage a comprehensive range of IT components, encompassing everything from hardware components and PCs to storage systems, software, and servers. This holistic approach ensures that we cover all facets of IT infrastructure, providing a robust foundation for our operations.

To stay ahead in the market, we utilize a variety of methods to analyze data and trends enabling us to understand industry trends. We also gather valuable insights from our partners and monitor developments in key geographies like the US and Europe. This multi-faceted approach ensures that we are always up-to-date with the latest market dynamics. We categorize all this information by solution area, which helps us maintain a clear and organized perspective.

We aim to introduce a few new vendors each year, focusing on those who can bridge existing technology gaps in the market. While there may not be an abundance of entirely new technologies emerging at the moment, there is a significant innovation happening within the AI ecosystem. We are particularly focused on these advancements, as we believe they will be crucial for future growth. By bringing in technologies that enhance our AI capabilities, we aim to ensure that we remain at the forefront of technological innovation, providing solutions that will make a significant impact in the future.

How do you select the vendors and products you distribute, and what criteria are most important for you?

For every solution we offer, we identify any gaps in our portfolio. For instance, when we initially ventured into AI, we realized we didn't have significant AI vendors. We identified key players in the AI space and worked diligently to bring them into our portfolio. Last year we onboarded Nvidia and other vendors which sit well within the Nvidia ecosystem, ensuring we are at the forefront of providing AI technology to our partners and end customers.

We apply the same strategy to all other technology areas whether it is for security or cloud. Cloud is another key focus area for Mindware. Following the same strategy we began by partnering with Microsoft Azure a few years ago. Over the years, we've expanded our multi-cloud capabilities by incorporating additional hyperscalers. With the recent addition of AWS last year, Mindware stands out as the sole regional distributor providing the complete hyperscaler portfolio

Our vendor analysis follows a well defined technology assessment process. We evaluate the technologies they bring, ensuring they complement our existing vendors without creating competition, thereby adding value. We ensure the relationship is mutually beneficially and follow a thorough financial analysis and lay down a multiyear planned approach. Recently, apart from AWS, we have partnered with vendors like Splunk and Google Cloud, and expanded into other regions with several other vendors. Our strategy is straightforward: introduce four to six new vendors annually and expand existing vendors into new countries..

How do you support your channel partners in growing their businesses and enhancing their capabilities?

The market currently faces three main issues. The first is the rapid acceleration of new technologies. Companies must make strategic decisions about which new technologies to adopt. The second issue is financial. Managing financial risk in the current market conditions is tough, and companies need support in this area.

The third issue is skills. Investing in new technologies requires a serious commitment to hiring skilled architects and professionals, who are both hard to find and expensive. Companies need to ensure that their investments will yield a return on investment (ROI). Our role, as a multi-aggregator, is to position ourselves as a hub to support these partners with skills, risk assessment, and financial capabilities to help them grow their businesses.

Mindware is making substantial investments in cutting-edge technology areas such as AI. Often, vendors face challenges in deploying these solutions owing to limited manpower, and partners may not fully understand how to address these evolving needs. Under MAGIC (Mindware's Aggregation Gateway for Innovation and Collaboration) which was conceived to empower

partners and providing them with unparalleled support across technical, financial and training support amongst others, we offer pre-configured solutions to the partners, offering the necessary skills and support to enhance their capabilities and go to market in various industry specific use cases including healthcare, finance, public sector, oil and gas, to name a few.

We have the capabilities to help our partners target specific clients and industries, presenting them with ready-made solutions that accelerate deployment and minimize both risk and financial burden. This approach has been highly successful since its launch two months ago, and we've already collaborated with a number of partners. Their responses have been excellent, and the concept is resonating extremely well. This initiative demonstrates our commitment to helping our partners succeed by providing them with the tools and expertise they need.

Can you describe the marketing, lead gen, and sales support you provide to your channel partners?

As a distributor, we provide our partners with diverse support including financial assistance, marketing, event coordination, campaign execution, lead generation, and lead passing for further engagement. While these support functions may seem foundational, they are of extremely important, and we demonstrate excellence in this domain. Our marketing team has undergone significant expansion, and we are investing in financial support. this approach is a big part of our strategy.

However, the next generation of support is what sets us apart. we're extending this advanced support model to security and cloud along with AI. We're helping our partners tackle new opportunities based on our vendor relationships. As a multi-cloud solution provider, we can offer assessments on which cloud provider to

choose based on the partner's location, their skill capabilities, and the expected return on investment. Our next-generation support is laser-focused, identifying the specific clients that our partners should target, rather than broad marketing campaigns aimed at the entire market.

MAGIC is central to this strategy. Given the market's complexity, deploying solutions requires a hub of capabilities to design complex solutions, and we are best positioned to provide this. With over 60 vendors in our portfolio and the skills to support them, we help partners design solutions in our hub, supplementing any missing skills they may have. This approach reduces costs, lowers risk, and increases the chances of deploying successful projects. MAGIC ensures our partners stay relevant in terms of skills, risk protection, and financial stability. We've recently expanded MAGIC for AI.

What emerging technologies or solutions do you see as a game changer next year?

Recently, I attended the Global Technology Distribution Council (GTDC), which gathered the top 20 distributors worldwide for intensive discussions over three days. The consensus among participants, and one I fully agree with, is that AI is poised to revolutionize everything. AI will drive advancements across sectors; from cybersecurity to wearable technology and spur the development of specialized chips for PCs, exemplified by Dell and Lenovo incorporating Qualcomm chips for AI capabilities.

The focus now is on comprehensively understanding AI's impact, from component-level innovations to business applications, and identifying key players who will shape the future. Our commitment lies in bringing these pivotal vendors into our region, many of whom are currently concentrated in the United States or Europe, particularly around the AI ecosystem.

Regarding AI readiness, many companies are unprepared for the rapid acceleration of AI. This urgency is evident in places like the UAE, which has appointed 22 senior executives dedicated to fostering AI growth, a unique initiative. Supporting this ecosystem involves not just us, but all stakeholders. We navigate challenges such as skill shortages, which we address as an aggregator of skills and capabilities. Mindware Academy addresses this challenge and supports development of young talent to bridge the skills gap.

To bridge the skills gap, we pursue three strategies. First, we've established partnerships with regional universities under Mindware Academy, hosting students to educate and be educated in turn. Second, we collaborate with companies globally, leveraging their specialized skills to augment our offerings. Third, internally, we're developing top AI architects to bolster our expertise. While this endeavor takes time, the next generation, already immersed in AI from early education, promises to bring new insights and skills.

The approach of these young professionals differs significantly from ours due to their familiarity and practical experience with AI technologies. Their insights are invaluable, particularly in practical applications. However, designing AI solutions, such as for banking, requires a blend of technical IT skills: data management, storage, server infrastructure alongside AI expertise. This synergy is critical as AI's growth mandates substantial upgrades to data centers across regions, presenting significant opportunities for basic suppliers of essential infrastructure components.

In essence, embracing AI's potential requires not just technological advancements but also foundational support systems to sustain its growth effectively.

What investment areas are you focusing on to drive future growth and innovation?

We're focusing our investments in AI, cloud, and security, and it's proving to be a profitable strategy. We have experienced significant increases in market share due to these efforts, resulting in a highly favourable return on investment in these sectors. Cybersecurity is a top priority for us, given the critical importance of protecting our operations and our partners' interests in an increasingly complex threat landscape.

In terms of where we're allocating resources, our primary investment is in people. We're enhancing our teams across sales, pre-sales, and technical roles as we firmly believe that skilled individuals drive success. Secondly, we're forging partnerships with leading companies outside our region to build a robust ecosystem.

Internally, we're also investing heavily in refining our processes. The distribution landscape is evolving rapidly, and we're adapting our approaches accordingly. This transformation requires a shift in mindset, which can be challenging but is essential for staying competitive.

Check Point's vision of empowering partners to meet customer needs

In an exclusive interview with Prashant Menon, Channel Leader at Check Point Software Technologies, we discussed the organization's partner relations

What strategies or initiatives have Check Point implemented to foster better collaboration within its channel network?

Check Point has implemented several initiatives to enhance collaboration within its channel network, central to which is the 2024 Partner Program. This program provides partners with essential support and resources for selling and implementing Check Point's cybersecurity solutions effectively. New partners receive foundational training on basic technology concepts to ensure a solid understanding of Check Point's offerings. Existing partners benefit from advanced training focusing on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), which are critical for addressing contemporary security threats.

To help partners effectively communicate the value of new features like the Infinity AI Copilot, Check Point offers training supported by proof of concepts and demos. Continuous learning is emphasized through regular training sessions and resources accessible via a newly launched portal and app. These platforms centralize training materials and updates on Check Point's latest technologies, keeping partners informed and capable of meeting customer needs.

Additionally, partners have access to resources typically reserved for Check Point's internal teams, allowing them to pace their training according to their schedules and requirements. By offering comprehensive support, Check Point empowers its partners to deliver value to customers, fostering a collaborative and mutually beneficial relationship.

What are your partner program tiers and the criteria for selecting partners?

Check Point's partner program is structured into four tiers: Advanced, Professional, Premier, and Elite. Each tier reflects a partner's expertise, commitment, and performance. Progression through these tiers is primarily based on attaining specific certifications that emphasize skill proficiency.

The foundational criterion for partner selection and progression is the attainment of relevant certifications. These certifications ensure partners have the necessary skills to deploy Check Point's solutions effectively. While skill proficiency is prioritized, revenue generation remains a crucial metric, reflecting a partner's ability to leverage their expertise to drive business success and deliver value-added solutions to customers.

Check Point values partners who are proactive in understanding and adapting to technology trends, particularly in cybersecurity threats. Partners with a deep understanding of customer environments and who can guide Check Point in aligning solutions with customer needs are highly valued. Market knowledge, especially regarding regulatory requirements like data residency, is essential for meaningful customer engagement. Check Point also appreciates partners who address skill gaps through continuous training initiatives and maintain high service

Prashant Menon,
Channel Leader at Check Point Software Technologies

standards. Ultimately, Check Point seeks partners dedicated to delivering tangible value to customers and fostering long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.

How does Check Point plan to evolve its channel strategies in response to changing market trends and the shifting needs of its partners?

Check Point is evolving its channel strategies to stay ahead of changing market trends and the shifting needs of its partners. A significant focus is on the growing importance of Managed Security Service Providers (MSSPs). To address this trend, Check Point has revamped its MSSP Partner Program to meet the dynamic demands of the cybersecurity landscape.

The enhanced MSSP Partner Program simplifies onboarding and introduces a consumption-based pricing model, offering financial flexibility and predictable revenue streams. This model allows partners to scale their services according to demand, aligning with the dynamic economic landscape. Check Point provides access to the latest managed security services across various vectors, including Secure Access Service Edge (SASE), email security, cloud security, SD-WAN, and mobile security.

Innovations like the Infinity Portal streamline management, accelerate deployment, and enhance customer onboarding. This portal allows MSSPs to manage their services efficiently, providing a seamless experience for their customers. Check Point also offers free training and distributor support, enabling MSSPs to swiftly adapt to Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) licensing and start benefiting immediately.

These strategic adaptations underscore Check Point's commitment to empowering its partners with advanced tools and resources. By staying responsive to market trends and partner needs, Check Point ensures its partners remain competitive and capable of addressing evolving cybersecurity challenges.

Could you provide details about the training and development programs that Check Point offers its channel partners to help them stay competitive and knowledgeable about the latest technologies?

Check Point offers a comprehensive suite of training and development programs to keep its channel partners competitive and knowledgeable about the latest technologies. The 2024 Partner Program provides foundational training for new partners, covering basic technology concepts to ensure a solid understanding of Check Point's security solutions.

For existing partners, advanced training modules focus on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), which are essential for addressing modern security threats. Partners are also trained to effectively communicate the value of new features like the Infinity AI Copilot to customers. Continuous learning is a key emphasis, supported by regular training sessions and resources accessible through a dedicated portal and app.

These platforms centralize training materials and updates on Check Point's latest technologies and messaging, ensuring partners stay informed and capable of delivering up-to-date solutions. Check Point offers industry-recognized certifications such as CCSA (Check Point Certified Security Administrator) and CCSE (Check Point Certified Security Expert), enhancing partners' marketability and proficiency in deploying cutting-edge cybersecurity solutions.

By investing in ongoing education, Check Point ensures its partners remain agile and responsive to emerging threats and challenges. This comprehensive approach to training and development helps partners maintain a competitive edge in the rapidly evolving cybersecurity landscape.

How does Check Point help its channel partners differentiate themselves in a crowded market and stay ahead of the competition?

Check Point helps its channel partners differentiate themselves in a crowded market by providing the necessary support and resources to excel in selling and implementing its solutions. Through the 2024 Partner Program, Check Point prioritizes enabling partners with the knowledge and tools essential for navigating the dynamic cybersecurity landscape effectively.

For new partners, foundational training in basic technology concepts is provided to ensure a comprehensive understanding of Check Point's security solutions. Existing partners undergo upskilling with advanced training modules focusing on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), crucial for addressing modern security threats. Partners are also trained to effectively communicate the value of new features, such as the Infinity AI Copilot, to customers. Check Point supports partners with proof of concepts and demos, ensuring they can confidently showcase solutions.

Continuous learning is encouraged, with access to regular training sessions and resources through a newly launched portal and app. These platforms centralize resources for self-training and staying updated on Check Point's latest messaging and technologies. Additionally, partners have access to resources typically available to Check Point's internal teams, enabling them to pace their training and meet customer requirements effectively. By providing comprehensive support and resources, Check Point empowers its partners to succeed in delivering value to customers.

What is Check Point's long-term vision for its channel strategy?

Check Point's long-term vision for its channel strategy is to foster a collaborative ecosystem that emphasizes growth and mutually beneficial partnerships. The strategy involves a two-pronged approach focused on expanding reach and securing new customers while facilitating partner growth through innovative technologies.

To achieve growth, Check Point offers attractive incentives to partners, encouraging them to extend their market reach and secure new customer bases. These incentives are designed to make Check Point's offerings more compelling and accessible, ensuring that partners can attract and retain a diverse range of clients.

Check Point is committed to continuous investment in partner enablement through comprehensive training and certification programs. This ensures that partners are not only knowledgeable about the latest technologies but also capable of implementing them effectively. The goal is to build long-term relationships where partners are empowered to succeed by delivering superior value, thereby driving mutual growth and success.

Ultimately, Check Point envisions a future where its channel partners are at the forefront of innovation and excellence in the cybersecurity industry. By fostering a high standard of service delivery and aligning mutual goals, Check Point aims to cultivate long-term, value-driven relationships that drive sustained growth and success for both the company and its partners.

Driving innovation

Software AG has made its data integration platform StreamSets available on Azure in the UAE. Rami Kichli, Senior Vice-President, Middle East & Turkey, Software AG, discusses why this partnership with Microsoft is all set to be a game changer for AI and analytics applications.

What makes the integration of StreamSets on the Microsoft Azure marketplace significant for UAE customers?

Microsoft and Software AG have been global partners for several years, working to assist customers in their cloud migration journeys. This collaboration has also been mirrored regionally, especially in the UAE. Microsoft, being one of the largest hyperscalers in the UAE, has engaged with us at both leadership and operational levels. One of the significant outcomes of this partnership is the launch of our data integration platform, StreamSets, on the Azure cloud in the UAE—a first outside of Europe.

This decision is significant for several reasons. First, it underscores our commitment to supporting the UAE's data sovereignty and data residency requirements, which are crucial for our success in this region. Second, the launch of StreamSets on Azure highlights our dedication to the country's national data imperatives. With this offering, UAE customers can now leverage top-tier data integration technology within the country's data protection guidelines framework, available through the Microsoft marketplace.

Additionally, it is important to discuss how this partnership enhances the capabilities of UAE businesses in data integration, data residency, analytics, and cloud infrastructure. Data has become increasingly critical for enterprises for two main reasons. Businesses need data to drive informed decision-making and convert it into value. This involves collecting data from various sources, processing it, and analyzing it to derive meaningful insights.

In addition, artificial intelligence is becoming a crucial technology with transformative potential. However, AI's success relies heavily on data – it requires vast data for training and inference. Despite our ability to generate data, moving data efficiently remains a challenge. This is where StreamSets comes in. It is a smart data pipeline platform enabling real-time data movement from one location to another, vital for training AI models.

StreamSets can handle data from any source, whether legacy systems, raw data, or data transitioning to the cloud. This capability is crucial for regions like the UAE, which produces significant amounts of raw data. As data moves, it often changes form, posing challenges for traditional data management systems. StreamSets addresses this issue by ensuring data pipelines remain functional despite changes, making it a robust solution for AI and analytics applications.

The partnership between Software AG and Microsoft Azure in the UAE enhances data integration, supports AI initiatives, and aligns with the country's data protection requirements. This collaboration is set to drive numerous successful use cases, benefiting enterprises across the region.

Rami Kichli,
Senior Vice-President,
Middle East & Turkey,
Software AG

How do AI enhancements drive the evolution of Software AG's products and increase their relevance to customers in the UAE?

Balancing the demands of reliability and innovation in mission-critical applications is essential for companies that operate on both a global and regional scale. These companies need to ensure that their applications remain robust and reliable, while also continuously integrating cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence. This balance is complex and critical because overemphasizing legacy systems or new technologies can lead to significant drawbacks.

If a company focuses too much on legacy systems, it risks falling behind as new technologies become mainstream, leaving customers with outdated solutions. On the other hand, if the company exclusively pursues new technologies and neglects legacy systems, it can disrupt the services customers rely on. This is particularly true for mission-critical applications where stability and reliability are non-negotiable.

Software AG has demonstrated exceptional skill in navigating this balance. We have a long history of successfully supporting customers through transitions, ensuring that they can adopt new technologies without disrupting their ongoing operations. This ability to facilitate digital transformation while maintaining business continuity is a significant differentiator in the industry.

For example, government clients have a continuous need to transform and modernize to stay ahead in various areas, from public services to infrastructure development. However, any disruption in their services can have widespread consequences. Software AG enables these clients to undergo digital transformation smoothly, ensuring that their critical operations remain uninterrupted.

This approach involves a strategic blend of maintaining robust legacy systems and integrating innovative solutions. Software AG's methodology allows clients to experience the benefits of modern technology without the risks typically associated with significant transitions. By doing so, we are helping our clients stay competitive and efficient while avoiding service interruptions.

Software AG's ability to balance legacy system reliability and the introduction of new technologies sets it apart in the industry. Our approach is to allow our clients to disrupt their operations positively without experiencing negative impacts, thereby supporting seamless digital transformation. This strategy is particularly valuable for government clients who require continuous service while modernizing their operations. With upcoming announcements on the Azure marketplace, we will continue to demonstrate our leadership in delivering innovative, reliable solutions.

Olympics will increase exposure to cyberthreats

Bashar Bashaireh,
Managing Director & Head of Middle East and Türkiye at Cloudflare

The Paris 2024 Summer Olympic Games gets underway on July 26 this year. Securing the IT architecture of the Olympic Games is no easy matter. It is complex, built on a cloud-native approach with several hundred interconnected applications. In terms of volume, billions of items of data will be transiting via the websites and applications. All the more exposed to attackers. But what about applications?

More than half (57%) of Internet traffic is now made up of API requests. These APIs represent an attack surface that is often overlooked and neglected by many organizations.

The first challenge for companies is to have a complete and accurate API inventory. Cloudflare has found that its customers have a significant lack of visibility over their public API exposure. Indeed, based on Machine Learning and heuristics, the integrated discovery tool identified an average of 30.7% of public APIs not referenced by organizations. Unlike other API reports in the industry, Cloudflare's is not based on user surveys, but on actual traffic data.

Cloudflare's API Discovery tool combines two approaches: the identification of known API tokens with automatic machine learning analysis of all incoming HTTP traffic, enabling the detection of these missing APIs. This complete visibility is an integral part of the API Gateway product, which also helps to manage and secure Internet access points. These undetected ghost APIs represent a major risk. If APIs are the essential plumbing of the Internet, they can also become a prime target for attackers. They therefore need appropriate protection.

Indeed, if the process of documenting and inventorying APIs for the attention of security teams is not ensured, they become ghost APIs, functional in the production environment, but unbeknownst to the company. This is where security issues begin to emerge.

Beyond inventory, securing APIs raises a number of challenges. Rate limiting, a common practice, is not always the most effective. In addition, APIs remain vulnerable to classic attacks such as SQL injection or DDoS attacks. But one of the biggest risks comes from authentication and authorization flaws: many APIs do not properly verify legitimate access to data, making them particularly vulnerable.

To guard against this, Cloudflare recommends 4 main measures: impose authentication on all public APIs; strictly limit throughput with elaborate rules; block abnormal volumes of sensitive data; prevent malicious actors from ignoring valid API sequences. This amounts to adopting a positive security strategy, which only lets known, compliant traffic through.

A final observation: API traffic now follows the rhythm of human activity – periods of peak sales, major events or vacations – due to the ever-increasing use of APIs by the general public. There's no doubt that in this Olympic year, this will be particularly the case, whether it involves a spectator, tourist, journalist or professional. The purely machine-to-machine view of APIs is no longer valid.

For optimum security, organizations need to take a holistic view of the protection of their Internet exposure against all threats, whatever the resources exposed (API, website, user, infrastructure). Preserving visibility and control has never been more difficult. Rather than multiplying independent solutions each securing one element or one threat, Cloudflare's connectivity cloud provides a single protection on all threats linked to the Internet exposure of resources. API protection being just one particular case of exposure dealt with in an integrated chain of protection. By way of example, Carrefour was able to consolidate 6 solutions on Cloudflare, optimizing costs by 50% and improving incident resolution times by 75%.

2024 will be a special year for the application world: an increase in application complexity, with 73% of application managers saying that security requirements interfered with their productivity and capacity for innovation; amplification of risks linked to the rise of generative AI; growth in fraudulent attacks on API business logic; the need for reinforced governance with the entry into force of the first standards such as PCI DSS on API security. Against this backdrop, and in this Olympic year, combining API protection with protection of all Internet exposures appears to be an essential prerequisite for the applications of companies involved in the Olympic Games, whether in the strict sense as partners, or in the broader sense, such as players in the transport, tourism or hotel industries.

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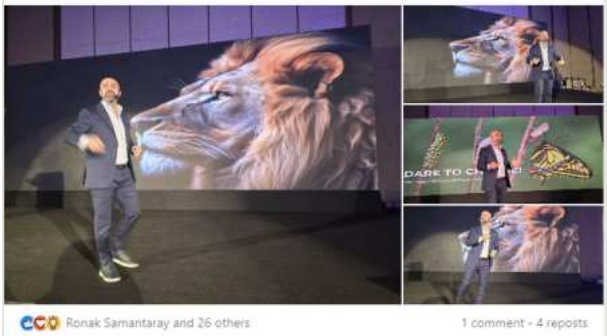

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NTT DATA appoints Thembeka Ngugi as head of marketing & demand generation

Thembeka Ngugi as Head of Marketing Demand Generation

NTT DATA has appointed Thembeka Ngugi as the company's Head of Marketing & Demand Generation for NTT DATA Middle East & Africa. The move aims to continue the acceleration of business growth in the Middle East and Africa.

Thembeka has over two decades of success in conceptualising strategic marketing plans and spearheading award-winning campaigns to reposition and enhance brand image.

Thembeka's appointment comes at a critical juncture for NTT DATA Middle East & Africa as the company is driving growth in existing regions. With her experience working in multiple sectors across Africa such as Fintech, hospitality, media, banking, mobile technology, and fast-moving consumer goods, Thembeka is known for enhancing brand image while generating revenue and increasing profit margins. Her vision aligns seamlessly with NTT DATA's goal to drive growth of the new and expanded NTT DATA portfolio in the Middle East and Africa region.

"We are thrilled to welcome Thembeka to our team," says Alan Turnley-Jones, CEO of NTT DATA Middle East and Africa. "She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this role and with her leadership we are confident in our ability to accelerate growth in the region, deepen our engagement with clients to provide a differentiated, consistent and better client experience."

interTouch appoints Rupinder Juttla as head of operations, EMEA and India

Rupinder Juttla,
as Head of Operations, EMEA and India, interTouch

interTouch has appointed of Rupinder Juttla as Head of Operations, EMEA and India. In this role, Mr Juttla will be responsible for operations and programme management as well as project delivery in the region.

With a career spanning 20 years in operations and project delivery across the hospitality and civil engineering sectors, Mr Juttla is well versed in the challenges and requirements associated with hotel openings and conversions. He has worked the past 12 years delivering solutions to the hospitality industry at GuestTek and Airangel (now Eleven Software). Mr. Juttla has extensive experience in leading multi-disciplinary and culturally diverse teams having worked in the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rupinder to our team at a time when interTouch is witnessing accelerated growth across Europe, Middle East, Africa, and India. Respected and trusted within the industry, we are confident that Rupinder's strategic approach to project management will help achieve the objectives of our key stakeholders," said Ernest Teng, Managing Director of interTouch.

Is your business ready to combat online fraud?

Let's discuss a serious topic that affects us all: online fraud. It's on the rise globally, and scammers are getting smarter by the day here in our region as well. As more people shift to online shopping, protecting our businesses and customers has never been more essential.

Sehrish Tariq
Assistant Editor
GEC Media Group

Enter PCI DSS—your reliable weapon against digital threats. PCI DSS stands for Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. If your business handles online payments, complying with PCI DSS isn't just a choice—it's a must. Ignoring it could mean facing hefty fines, damaging your reputation, and putting your customers' data at risk. The latest update to PCI DSS, version 4.0, introduces more flexible control options, strengthens MFA and password requirements, increases validation through continuous assessments, and updates encryption practices to align with best practices. Overall, PCI DSS 4.0 aims to enhance security, offer increased flexibility, and ensure robust protection of payment card data in a volatile threat environment.

To earn that coveted PCI DSS 4.0 certification, you must meet 12 core requirements. These cover everything from building a rock-solid network to monitoring who's accessing sensitive data. It's all about creating layers of defense to keep the bad guys out and your customers' information safe and sound.

However, in today's world of cloud computing, ensuring PCI DSS compliance can be a bit tricky. Public cloud providers vary in their security capabilities, so you must vet them like a pro. Plus, the flexibility of cloud setups means you need to stay on your toes, constantly updating your defenses to match evolving threats.

This is where the vital part of the channel ecosystem comes into the picture: Value Added Resellers. They're the experts who ensure that every solution they roll out for businesses integrates with the existing environment while complying with industry standards. By teaming up with them, you're not just ticking boxes—you're building a fortress.

Let's stay ahead of the curve, protect what matters most, and keep our customers coming back with confidence.

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