

Enterprise

CHANNELS

MEA

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PUSHING THE WORKPLACE BOUNDARIES

Productivity is transforming, skillsets are dispersed and human capital is diverse. If you deep dive into the blueprint of the modern workplace, you will see that the architectural blue lines are no more visible. .../24



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ANUSHREE DIXIT

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Digital transformation tops the priority list of all boardroom discussion today. Though the blueprint is set, there still lies innumerable challenges when organizations embark on new peripheries.

In 2017 and all of 2018, everything circled around customer experience. Whether it was Omni channel gateways in retail, digital banking, friendly bots, and much more.... All of this was devised and developed by keeping customer in the center. But over the years, companies have realized that digital transformation is not only about that they are serving, it also involves people (employees), process and products.

Our cover story this issue is a close look into one such topic— Borderless Enterprise—that talks about how organizations are giving the much needed workforce flexibility and introducing new-age work models in breaking the conventional workplace settings. Cloud applications, high-intensity networking infrastructure and workflow automations are becoming an integral part of internal transformation.

Furthermore, in our focus story on Digitization of Transportation and Logistics industry, we see how the key players in the region are anticipating and observing Transportation and Logistics sector shifting legacies to embrace transformation with all its might to satiate growing customer and stakeholder expectation. Beyond that, from a country perspective, our special story on Focus Africa looks into how innovative disruption is transforming the potential of the continent economically and technologically, thus creating new target markets for unprecedented consumer choice. There arises a need for complete revamp of the potential opportunities that would redefine the models of customer engagement and business development strategies.

These and much more to read in this issue of Enterprise Channels MEA.

We are also kicking off The World CIO 200 Summit this month with The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Over 200 decision makers from the kingdom will be gathering at The Movenpick Hotel, Riyadh on 11th September to cheer for the Top 30 CIOs in the Kingdom and see who makes it to the BOTS 2019.

Do stay tuned for the updates to come. ➡

Enterprise CHANNELS MEA

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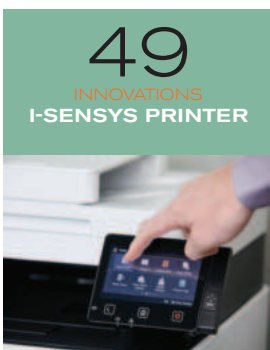
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HOSSAM EL-MASRY, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
MANAGER, GSCCO

Nutanix Helps Saudi Port Operator Future-Proof Operations

Nutanix said that the Gulf Stevedoring Contracting Company (GSCCO), a port operator in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is leveraging Nutanix software to increase IT capacity to support growing operations across Saudi port facilities while also reducing IT management overhead. This includes successfully accommodating a 50% spike in container volumes with no impact on operational efficiency.

"We wanted a solution that would deliver linear scalability to handle rapid growth in container traffic," explains Hossam El-Masry, Information Technology Manager at GSCCO. "We were also looking for greater resiliency and the ability to upgrade and manage the infrastructure without any downtime or impact in any way on the level of service provided to staff and customers at the ports we manage."

Following a comprehensive evaluation of hyperconverged solutions from a number of vendors, the team at GSCCO decided on Nutanix, whose solution enables the company to reach a milestone of 50 percent growth in container traffic well ahead of schedule while significantly lowering operational overhead.

"The Nutanix software delivered fully on its promise of cloud-like scalability, enabling us to add additional nodes in hours rather than days or even weeks with the old hardware and software, and with no downtime. We now also have a much more resilient infrastructure allowing us to keep the ports running at all times with no disruption in service during maintenance and rapid failover to our recovery site to enable us to keep the ports working should we suffer a power outage or other problem," said El-Masry.

DELL TECHNOLOGIES UNVEILS NEW ADVANCEMENTS IN SDN

At VMworld 2019, Dell Technologies unveiled new advancements in software-defined networking so customers can simplify and help lower the cost of networking in today's multi-cloud world.

"Dell EMC and VMware are rebuilding the network for the cloud era – with everything open, automated and software-defined," said Tom Burns, senior vice president & general manager, Dell EMC Networking & Solutions. "New SD-WAN solutions powered by VMware and network fabric man-

agement delivered by SmartFabric Director raise the stakes when it comes to network virtualization and security in today's highly-distributed software-defined enterprise. We're just getting started on our combined innovation."

Legacy wide area networks (WANs) struggle to keep up with the modern, multi-cloud traffic demands. At the edge, the new Dell EMC SD-WAN Solution helps customers move away from complex, slow-to-innovate and expensive branch office network-

ing to a SD-WAN platform that uses cloud capabilities and economics. Previewed at Dell Technologies World, the new solution is now globally available and supported.

This Dell EMC SD-WAN Solution delivers all-in-one simplicity – combining VMware SD-WAN by VeloCloud software available as a flexible subscription with highly-engineered and efficient modern appliances in multiple configuration options – all backed by world-class Dell EMC support,

supply chain, and services.

VMware SD-WAN by VeloCloud includes: a choice of public, private or hybrid cloud network for enterprise-grade connection to cloud and enterprise applications; branch office enterprise appliances and optional data center appliances; software-defined control and automation; and virtual services delivery. Software subscription options can be upgraded to accommodate changing business requirements for features, duration and bandwidth.

The GAVS logo is displayed in a bold, white, sans-serif font in the top left corner. The background of the entire slide features a blue-toned image of a human head in profile, composed of a wireframe mesh, with a bright, multi-colored light burst emanating from the brain area. In the top right corner, there is a red circular icon with a white dot in the center, resembling a stylized 'O' or a sensor.

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Batelco Hosts 'Batelco Talks' Session with Almoayed Technologies CEO

In light of Batelco's role as a key player in the Kingdom's ICT sector and in order to keep employees up to date with the latest technologies and trends, Batelco held its latest 'Batelco Talks' session on the subject of Digital Transformation with the CEO of Almoayed Technologies.

The session, which was delivered by Abdulla Almoayed, CEO of Almoayed Technologies highlighted the key developments and growth of digital transformation which are expected to have a significant impact within the GCC in the coming years. As part of the session, Mr. Almoayed discussed the transformation to Open-APIs which is the future, stressing Bahrain's capability to cope with this upcoming

transformation in terms of flexible and updated regulations that support the requirements of today's market and business practices. On another note, he also highlighted the importance of FinTech and data analytics which are needed to facilitate the accelerated pace of digitization.

'Batelco Talks' form bite-sized learning initiatives and are hosted monthly by Batelco. This informative session, held at Batelco Headquarters Hamala, was attended by Batelco staff and executives, with the high participation reflecting the keen interest that Batelco employees have in educational events aimed at upgrading their knowledge, particularly in the fields of ICT, communications and digital transformation.

AMD LAUNCHES 2ND GEN AMD EPYC PROCESSORS

AMD was joined at an event by an expansive ecosystem of datacenter partners and customers to introduce the 2nd Generation AMD EPYC family of processors that deliver performance leadership across a broad number of enterprise, cloud and high-performance computing (HPC) workloads. 2nd Gen AMD EPYC™ processors feature up to 64 "Zen 2" cores in leading-edge 7nm process technology to deliver record-setting performance while helping reduce total cost of ownership (TCO) by up to 50% across numerous workloads. At the event, Google and Twitter announced new 2nd Gen AMD EPYC processor deployments and HPE and Lenovo announced immediate availability of new platforms.

"Today, we set a new standard for the modern datacenter with the launch of our 2nd Gen AMD EPYC processors that deliver record-setting performance and significantly lower total cost of ownership across a broad set of workloads," said Dr. Lisa Su, president and CEO, AMD. "Adoption of our new leadership server processors is accelerating with multiple new enterprise, cloud and HPC customers choosing EPYC processors to meet their most demanding server computing needs."

MCIT, HUAWEI HOST 5G ONBOARD TRAINING PROGRAM UNDER 'THINKTECH' INITIATIVE

In collaboration with Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Huawei hosted a dedicated 5G onboard training program at MCIT's headquarter. This program is part of Huawei's ongoing 5G Roadshow in Saudi Arabia, which is touring the Kingdom to raise awareness of the next generation of 5G connectivity and seeking to develop ICT talent locally. The latest three-day training program was conducted by Huawei experts in partnership with MCIT under the umbrella of the Ministry's ThinkTech initiative, with the attendance of Dr. Ahmed Altheneyyan, Deputy Minister for Technology and Digital Capacities Development. The training provided end-to-end 5G knowledge as well as hands-on demos available within Huawei's 5G Roadshow truck. The workshop covered topics such as 5G motivation and industry trends, 5G network architecture and key technologies, as well as providing recent 5G use cases and global best practices. In addition, it touched on the key challenges facing the sector, including the procedures required to equip telecommunications networks in the Kingdom.

AIRBUS AND STC SPECIALIZED PROVIDE RELIABLE SECURE COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE HAJJ

Airbus provides mission critical communications technology to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for this year's Hajj pilgrimage.

With the implementation of its systems to ensure faster emergency response for public safety, and use of its state-of-the-

art technology, Airbus and STC Specialized ensured the smooth running of security operations which safeguard millions of visitors each year.

Various security organisations benefited from Airbus' trusted solutions which include

the slimline Th1n Tetra radio and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology. These inform dispatchers of each mobile units' location, status, and active Tetra talk groups. The information is then sent to all the relevant emergency personnel

using the STC Specialized network powered by Airbus' Tetra solution; such as, the Ministry of Hajj, the Ministry of Health, and Mecca Municipality.

Airbus' mission critical solutions facilitated the monitoring of this major event, as well as the

communication between ground staff and the control rooms, enabling them to immediately address any on-site emergency while benefitting from the stability, continuity, and reliability of Airbus technology when, and where it is needed the most.



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Veritas Delivers Cloud-Agnostic, Hybrid IT for VMware

Veritas Technologies made available its Enterprise Data Services Platform for VMware environments running on-premises or in any of the major clouds including Amazon Web Services (AWS), Microsoft Azure and Google Cloud Platform. Veritas' integrated solutions enable VMware users to manage the availability of business-critical services at the application layer, leverage flexible data protection with granular or at-scale recovery irrespective of where or in what cloud VMware runs, and gain the insights to optimize the management of their entire hybrid/multi-cloud environment from a single view.

Veritas recently launched its Enterprise Data Services Platform, which is a unified set of technologies designed to abstract the complexity of data and infrastructure management from

enterprise IT. The platform gives customers unparalleled application and data availability, protection, and insights, allowing them to manage data growth, recover from ransomware attacks, drive operational efficiency and prove compliance for on-premises, virtual and cloud environments.

"Veritas is a critical component for enterprise organizations looking to fully leverage a hybrid cloud deployment powered by VMware, while maintaining the highest resiliency levels and infrastructure flexibility possible," said Greg Hughes, chief executive officer, Veritas. "NetBackup 8.2's fully agentless architecture for VMware and API-first approach enables completely automated protection, migration, orchestration and recovery of data across any environment."

CITRIX SET TO LAUNCH DESKTOP AS A SERVICE SOLUTION FOR MICROSOFT

Citrix Systems has launched their Managed Desktops, a cloud-hosted offering that enables organizations – regardless of their size or IT expertise – to provision Windows-based applications and desktops from the cloud to any device, anywhere in a simple, unified manner.

"Work today isn't confined to physical offices or traditional devices. It happens around the clock and globe on everything from PCs and laptops to phones, tablets and even watches," said Carisa Stringer, Senior Director, Product Marketing, Desktop and Applications Group, Citrix. "With Citrix Managed Desktops, organizations can quickly and easily provide employees with access to their individual desktops and all the applications and corporate resources they need to do their jobs and perform at their best."

A turnkey service delivered in close collaboration with a robust ecosystem of Citrix partners, Citrix Managed Desktops provides everything needed to securely deliver Windows desktops and applications with simplicity and speed.



ALCATEL-LUCENT ENTERPRISE PARTNERS WITH AISLELABS

Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise has signed a strategic technology partnership with Aislelabs, a provider of advanced cloud based Wi-Fi location marketing and analytics. The partnership will enhance the deployment of the ALE WLAN solution by combining it with Aislelabs' analytics platform to unlock the hidden potential of Wi-Fi infrastructure by turning WLAN into a powerful location and behavioral analysis tool.

EQUINIX AND VMWARE PARTNER

Equinix has expanded partnership with VMware to support VMware Cloud on Dell EMC on Platform Equinix. Enterprises must focus on ensuring the availability, performance, security and reliability of a massive set of applications while operating in a cost-effective and scalable manner. To meet these evolving needs, Equinix and VMware are teaming together to develop solutions to help enterprises accelerate hybrid cloud transformations based on VMware Cloud on Dell EMC within Equinix International Business Exchange data centers.

AUTOMATION ANYWHERE ACQUIRES KLEVOPS

Automation Anywhere has acquired Klevops. With the acquisition, Automation Anywhere fast forwards the RPA category to Attended Automation 2.0, where managers can easily orchestrate workstreams across a team of employees and bots, driving a higher level of employee productivity and improved customer experience. This enables customers to automate more processes than ever before, with the same level of central governance, security and analytic capability for which Automation Anywhere has always been known.

BRAXTONE PARTNERS WITH BEYONTEC

Beyontec Solutions recently entered into a strategic partnership with Braxtone, a leading provider of recovery and professional services for insurance, to offer a comprehensive automated motor claims recovery solution for insurance companies in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.



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 SEAGATE

MDSap Partners with SAP's 'Moving Experience' Initiative



In a significant first to support the region's digital transformation, MDSap, a gold partner of SAP and expert in SAP's Platform and Technology (P&T) solutions, has launched a unique 'Moving Experience' – a compelling roadshow that presents how digitization can sharpen business efficiency and productivity.

With MDSap as the Digital sponsor of the initiative, SAP will lead the initiative, which aims at promoting better story-telling to clearly communicate how SAP Platform and Technology solutions can transform businesses.

Travelling across the UAE and Oman to the premises of the customers until September, the 'Moving Experience' will provide a credible and bespoke onboarding experience for customers on how SAP technologies can transform their business through compelling demos.

Tony Achkar, Group Managing Director and EVP of MDSap said, "The Moving Experience is a creative knowledge-sharing initiative that aims to provide customers with a real-world experience of how SAP technology can help them unlock their true potential. We believe that advances in technology must not be confined to board room meetings. We must take the message to the customers and ensure that we engage them with a narrative that demystifies technology and ensures they can understand better, learn more and make informed decisions. The initiative is in line with our commitment to the 'smart transformation' plans of the regional governments. We aim to take the 'Moving Experience' to new geographies and foster a culture of stronger engagement with our customers."

EMT DISTRIBUTION EXPANDS PARTNERSHIP WITH PROGRESS

emt Distribution is expanding its activities with Progress to the Turkey and Africa regions.

"Given their deep regional expertise, wide channel base and proven technical capabilities, we're excited to expand our partnership activities with emt Distribution," said Gary Quinn, SVP, Core Products Sales, Progress. "This move further demonstrates our commitment to supporting our customers and channel partners in the growing META region."

Speaking about the new expansion, Mohd Mobasseri, CEO at emt Distribution, said, "We have had almost six years of great experience with Ipswitch in the Middle East region, with successful growth and a close partnership. We have agreed now to share our expertise in other regions as well and grow the markets in Turkey and Africa. As the oldest training center of Progress in the region we commit to have an extraordinary plan for educating our partners in the new regions too and deliver the real value of distribution of all Progress Ipswitch products."

OMANI PHARMACY CHAIN RELIES ON INFINET WIRELESS FOR ALWAYS-ON CONNECTIVITY

InfiNet Wireless successfully delivered a comprehensive communication infrastructure to Muscat Pharmacy & Stores LLC.

Operating over an extensive network of more than 200 suppliers, across 69 outlets, the company selected InfiNet Wireless' industry-leading solutions in response to grow-

ing requirements for always-on connectivity and higher bandwidth. The upgrade guarantees that the pharmacy employees have real-time, 24/7 access to business-critical and patient experience enhancing applications as well as provides the IT team with a future proofed digital platform to meet expansion requirements.

Elaborating on the decision to select InfiNet Wireless, Ajith Kumar, Network & Security Administrator at Muscat Pharmacy & Stores LLC said, "With several implementations across the Middle East, InfiNet clearly has a strong reputation in the market as a quality company; so right off the bat, that gave us a degree of

confidence. Secondly, from a cost-performance standpoint, InfiNet stood head and shoulders above all the other vendors. Finally, and this is what really made the decision an easy one for us, the technical support from InfiNet and the HTC team was outstanding throughout the evaluation phases."



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Visa Named Founding & Official Payment Partner for Coca-Cola Arena

Visa unveiled a strategic partnership with Dubai's new Coca-Cola Arena. The multi-year partnership presents Visa cardholders and clients with exclusive pre-sale access to world-class events and unprecedented experiences for them including backstage experiences.

The partnership aligns with Coca-Cola Arena's cashless ambition and goal of becoming the region's most technologically advanced arena by leveraging Visa's digital payments expertise. Recently, Visa hosted Coca-Cola Arena representatives at its regional Innovation Center in Dubai to showcase Visa's latest payments technology and explore creating solutions to enhance the arena's customer experience.

The Coca-Cola Arena has 100 percent contactless acceptance with contactless-enabled POS terminals across all concession stands. There are plans to eventually transition to cash-free concession stands in the future. Visitors will be

able to experience Visa's multi-sensory branding including sound, animation and haptic cues when they pay with Visa at the arena.

Located at City Walk, the Coca-Cola Arena is capable of hosting live shows all year round with a capacity of 17,000, including international touring artists, local events, sporting tournaments, e-gaming, comedy, theatre and musical performances, conferences, and gala dinners.

Guy Ngata, AEG Ogden's CEO of Coca-Cola Arena, commented: "Coca-Cola Arena is delighted to welcome Visa on board as newest Founding and Official Payment Partner. We look forward to working closely with Visa from showcasing the very best events and providing world-class experiences for our patrons and clients. There is no doubting our partnership with Visa will further support our ambition to be the leading entertainment arena in the MENA region which is at the forefront of cashless technology."

MOVEMENTS



Nexans appoints [ARAFAT YOUSEF](#) as Managing Director for MEA



Dell Technologies appoints [VANGELIS LAGOUSAKOS](#) as Senior Director, Channel for MERAT



Gulf Business Machines appoints [AMR REFAAT](#) as CEO

NUMBER GAME

\$17.5Bn

KSA Logistics and Warehousing Market expected to reach over USD 17.5 Billion by 2023: Ken Research



WEB CLIPS

ENOC GROUP WINS THE SPLO AWARD

ENOC Group is the world's first energy company to have won the coveted Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council (SPLC) Award in Portland, USA at the 2019 SPLC Summit organised by the US based not-for-profit organisation. The Group was awarded under the 'Sustainable Purchasing Business Case Leadership' category for showcasing its business value generated by adopting sustainability principles in its operation as well as implementing sustainable purchasing standards.

CAFU TO PROVIDE ON-DEMAND VEHICLE MAINTENANCE SERVICES

The MENA region's first-ever fuel on-demand mobile application, CAFU has announced the expansion of its services, by introducing "CAFU Essentials." A new service under the CAFU brand, "CAFU Essentials" will provide on-demand maintenance services such as oil, battery and tire change as well as fuel system cleaning for motorists across Dubai, Sharjah, and Ajman. Users will be able to enjoy these services through the CAFU app.

MCIT AND NOKIA TO LAUNCH R&D UNIT IN SAUDI ARABIA

The Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology entered into an agreement with Nokia to launch Nokia R&D unit for developing software in Saudi Arabia. The agreement has been signed by H.E Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Eng. Haitham Bin Abdul-Rahman Al-Ohali, and Amr K. El Leithy, Head of the Middle East and Africa Market, Nokia, in the presence of H.E Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Eng. Abdullah Bin Amer Alswaha and Rajeev Suri, the President and CEO of Nokia as well as a number of officials and dignitaries of both the parties.

COMMVAULT ACQUIRES HEDVIG

Commvault has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire software-defined storage (SDS) innovator, Hedvig, for total consideration of \$225 million, which includes the purchase price and ongoing employee retention.



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Employee Wellness Engagement Comes of Age in UAE

Healthigo announces wide spread adoption of Corporate Connect – the employee wellness dashboard that empowers Human Resources to enhance employees' health and wellbeing.

Corporate Connect, launched in February 2019 offers a wide range of unique points of engagement aimed at improving employee health, wellness and welfare. Corporate enterprises can now enable easy access to healthcare mapped their insurance, increase productivity of their employees, reduce health related workplace absenteeism, and reduce healthcare costs – all using one single platform.

Sign up for the Free-To-Use Corporate Connect platform is simple and employee onboarding is done in easy steps. Corporates can automatically map their health insurance network to supported healthcare providers enabling an insurance mapped search and instant Doctor's appointment

booking, enhance employee welfare initiatives by offering free rides to and from Doctor's appointments, increase engagement by distributing select health & wellness offers and promotions, and engage employees into wellness programs and events within their premises.

By leveraging insightful and actionable data available to HR, Healthigo helps organizations create a better health and wellness experience based on the company's and employee's preferences and wellness goals, improve productivity and reduce medical insurance costs.

Large corporations like Emirates NBD, DU, EMAAR, IKEA, Apparel Group, Danube, Nestle, DHL and DAMAC among others have engaged with Healthigo's Corporate Connect program to bring healthcare providers closer to over 92,000 employees.

AVEVA LAUNCHES UNIFIED OPERATIONS CENTER

AVEVA launched Unified Operations Center, its command-and-control solution for infrastructure operators such as smart cities and facilities management, and for industries like Oil & Gas and Mining.

Working side-by-side with companies in these verticals, AVEVA has turned best practices into templated solutions that are repeatable, scalable and adaptable, enabling fast implementation and return on investment. Organizations such as the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), Assmang Proprietary Ltd and the city of Atal Nagar in India have pioneered early versions of this tailored approach and have realized reductions in project implementation times by as much as 60% over the more time-intensive process of integrating bespoke solutions.

The Unified Operations Center is a central hub that transforms the control room into a collaborative workspace. Functional silos are broken down by contextualizing operational and business data to enable teams to make better decisions based on accurate, real-time information. AVEVA is the first to provide a single solution that integrates IT and OT (Operational Technology) applications in a central hub, enhanced by industry-specific customizations.

ARRAY NETWORKS INAUGURATES NEW FACILITY IN DUBAI

Array Networks is relocating its UAE branch office to a new prime location at DMCC, situated at the heart of Jumeirah Lake Towers (JLT) Dubai. The new office comes with the world-class services, leading infrastructure and vibrant community. The movement to one of the prime location in Dubai aims at improved performances, offering boundless opportunities for global market development plans, accommodating rising headcount — supporting record sales, revenue and steady growth. "We are excited to invest in and build a deeper rapport with the UAE business community. Relocating to a new working space at DMCC, a dedicated global center for more than fifteen thousand businesses, not only fits our strategic needs, but gives us a fresh, new landscape for building better experiences. The new space has been chosen to foster collaboration and innovation while incorporating elements of Array's successful journey in the Middle East so far," said Srinivas Vege, Regional Director – Sales -ME & Africa at Array Networks.

INNOVATE 1 PAY BRINGS ITS REVOLUTIONARY INCLUSIVE BANKING APPROACH TO DUBAI

Innovate 1 Pay is launching its Dubai office, bringing easy and seamless money transfer and payment services to African expatriates in the region. Innovate 1 pay is licensed by the Central Bank of Nigeria to provide services including international money transfers and wholesale foreign exchange management, as well as being the exclusive distributor of foreign currency to Bureau de Change (BDC) operators in Northern Nigeria.

Africa is set to surpass China and India as a job market by 2040, and with the recent visa reforms in the UAE, Dubai has emerged as an attractive destination for Africans to pursue career advancement and professional fulfillment. Innovate 1 Pay's secure and convenient payment gateway and financial services platform, which integrates seamlessly between Dubai and several African nations, looks set to emerge as the solution to address this expanding market

segment and its unmet needs.

Innovate 1 Pay Chairman Mahmood Ahmadu articulates the opportunity by positioning his vision from a human-centric and ease of transaction perspective. "With the maturing of financial markets in Africa, we have expanded our presence to a total of 56 countries currently, and with the promise that the new UAE visa regime holds for African professionals, we believe the prospects for growth in addressing this

demographic is very promising indeed" he said. "The next generation of financial services needs to reflect customer expectations around secure and quick transfer of funds. Our relationship with government bodies and comprehensive presence in the African market positions Innovate 1 uniquely in being able to leverage these strengths, and amplify them with the use of appropriate and user friendly technologies", Mahmood Ahmadu added.

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Virus Rescuers hosts a gala night for IT and Security Professionals

Virus Rescuers hosts a gala night for IT and security professionals. The half-day event included a number of sessions and panel discussions by companies like Blackberry Cylance, Unitrends and Kemp.

At the event, BlackBerry Cylance highlighted the importance of autonomous security driven by artificial intelligence that is purely designed to stay ahead of online threats and attackers. —, Unitrends (Provide Company description) presented on how to increase uptime, productivity, and confidence in a world in which IT profes-

sionals must do more with less. Their all-in-one backup appliances simplify data protection, application spin-up, and SLA policy automation. Kemp showcased how 360 platform supports hundreds of user cases across any combination of platform types, including physical, virtual, cloud, or multi-cloud environments.

Satyan Jham, Founder & CEO – Virus Rescuers says “It is very encouraging to see technology companies coming forward to discuss and raise awareness about cyber security and data theft, which is always an alarming aspect in any field

of business. In addition, the UAE National Cybersecurity Strategy encourages emerging technologies and provides endless opportunities in the cyberspace while taking into account the risks of phishing and hacking that it brings with it. I look forward to more number of participants in the next chapter addressing key cyber threats. I would like to thank all our partners who attended the event and made it a huge success.”

The attendees list had senior executives from leading technology organizations in the UAE.

BATTERJEE MEDICAL COLLEGE SELECTS BLACKBOARD LEARN ULTRA

Batterjee Medical College (BMC), the largest specialised private medical college in Saudi Arabia, has selected Blackboard Learn Ultra as the new Learning Management System (LMS) for more than 2,000 students. BMC, which will be among the first institutions in the Middle East to embrace cloud computing, will leverage Learn Ultra to introduce blended learning, employ new interactive assessment methods and enable anywhere-anytime teaching and

learning opportunities.

“In line with Saudi’s Vision 2030 educational objectives, BMC has embarked on a digital transformation process,” said BMC Dean, Dr. Osama A. Kensara. “That’s why we decided to replace a homegrown solution with a new cloud-based LMS and reap the benefits of this type of deployment, including zero downtime updates and quicker delivery of enhancements and new features.” After thorough evaluation,

BMC selected Blackboard Learn Ultra over competing solutions for its user-friendly interface, its powerful features and its streamlined workflows.

“We wanted to take teaching and learning to the next level but found we could not implement innovative strategies without a powerful, flexible LMS to support our teachers and our learners,” said Dr Maher N. Alandijany, Quality Assurance Consultant at BMC.

Telephony Group Awarded by Alleem Business Congress

ATelephony Group of companies were recently awarded by Alleem Business Congress for Energy Management and Smart City initiative across the region. The company was recognized for the award for initiating innovative smart solutions and services on Energy Management and smart city solutions.

Sheikh Ahmed Khalid Alqasimi received

the award on behalf of the company at the 11th Annual Sustainable Development Congress week held in Sharjah Chamber of Commerce. The event was organized by Alleem Business Congress and headed by Dr.Rashid Alleem Chairman of Sharjah Electricity and Water Authority (SEWA).

Shefiq Abdulla, Chief Operation Officer and Thaha Hussain, Director Mobility and Converged

solution of Telephony Group of Companies joined the event.

Shefiq Abdulla said: “Telephony is honored to receive this prestigious award. This recognition inspires our entire team and organization to innovate and introduce the most advanced technology for the nation and society to enhance their lifestyle.”

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CIO 200 Saudi Arabia Edition to be Held Under the Patronage of MCIT



Brought by Global CIO Forum and organized by GEC Media Group, The World CIO 200 Summit will be held in Saudi Arabia under the patronage of The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology on 11th September 2019, celebrating the achievements of the digital leaders. The event will felicitate the IT leaders of 14 countries this year.

The World CIO 200 event is designed with country specific briefings, TechTALKs, excellent networking sessions, etc. The event shares technology insights and celebrates the success of entire industry.

“TechTALK” is one of the niche segments where the ICT industry’s leading solution providers

share the dais with four key end users discussing problems, opportunities, challenges and solutions.

Setting a global benchmark in 2018, the CIO 200 event has been testified as one of the most objective oriented events in terms of having all the right elements on the platform for spearheading the digital transformation champions.

Held under the Global CIO Forum, the CIO 200 is a multi-country CIO felicitation ceremony that recognizes the achievements of the digital leaders of today. The CIO 200 is not a competition but a celebration of the amazing lives of the CIOs and their career span. After touring 10 countries in 2018, the awards in 2019 would be going to 14 countries that include – UAE, KSA, Bahrain,

Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Ghana, Kenya, Egypt, India, Atlanta, Canada, Singapore and South Africa.

Starting September from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the roadshow will culminate in a 2-day gala event in UAE on December 10th and 11th with the unveiling of the second edition of BOTS.

Commenting on the CIO 200 Awards, Tushar Sahoo, Managing Director, GEC Media Group said – “Today, the role of a CIO is one of the most critical and they hold the future of innovation. The World CIO 200 celebrates their achievements in this industry. The World CIO 200 Summit is of great importance in terms of knowledge sharing and networking.”

TFG DELIVERS SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SHOPPING EXPERIENCES WITH PURE STORAGE

Pure Storage said that it has been adopted by The Foschini Group Ltd (TFG). Pure’s solutions will allow TFG to empower over 23,000 employees with the technology and tools they need to build meaningful and lasting relationships with customers while intelligently managing stock levels through the group’s TFG Infotec service division,

which oversees the company’s IT infrastructure.

With more than 4,000 outlets in 32 countries, and annual revenues of around ZAR 34 billion (USD 2.3 billion), TFG is a leader in South Africa’s clothing-retail segment. Modern customers, who are digital natives, represent the majority of

TFG’s consumer base. This audience expects multiple options for engagement, including a brick-and-mortar presence, online shopping, apps and social media. Delivering this superior experience and accompanying customer support is no mean feat. In order to satisfy the needs of these shoppers, employees must have access to up-to-the-minute

intelligence. The information ecosystem required to realise this must be built on speedy, reliable access to data, and modern infrastructure that provides high performance, while offering cost-effectiveness. By choosing Pure, TFG made significant gains in the performance and availability of business-critical applications.

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IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF ERP SOFTWARE?



■ ALI HYDER, GROUP CEO, FOCUS SOFTNET

While Artificial Intelligence technology is still in relative infancy, the new machine learning is making serious waves in the software market and making inroads into business management applications, endowing them with the power of superior governance structure.

IMPACT OF AI ON INDUSTRIES

AI has the potential to bring change on a wide scale to companies, where the customer and operational data is primary to the business. Naturally, it's unfair to single out any one industry vertical. While that being said and every industry have its share in the benefits, the impact of the new technology is most prominent in process-heavy and data-intensive sectors that have the highest dependency on future predictions done on the basis of historic information.

AI IN MANUFACTURING

With the introduction of AI and machine learning, manufacturing companies can take a leap into a digital future to achieve most improved process optimization. AI technology augments manufacturing efficiency to ensure faster production is less time. Right from planned preventative maintenance to every other operation performed in any manufacturing plant, AI would revolutionize them and make them more efficient and less prone to errors.

AI IN RETAIL

AI would bring change in the way retail businesses function today. It would enable retailers to use augmented and virtual reality functionalities

in advertising, introduce immersive product catalog visualization to dramatically improve shoppers' experience with the products even before they buy. Artificial intelligence is bound to transform the future of ERP solutions. The new machine learning technology that appears to emulate human actions would influence businesses, regardless of size or industry.

AI as a part of your ERP system would affect the very essence of daily operations. The smart technology recognizes the users' behavior pattern and automatically performs the routine tasks they do in the blink of an eye while maintaining an unprecedented level of accuracy. In order to experience this advancement, you need to revise the current technology strategies of your business and be prepared to embrace the change and adapt to the developments.

AI IS TRANSFORMING THE WAY ERP FUNCTIONS

Here are the three primary benefits of the new technology:

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEMS EVEN BEFORE THEY OCCUR

AI integration improves forecasting capabilities of an ERP software. It includes advanced algorithms that can search through and analyze the massive data sets collected in the ERP system, identify the trends, and make predictions about the upcoming periods. This way, an AI-based system is able to pinpoint or detect the possible problems, enabling users to prepare in advance and even prevent them. AI-run ERP systems enable you to unlock

the hidden potential of your business data and use it to manage functionalities with optimal efficiency.

AUTOMATES ROUTINE TASKS WITH SYSTEM INTELLIGENCE

You need to follow a defined set of methodology while performing any given task within your ERP system. AI tools can function in a similar fashion. For this, an AI system needs to be programmed with a set of governing rules against each action. The technology is intelligent enough to apply these assigned rules to make decisions that are accurate and at the same time much faster compared to any human. Consequently, AI-enabled ERP systems automate routine responsibilities and makes them as effortless as possible; freeing up your employees' valuable time to focus on tasks that would add to the profitability of your business.

IMPROVES USER EXPERIENCE THROUGH INTERACTION

One of the main functions of AI is to provide intelligent outputs based on human inputs. AI system can read historic data and learn from earlier behavioral patterns of the users. This makes AI-enabled ERP applications provide an extensively personalized experience to the user as well as function faster and in a more useful way.

Although AI has not fully arrived, it is going to be a part of the ERP systems in no time! So, you must be ready for this adaptation if you want your business to sustain and remain competitive in the years to come. 🚀

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PUSHING THE WORKPLACE BOUNDARIES

Productivity is transforming, skillsets are dispersed and human capital is diverse. If you deep dive into the blueprint of the modern workplace, you will see that the architectural blue lines are no more visible. Advanced cyber attack techniques are definitely challenging the growth of this market, yet the future of workplace is borderless.

■ BY: DIVSHA BHAT <DIVSHA@GECMEDIAGROUP.COM>
■ PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

The growth of the borderless enterprise is developing to become more connected while the speed at which it has allowed for digital transformation to take shape is unprecedented. The traditional infrastructure-centric approach is being overrun by many options including SaaS, IaaS, etc. These new solutions are generating the opportunity for the borderless enterprise to span across time zones and firewalls all with the help of Edge computing and IoT. This has had major implications on the way enterprises operate in the Middle East and around the globe. IDC predicts that by 2020, at least 55% of the world's businesses will be digitally determined, transforming markets and reimagining the future through the implementation of new business patterns and the provision of digitally enabled products and services.





“WHILE ADOPTING APPS, CONTENT AND NETWORKS, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR COMPANIES TO BEAR IN MIND THE RISK OF CYBERATTACKS AND PROTECT SENSITIVE INFORMATION,”

ALI KADDOURA,
UAE COUNTRY MANAGER AT CITRIX



“WE AIM TO CONTINUE UPSTREAM WITH OUR FOCUS FIXED ON TRANSFORMING PRODUCTIVITY AND COLLABORATION BY SETTING THE SCENE FOR HELPING PEOPLE WORK SMARTER WITH INNOVATIVE EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES,”

DR. CHRIS COOPER,
GM, LENOVO DCG META.



“WE HAVE BEEN COMMITTED TO INTEROPERABILITY FROM THE START, AND WE ARE KEEN TO HELP OUR CUSTOMERS STREAMLINE THEIR FLOW OF BUSINESS DOCUMENTS,”

LUIS ORTEGA,
MANAGING DIRECTOR FOR MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA, PAGERO

CHALLENGES FACED

As exciting and versatile as the concept of borderless enterprise is, it does open us a whole new dimension of challenges for the IT departments. With the loss of the infrastructure-centric approach characteristic of legacy systems, centralized management and visibility are lost. It becomes increasingly difficult to monitor problems and address them in such a way that promises minimal downtime.

“As more business-critical applications are deployed, the lack of centralized management and visibility can easily dilute the benefits when services are not available to customers, partners and/or employees. This is where Edge Computing and IoT become crucial for efficiency. When data that is collected from remote sensors, smartphones, tablets, and machines, is analysed, Edge and IoT capabilities enhance the ability to do so in real time – ensuring the outcomes are immediately actionable for personnel at the site. Today’s businesses are tasked with doing more with less, and at Lenovo DCG, we pride ourselves with providing the solutions with the added efficiency that not only puts more computing

power in the hands of users at lower relative cost, it helps save energy and frees organizations up to allocate valuable resources toward additional functionality,” said Dr. Chris Cooper, General Manager for Lenovo DCG, Middle East, Turkey and Africa.

Riverbed points out that End-user-experience (EuE) is one of the most important KPIs for C-level executives today. In the borderless enterprise, it is also one of their biggest challenge because in this model, employees need to access data from anywhere and anytime – with the same efficiency as their counterparts who are based in headquarters. This raises the critical question of how you can control access and the performance of applications, when users are connecting via insecure devices and networks.

According to ServiceNow, borderless enterprise is not a new topic but has rapidly accelerated with the proliferation of cloud

platforms and the promise of endless elasticity and capacity, anywhere, anytime, and on any device! A decentralized model does however come with some challenges and perils, not too dissimilar to outsourcing models of yester year. A lack of control, or centralized management and oversight can lead to anxiety when service disruptions or outages occur, putting pressure on relationships and Vendor/Supplier management in a way not seen previously.

Chris Pope, VP Innovation at ServiceNow says that we need to adopt an outside-in approach and think of new ways and models to solve challenges in providing services in an acceptable way. “Removing borders does not remove accountability or responsibility — if anything it requires a clearer and crisper focus on what’s important, when it’s important and to whom. Productivity, efficiency, security, compliance, modernization, relevance, adaptability are all big words but have their place and importance in many situations. Flexibility holds great promise, enabling organizations to pivot and move based on new requirements or underperforming service providers, but in reality, that’s hard to do.



“WE ARE EMPOWERING BUSINESSES TO BUILD STATE-OF-THE-ART SD-WAN NETWORKS THAT LEVERAGE THE POWER AND FLEXIBILITY OF THE INTERNET,”

CHARBEL KHNEISSER,
REGIONAL PRESALES DIRECTOR, EMEA EMERGING MARKETS, RIVERBED



“A LACK OF CONTROL, OR CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT CAN LEAD TO ANXIETY WHEN SERVICE DISRUPTIONS OR OUTAGES OCCUR, PUTTING PRESSURE ON RELATIONSHIPS AND VENDOR/SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT IN A WAY NOT SEEN PREVIOUSLY,”

CHRIS POPE,
VP – INNOVATION, SERVICENOW

Instead of the proverbial ‘all eggs in one basket’, the services are now in different baskets and geographically dispersed. Further complicating matters is the fact that the skills and talent needed to manage services in this new world are different from the traditional ones, putting pressure on organizations to either upskill existing resources or acquire them.”

TRANSITION TO BORDERLESS ENTERPRISE

In the transformation process of companies that aim to become borderless, IT departments are asked not only to deliver IT services but also to improve business outcomes. Employees demand anytime, anywhere access to a wide range of apps and personal devices. The cloud is offering more choices than ever before, and this requires careful orchestration of hybrid and multi-cloud environments, to drive innovation and agility. While adopting apps, content and networks, it is important for companies to bear in mind the risk of cyberattacks and protect sensitive information says Citrix.

Ali Kaddoura, UAE Country Manager at Citrix points out six strategies that will help customers meet the challenges and simplify infrastructures while providing centralized control. 1) Focus resources on accelerating business outcomes; 2) Enable users to work from anywhere; 3) Invest in Innovation; 4) Get serious about Security; 5) Be Global; 6) Getting ahead of IT complexity doesn't have to be hard

Also, majority of the companies have put a foot forward in solving the main challenges of borderless enterprise. Riverbed developed the industry's first and only solution that significantly

accelerates the performance of leading SaaS apps, such as O365, Salesforce, ServiceNow and Box, by up to 10 times. “We have also formed technology alliances with Microsoft, Amazon Web Services and other major cloud vendors so application acceleration for their platforms can be enabled by purchasing our performance optimization solutions directly from their web stores,” said Charbel Khneisser, Regional Presales Director, EMEA Emerging Markets, Riverbed.

Pagero are building the world's largest, open business network. With cloud-based network, their customers can reach any business, anywhere in the world – no matter how many borders their operations cross. “We take care of the technical and regulatory requirements across the entire order-to-cash, purchase-to-pay and freight processes, to provide data accuracy and security, transparency and real-time visibility. We have been committed to interoperability from the start, and we are keen to help our customers streamline their flow of business documents. Pagero has agreements with a large number of other operators, and our network is constantly growing. Our goal is to make it possible for our customers to reach as many other companies as possible in both the private and public sectors, worldwide,” commented Luis Ortega, Managing Director for Middle East & Africa, Pagero.

The borderless enterprise is a new reality for the IT departments. If proper measures are taken to mitigate the hurdles, the advantages it brings to the organizations are worthy. ➤



CHALLENGES

- Increased Mobile Phone Usage
- Lack of Control of Downtime/Availability
- Lack of Control of Customer/Employee Access

LET'S FIND A WAY!

ADNAN SHAHID, CEO OF TPL MAPS AND BOARD MEMBER OF TPL INTERNATIONAL WAS RECENTLY IN DUBAI. ENTERPRISE CHANNELS MEA CAUGHT UP WITH HIM FOR A RENDEZVOUS ON THE VISION OF TPL MAPS IN CREATING A DIGITAL WORLD THAT NURTURES CONNECTED COMMUNITIES AND AIMS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE. THE COMPANY RECENTLY ANNOUNCED ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH HERE TECHNOLOGIES TO OFFER HIGH-QUALITY MAPS OF THE REGION FOR ALL ITS CUSTOMER SEGMENTS, INCLUDING AUTOMOTIVE, TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS, TECHNOLOGY, MEDIA AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

■ BY: ANUSHREE DIXIT <ANUSHREE@GECMEDIAGROUP.COM>

TPL Maps, a part of the TPL Corp was launched in 2016 and is the first indigenous digital mapping company of Pakistan providing GIS-based scalable solutions to businesses with the aim of contributing data to the community.

According to Adnan Shahid, CEO of TPL Maps, location-based data would define the future of business. Whether its e-commerce, food delivery, logistics company or companies like uber.... Location-based data would be the key. Industry analytics are predicting a five-fold increase in revenues coming from location-based services. "According to a report, by 2021 the location-based services market will generate ninety-six billion dollars in revenue.

According to Adnan, TPL Maps have always considered its operations into multi-use solutions. With the help of its steady tools, the developers have profoundly developed various features of the Map-based application. These features include offline calculation of different routes, turn overs, high frequency of visual geographic locations, street view, traffic indication, an advanced search of places, offline maps and view of the 3D structure

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

TPL Maps provides innovation & customization of data to provide solutions to the local government and private sector. The data generated from TPL Maps survey includes geo spatial data, driver behaviors, road conditions, traffic data, 3D maps, street vision etc. "TPL Maps does everything to localize and map up things from road networks to houses to commercial areas," says Adnan. "With our expert surveys, we are in a unique position to research, analyze and build

intelligent data, whilst topping it up with cool technologies." He adds "For example, our area mapping or detection survey measures the width of a certain road and explores the number of green areas that it connects, the number of schools and hospitals in that area and various other factors that act as differentiators in mapping expensive areas as compared to unmanaged areas or irregular houses, tiny roads. The results or data generated from these surveys are then offered as services to people or companies who wish to build new offices or institutions in that particular place. As an example, if a bank is looking out to open its next branch, or there is a telecom company looking out to put up their tower or broadband infrastructure etc, our services come handy."

"Today, if you are booking any hotel you have access to details of the location of the hotel, its star rating, types of cuisine available, and to some extent about the availability of the room and services available. But at TPL Maps we see the future in a different way. With location-based services the information that guests will have is much more customized and in depth. Imagine you stepping out of the car and once you are on the network you have access to details like which elevators to take, where is the café located, what is the seating space like, which corridor goes to your room etc. Imagine the same scenario in a supermarket. Shoppers will be able to identify the shelves based on required products, discount available etc."

MAPPING THE GLOBE

Adnan joined TPL Maps with his eyes on the globe. "I could see TPL Maps as a very promising start-up. The technology



ADNAN SHAHID,

CEO OF TPL MAPS

Here Technologies to bring improved navigation solutions for high-end vehicles in Pakistan. TPL Maps is also the exclusive partner of What3words, the top mapping startup in the world being used by Mercedes and Ford, and Inrix; the world's largest traffic data company based out of USA which shows TPL Maps' commitment to bring innovative technology to Pakistan. Data from TPL Maps will allow HERE Technologies to offer high-quality maps of the region for all its customer segments, including automotive, transport and logistics, technology, media and telecommunications and the public sector. TPL Maps will become a go-to market partner for HERE Technologies in Pakistan, the UAE and other markets of the Middle East and Africa. The two companies aim to meet the needs of the region's rapidly growing economies and middle-classes' increasing consumption of products and services.

THE INNOVATION DNA

Adnan says that consistent innovation is in the DNA of TPL Maps. "We believe in providing our customers with the best possible mapping solutions. Our technology is next-gen and our R&D teams are continuously working on improving the technology further. All our efforts are driven in the direction to establish ourselves as a cutting-edge technology company that offers the most comprehensive services to the customers. "TPL maps have been developed indigenously and we firmly believe that these localized mapping solutions will provide a holistic navigational experience to people all over Pakistan. Globally, maps have taken the center stage for e-commerce, fintech, advertising and games. Today we have enabled Pakistan to leverage the power of Maps for businesses, consumers and the Government sector."

Adnan says that the vision of the company is to create a digital world of connected community where TPL Maps can offer services to improve the lives of the people. ■

that the company was using was next-gen and this is what brought me here. My responsibility is to take this company on a global pedestal and build meaningful partnerships that will further accelerate this vision.

Adnan believes that UAE, especially Dubai, is the right place to invest and exploit these technologies and the infrastructure and the government is geared up to embrace these technologies. "A country where the government is standing strong in support of emerging technologies, there is no dead-end for innovation. Going with the recent

pace, that day is not far when location-based service will be used in public transports like metro... or maybe the flying taxi in the future." Adnan says that the vision of TPL Maps is to provide services that are customized as per the country or the people residing. Adnan will be focused on expanding the technology that TPL Maps has into this region. The company's recent partnership with HERE technologies is one pivotal step towards further strengthening this. Bringing more innovation in the navigation domain, the company has aligned themselves with global mapping player,

OFFICES OF THE FUTURE: HOW CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY IS DRIVING BUSINESSES?



■ RAMZI ITANI VICE PRESIDENT MEA, BARCO

Let's face it – we live in a time where digital technology has become the avenue for trade and investment. We are at the brink of the fourth industrial revolution where smart consumer devices surround us and enable us with the freedom to connect with anyone, anytime and anywhere, leading the enterprise world into the era of BYOD. The popular term, which stands for Bring Your Own Device, refers to the practice of allowing employees to connect to the enterprise network for work purposes on their own devices such as mobiles, laptops and tablets.

The benefits to both the employer and employee are many, resulting in BYOD becoming a standard practice across the world. The UAE has been quick to catch on, with many enterprises already imbibing BYOD in their practice, and adopting the culture of remote working and flexible working hours that the practice enables.

Professionals are increasingly expecting to work with companies that allow them to use their own, more familiar devices, while at the same time businesses are welcoming the benefits of cost saving and employee satisfaction to drive growth. Across enterprises, we see the influence of BYOD drive a transition that is taking shape in many forms. A recent survey, for example, shows companies that adopt this approach see a 37 percent increase in employee satisfaction.

REIMAGINED OFFICES

As an extension to this trend is the growth of remote offices, connected via digital interfaces. A 2018 study shows that up to 60 percent UAE employees work from home once a week, while

a phenomenal 52 percent work remotely for half the week.

Understandably, a virtual meeting and co-working set-up not only saves time and resources, but also reduces stress amongst employees, providing a more conducive work ecosystem. As a result, research shows that remote offices are no longer the mainstay of start-ups alone, but are now being widely embraced by large corporations as well.

DRAWING THE LINE

For the IT decision-makers in larger corporates, these changes can be unprecedented in their scale, as much as they are worrying from a security standpoint. While the benefits are many, if not managed well and with the right technology, employee guidelines and risk-mitigation procedures, BYOD can pose its own risks. The question here is, can we create a robust IT environment when there are factors impacting the business that are external and in many cases out of reach? Sure, it is possible, with the right checks and balances.

1. Putting a handle on BYOD risk – The notion of a 100 percent secure workplace is as good as a myth. As long as corporates continue to update their technology, they will be less exposed to threats as updating your firmware might contain fixes for security weaknesses. A lost, stolen, hacked device or data breaches would be a top concern for many employers. What's more, employers often cannot assess data breach exposure on unmanaged BYODs as these devices do surpass the many filters that organisations usually apply to corporate phones. Consider the

exposure posed by a meeting collaboration system in a highly confidential board meeting. Using a secure collaborative meeting solution such as the ISO 27001-certified ClickShare would help address this issue, making sure that the system handling the content must assure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of this data. In fact, the ClickShare content is delivered in real-time and is never stored on non-volatile memory in one of the platform's components.

2. Screen the personal-work devices – IT systems can only work if the right measures are in place to avoid loss of information. Taking the time to upgrade devices with security protocols, including the use of original software, can keep the fraudulent attacks at bay.

3. Create a guideline for employees – The UAE reportedly saw a record number of cyberattacks targeted at corporates, especially in the Oil & Gas sector, between October 2018 to March 2019. While these attacks could be the result of any number of reasons, BYOD and organic data breaches rank high on the list. Making sure that personnel follow a standard set of rules when they use their own devices or external systems for remote connections is critical to keeping the business secure.

As more and more consumers set their ways in their use of technology, corporates will need to find ways to build their systems around the needs of stakeholders – whether they are employees, clients or regulators. Setting a standard that builds on security and is envisioned around the office of the future is no doubt the way forward. ➡

By 2021, 50% of large enterprises will use an integrated risk management (IRM) solution set to provide better decision making capabilities.

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A STRATEGIC APPROACH

"OUR SAS PLATFORM IS BUILT ON A STRATEGY OF USING ANALYTICAL INSIGHTS TO DRIVE BUSINESS ACTIONS AND SUPPORTS EVERY PHASE OF THE ANALYTICS LIFE CYCLE. IT COMMUNICATES PERFECTLY WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD, INCLUDING OPEN SOURCE TOOLS, IN GENERATING POWERFUL INSIGHTS FROM IT IN SUCH AN EASY WAY THAT THE BUSINESS USERS THEMSELVES CAN DRAW INFERENCE FROM THIS WHOLE PROCESS, THUS, OFF-LOADING THE IT TEAM OF THIS BURDEN," - ABED HAMANDI, REGIONAL DIRECTOR - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MEA, SAS.

? AI has become the mainstream and is fuelling more aspects of businesses. But how data-driven innovation can be brought to life and put in action to resolve real business problems?

In the past, data was perceived as a by-product of a business activity. It had little value after the process was completed. While there might have been one or two other applications that needed data access but these were usually one-off activities. Today, alongside the evolution and advancement of the business environment, the value and true potential of data is realized and accepted with the help of analytics. Analytics has made data the secret sauce of many new business models and initiatives. For example, by leveraging data analytics a bank can get a handle on its multi-channel customer interactions by analyzing log files. A health insurer is able to better predict customer dissatisfaction by analyzing speech-to-text data from call center recordings. Moreover, data analytics can deliver on a variety of fronts of public management - keeping costs under control, increasing productivity, citizenship management, economic development, public safety, smart cities, taxes and benefits, improving public health and safety and maintaining a vibrant economic environment. In short, these organizations across industries can have a much more complete picture of their customers and operations by combining unstructured and structured data.

? At the recently held SAS Analytics Roadshow, SAS claimed that they see a strong desire among IT leaders to leverage AI and analytics to drive digital transformation in their organization. How can SAS enable them to transform data into actionable insights through advanced analytics?

Regardless of the industry, organizations today

have access to a huge amount of data. In order to convert this data into useful insights, an organization requires an effective analytics and AI strategy. This strategy will need to be aligned with the organization's business objectives, being supported by technology and the top management to orchestrate and govern their analytics ecosystem through the entire Analytics Lifecycle – Data, Discovery and Deployment.

- **Data** – the foundation for decisions. The data flooding your organization is complicated and fast-moving. It's time to embrace all of that data by leveraging the right technology to find new ways to solve problems.

- **Discovery** – the first steps toward intelligence. We at SAS help organizations explore even the biggest data sets and be creative about finding the truth hidden in the data.

- **Deployment** – turning discovery into action. What good is a discovery if it doesn't change the way you do business? This phase takes the insights gleaned from discovery and turns them into part of your production analytics environment.

So, organizations should consider the entire analytics life cycle, from data ingestion to exploration to modelling to deployment and make sure that the accuracy and speed is able to provide competitive advantage to them. It needs to be able to handle complex problems of any size with proven methods. This is what we provide. Our SAS Platform is built on a strategy of using analytical insights to drive business actions and supports every phase of the analytics life cycle. It communicates perfectly with the outside world, including open source tools, in generating powerful insights from it in such an easy way that the business users themselves can draw inference from this whole process, thus, off-loading the IT team of this burden.

? How can AI and analytics help the Middle East to change its status quo and achieve its digital agenda?

Countries in the region most certainly are ready to be receptive towards artificial intelligence. According to IDC, AI spending in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) is expected to reach \$290 million this year, rising to \$530 million in 2022. In a region-first, the UAE launched its debut Artificial Intelligence Strategy, designed to boost government performance, create a productive and innovative environment, and constructively utilize human and financial resources to accelerate the execution of future programs and development projects.

Other examples include the UAE's Ministry of Artificial intelligence, a world-first move that is in line with the nation's Centennial 2017 project, which aims to digitally transform the city and equip businesses and government entities on how to fully embrace this phenomenon and reap its benefits upon incorporation into daily business operations.

These efforts are indicative of organizations rushing as fast as they can to jump on the artificial intelligence bandwagon. In doing so, some organizations believe they can leapfrog necessary prerequisites and go directly to adopting AI. This approach carries enormous risks that could paralyze an organization and put it behind its competitors.

It is important to first understand where AI fits and where AI is not required -

AI is good for:

- Unstructured datasets
- Many data sources and dynamic systems
- Automatic classification, real time business decisions
- Forecasting and predictions

Here is what being ready for AI adoption looks like for organizations:

- Data excellence: Data is valued as an asset and basic data processes have been automated
- Data science/analyst team in place and connected with business
- Business decisions are led by analytical insights



ABED HAMANDI,

REGIONAL DIRECTOR – PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA, SAS

conduct analysis, which in turn will give an effective viewpoint of an organization's approach to AI.

? What demand does SAS see in the growth of Professional Services?

The requirement of the market for an entire consultative approach and engagement with high end output from the market leaders in analytics to provide relevant insights that can aid in forward decisioning. To this end, the concept of managed services with on premises implementation and cloud – which extends advanced technical, business and infrastructure capabilities, helps vendors meet the needs of the customers with higher synergies. The organic growth within the install base of SAS using the analytical engine can be used across technology implementation between departments and new business with data insights sharing approach. Keeping this in mind, customers consider SAS as their advisor and partner to ensure their requirements stemming from their transformational roadmap are efficiently and effectively met with our industry leading solutions.

? How does SAS help the BFSI sector drive profitable growth and improve competitiveness?

The entire financial ecosystem is undergoing a radical change in the wake of digital transformation. Fintech, regtech, open banking, data privacy and regulatory compliance technologies are all playing a critical part in shifting the paradigm. SAS believes that hyper intelligent, AI-driven banking institutions that can provide personalized, trusted customer experiences, as well as meet risk and compliance mandates will be relevant to the evolving BFSI industry. Prominent banks to name very few among a long list of successful implementations and flagship transformational projects done in MEA like Commercial International Bank in Egypt and Emirates NBD have partnered with us for our solutions and services which enable them to enhance their customer journey and adhere to local regulations and global standards through advanced analytical monitoring, reporting and business intelligence. ➔

– Structured analytics is in place and is driving value

- Comfort with agile decision support systems
- Clear measurement of the value driven by analytics
- AI use cases identified and AI pilots completed

? What steps are needed to move AI out of the lab and into business operations to realize the desired outcomes?

For AI to be used effectively, it's important that the strategy around it feeds into the bigger business objectives, always taking into account the convergence of people, process and technology:

- People: First and foremost, humans are the most important resource an organization has. You must invest in data scientists who have skills focused around AI and machine learning to build your applications; systems engineers who ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place to support those applications; solution architects who oversee enterprise implementation; and business advisers who understand unique factors within the data and the business value that will be derived from the application.
- Process: Second, consider what organizational changes will have to be made within your busi-

ness. A great AI model has no value if it cannot be put into production. And, you need lots of rich data. You must identify what data you want to analyze, what factors must be captured in your data collection and the method you will use to bring that data into your AI system. Make sure that users understand the expectations of working with output from the AI applications, and create a simple process for capturing input so the solution can be tailored for more accuracy and increased relevance to meet each business and consumer need.

- Technology: Graphics processing units (GPUs) can greatly accelerate training time for AI models, which will require a hardware investment. Although there is a great deal of sophistication behind AI technologies, barriers to adoption and implementation sit within people and processes, so make sure those areas receive a great deal of focus, consideration and leadership when designing any AI strategy.

At SAS, we encourage businesses to focus on people, process, and technology conversion prior to implementing AI. This can ensure platform readiness and practical technical knowledge, which are both crucial to AI application. An organization must be well-armed with data science skills and make suitable platforms available to

FEARLESS DISRUPTION AFRI‘CAN’

Digitization is sweeping across the continent and experts agree that this would be one of the key drivers of growth that would account for 5 percent of the GDP. The economy is being transformed.

■ BY: ANUSHREE DIXIT <ANUSHREE@GECMEDIAGROUP.COM> ■ PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Time Berners-Lee was at a conference recently in Nigeria, where he addressed a gathering amidst the celebration of thirty years of the World Wide Web. He told the audience that the country represents both the present and future of the web, when you look at how it is impacting lives not only in Nigeria, but also across Africa.

Digitization is sweeping across the continent and experts agree that this would be one of the

key drivers of growth that would account for 5 percent of the GDP. The economy is being transformed.

DISRUPTION IS KEY

Innovative disruption is transforming the potential of the continent economically and technologically, thus creating new target markets for unprecedented consumer choice. There arises a need for complete revamp of the potential opportunities that would redefine the models of

customer engagement and business development strategies.

According to Derek Appiah, Managing Director, Nexinnova Ghaha Limited, affordable mobile smartphones, increasing internet penetration, cloud infrastructure and increasing availability of data are the digital technologies enabling forward looking businesses to overcome Africa's





“AFFORDABLE MOBILE SMART-PHONES, INCREASING INTERNET PENETRATION, CLOUD INFRA-STRUCTURE AND INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF DATA ARE THE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ENABLING FORWARD LOOKING BUSINESSES TO OVERCOME AFRICA’S CHALLENGES.”

DEREK APPIAH,
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
NEXINNOVA
GHANA LIMITED



“NEW IT OFFERINGS DESIGNED FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SECURITY CHALLENGES FACED OUTSIDE OF THE DATA CENTER WILL ENABLE MORE EFFECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE WAYS OF DELIVERING SERVICES FOR HEALTHCARE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, RETAIL, MANUFACTURING AND OTHER INDUSTRIES.”

BEEVAN LOCK,
TECHNICAL SALES LEAD, DATA
CENTER GROUP, LENOVO SOUTHERN
AFRICA

challenges. Combining and adapting these digital technologies allows businesses to create:

- new business models;
 - solutions based on foresight rather than hindsight;
 - personalised differentiated experiences ; and
 - productive work places.
- “For example, the challenge and risk of transporting cash in Ghana has been overcome by combining these digital technologies to create local mobile payment solutions for all - including the approximately 60% of the population that do not own a bank account” says Derek.

Andy Coussins, senior vice president and head of international, Epicor Software says, “The speed at which Africa is currently embracing technological disruption, makes it clear that organizations within the region are on a mission to make up for recent lost opportunities (in large part due to various forms of political and financial instability). The one advantage of being a laggard is that organizations here have been able to learn from others’ mistakes and so the pace of change is incredibly fast. As a case in point, there are many





“GENERALLY, SERVICES IN AFRICA ARE GOOD, BUT THERE IS TREMENDOUS SCOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT—FROM REDUCING WAITING TIMES FOR MEDICAL PROCEDURES, TO REDUCING TIME SPENT WAITING FOR GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTATION.”

ANDY COUSSINS,
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND
HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL, EPICOR
SOFTWARE

new tech startups in Africa, with Jumia being the first to go public on the NYSE.”

INTERNET, CONNECTIVITY AND THE RISE OF E-COMMERCE

The high penetration of internet and increased purchase of Mobile devices is accelerating the continent's e-commerce landscape. According to McKinsey & Company, African e-commerce sales are expected to reach an impressive \$75 billion by 2025. “Countries such as Senegal, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya are leading the way in developing vibrant African businesses are on an exciting and transformative digital journey. As more services and products move online, new business models are unfolding across the continent – at the heart of which is connectivity.”

“We expect to see a widespread increase in access to high-speed, cost-effective connectivity. As more South Africans are able to benefit from this there will be increased competition to deliver



new services and solutions to communities and businesses,” says Beevan Lock, Technical Sales Lead, Data Center Group, Lenovo Southern Africa. “A lot of these will require data to be stored, processed and analysed at the edge instead of centralized data centers. New IT offerings designed for the environmental and security challenges faced outside of the data center will enable more effective and innovative ways of delivering services for healthcare, local government, retail, manufacturing and other industries,” he adds.

Communications service providers (CSPs) have seen the expectation of their customers evolve rapidly over the past ten to fifteen years, and simply being able to provide users with a fixed or mobile voice service and basic messaging is no longer enough in a modern, digital age that has seen a growing demand for varied and personalised offerings. This is according to Ahmad Sayed, Regional Head and VP Sales, Middle East and Africa at Nexign, who adds that the change started with the advent of the internet, and the additional functionality that it enabled on end user devices - right from web browsing, and email, to more interactive forms of instant messaging.

TELECOM UPROAR

Africa's digital journey is subject to a significant challenge. According to experts, Africa's digital transformation can only happen if the region's telecoms infrastructure keeps up with the pace of innovation. There are still heavily imposed challenges in geo mapping and connectivity. More reliable, secure and sophisticated forms of connectivity will only help African businesses grow faster. One of the leading player in the continent, Liquid Telecom claims to have played a major role in deploying advanced fibre networks across Africa, building the continent's largest independent cross-border fibre network,

“WE HAVE NOW SEEN A REVOLUTION IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES INDUSTRY, WITH CSPS STARTING TO DELIVER MANY SIMILAR SERVICES IN AFRICA. IN ADDITION, THE PEOPLE WHO STAND TO BENEFIT FROM EBANKING ARE OFTEN FROM RURAL AREAS THAT ARE NOT SERVED BY THE TRADITIONAL PROVIDERS.”

AHMAD SAYED,
REGIONAL HEAD AND VP SALES,
MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA, NEXIGN

which today stretches over 21,000km.

Taking a step further, Nexign says that operators must build digital partnerships and collaborate more efficiently with other industry players on a global level. There are already examples of collaboration between BSS vendors and companies providing blockchain solutions, which enables CSPs to implement new business models, form new partnerships, and create new roaming products and complex bundles that include digital non-telco services.

FINTECH GAINING PACE

According to a business report on Africa's growing FinTech market, ‘the significantly lower barriers to entry technology has provided small businesses, has seen a thriving FinTech ecosystem emerge. In 2016 there was a 33% growth in investments into start-ups, that saw \$367m flow into the sector. While there is a concentration of the Fintech's around South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria this trend actually continues across the continent.

FINALLY

Getting some facts on board – With a steadily growing population heading towards 2bn, Africa's 1.1bn workforce will be the world's largest by 2040. Equally, with a collective GDP of \$2.6 trillion by 2020 and \$1.4 trillion of consumer spending, many see the impact of around 500m new middle-class consumers. The future is undoubtedly bright and the continent is steadfast in adopting changes fearlessly. Consolidation of the existing resources would be key. ➔

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GETTING INTO THE FAST LANE WITH AI

AI is now a key to success for organizations and is set to be a significant contributor towards global economic growth by 2030.



■ FADI KANAFANI, MIDDLE EAST MD & GM, NETAPP

According to a study by McKinsey Global Institute (MGI), on average, the global gross domestic product (GDP) could increase by 1.2 percentage points per year, which would correspond to a total value added of 13 trillion US dollars.

Among a number of industry segments, the automotive industry is one of the most technologically advanced and progressive industries. It's no surprise that the industry is a frontrunner in adopting and incorporating AI into research, design, and manufacturing processes for smarter and better outcomes and products.

When you think about AI in automotive, autonomous vehicles is likely the first use case that comes to mind. While the holy grail in the industry is full self-driving, defined as level 5, most companies are already offering increasingly sophisticated adaptive driver assistance systems (ADAS) as stepping stones towards that level of autonomy.

In an industry like automotive, the number of possible AI use cases is large and essentially divided into four segments which are autonomous driving, connected vehicles, mobility as a service, and smart manufacturing. Naturally, there are overlaps between some of these segments; success in one area can yield benefits in another. For example, autonomous driving may be a key element of a mobility-as-a-service strategy. There are, however, challenges to achieving full self-driving. Each car deployed for R&D generates a mountain of data; 1TB per hour per car is typical. Teams can expect to accumulate hundreds of petabytes to exabytes of data as autonomous

driving projects progress. This raises several critical questions such as how to create a pipeline to move data efficiently from vehicles to train a neural network or how to efficiently prepare and label data for neural network training are some of the concerns. Some questions that need to be addressed are how much storage and compute power is needed to train a neural network, to run inference on a trained neural network and if the training cluster should be on-premises or in the cloud. It is also important to determine how to correctly size the infrastructure for data pipelines and training clusters including storage needs, network bandwidth, and compute capacity.

Today, cars use cellular and WiFi connections to upload and download entertainment, navigation, and operational data. In the near future, we'll also see cars connecting to each other, to our homes, and to infrastructure. For example, Audi has already introduced technology to connect cars to stoplight infrastructure, enabling drivers in select cities to catch a "green wave," timing their drives to avoid red lights. That's just one of many opportunities to use data from connected cars.

In the future, car ownership may decline in favor of various forms of ride sharing, particularly in dense urban areas. Car companies will need to become mobility service companies to address changing consumer demand. Many car companies such as Ford and home-grown Careem are already branching out, acquiring scooter- and bike-sharing companies and creating delivery services.

The machine learning and deep learning

problems in mobility-as-a-service models are significantly different than those in autonomous driving: How do you predict customer demand? How do you optimize fleet efficiency and minimize customer wait times? How do you dynamically set prices in response to demand? How do you ensure passenger physical security? How do you protect customer data, prevent fraud, and balance privacy versus convenience?

From an infrastructure standpoint, these distributed problems require different strategies and may require smart algorithms on the consumer's device (smart phone), in the vehicle, and in the cloud, plus long-term, secure data management for compliance.

The auto industry has a lot on its plate. Companies must look for ways to increase operational efficiency to free up capital for investments like those described above. Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) and Industry 4.0 technologies are the key to streamlining business, automating and optimizing manufacturing processes, and increasing the efficiency of the supply chain.

Competition in the auto industry is also fierce. Leaders look to train their own AI specialists and developers and cooperate with other companies to maintain their standing. While these measures are intended to close the current knowledge gap, it also helps achieve the overarching goals of higher product quality, better customer experience with AI, and reducing operating costs. Innovations are the key to keeping up with IT companies in the competitive field of autonomous driving. ➔



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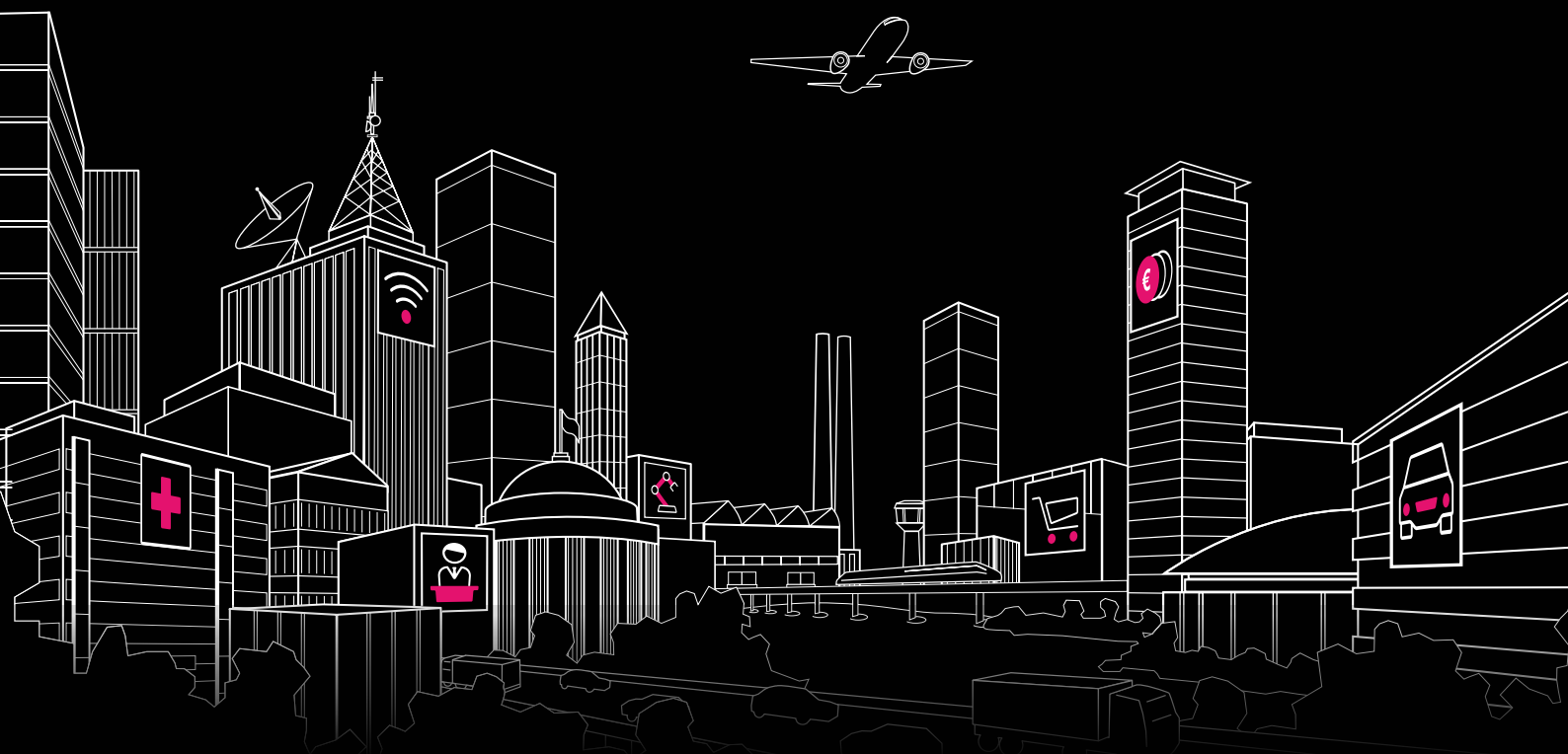
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As and when IT grew as the fundamental driver for business, regardless of sectors, priorities started to shift and T&L saw an increased use of technology in streamlining the supply chain, increasing productivity and asset utilization.

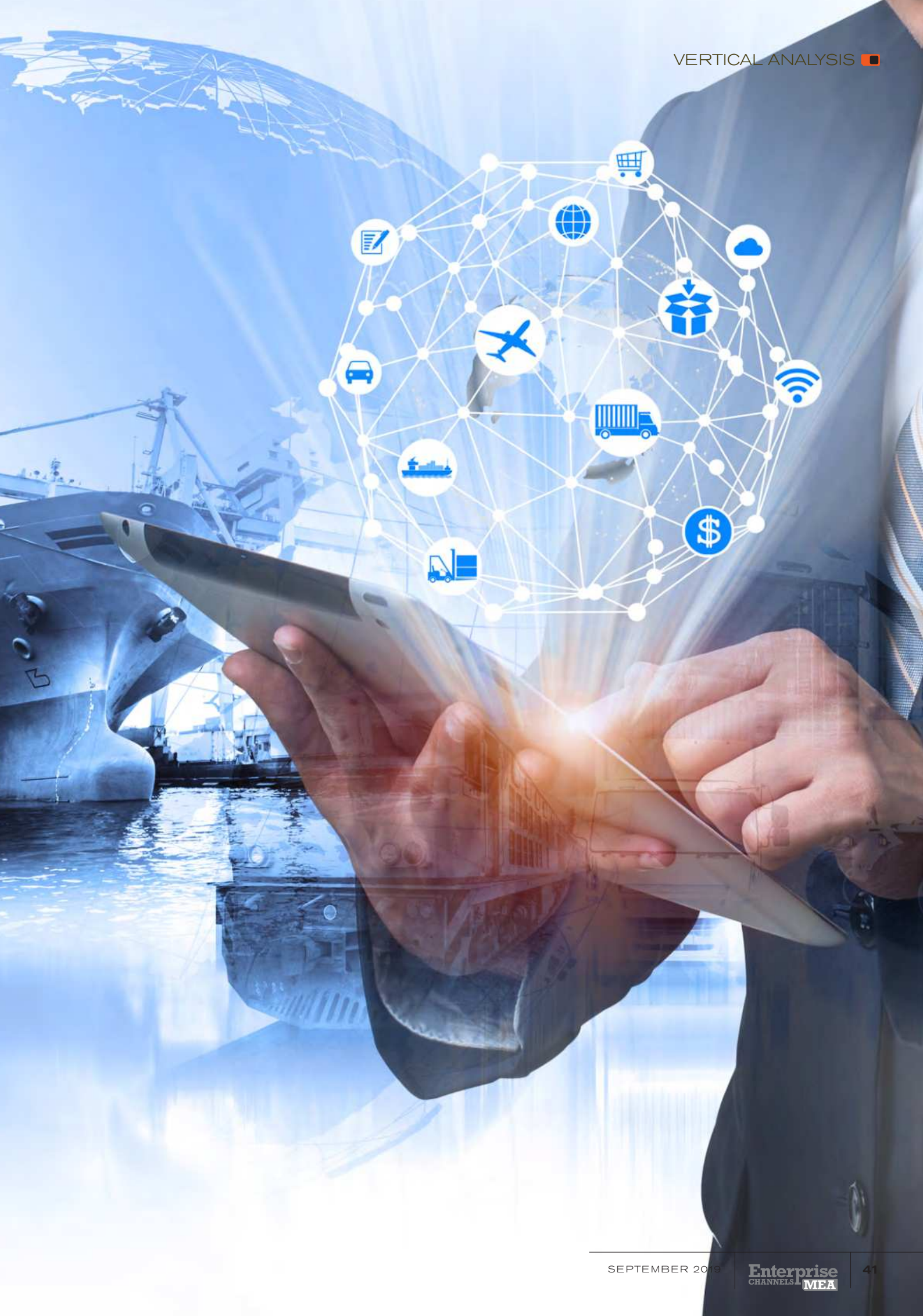
■ WORDS: ANUSHREE DIXIT <ANUSHREE @GECMEDIAGROUP.COM> ■ PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

SPEEDING UP THE REAL-TIME ECONOMY

Real-time economy is accelerating and hyper-connected reality is increasingly raising the bar for

competition. Transportation and Logistics sector has been shifting legacies to embrace transformation with all its might to satiate growing customer and stakeholder expectation.

Technology did not seem to fit very well into the foundational principles of the transportation and logistics sector. Well, who would have thought technology could bring in any difference





“WE ARE COMMITTED TO HELPING LOGISTICS COMPANIES TO BRING GOODS TO THEIR DESTINATION QUICKLY, COST-EFFICIENTLY AND SAFELY; USING OUR SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS FOR THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY.”

ANDREA PETTI,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PTV GROUP
IMEA

to goods or objects being transferred from one place to other in a vehicle that is driven by someone, on a specific route, to a specific destination. But as and when IT grew as the fundamental driver for business, regardless of sectors, priorities started to shift and T&L saw an increased use of technology in streamlining the supply chain, increasing productivity and asset utilization.

Atif Rafiq, co-founder at Qafila says, “With increased expectations from consumers for faster, more efficient management and transport of goods, logistics companies have turned to technology as a competitive differentiator and as a way to exceed challenging service level goals. Whether in the form of connectivity, predictive analytics, faster processing speeds or smarter hardware and equipment, virtually every link in the supply chain can digitally connect to the other links at each point in the process. Logistics organizations are realizing with increasing urgency that they can’t afford to slow down for the delays created by siloed systems and teams.”

TRANSFORMING THE DIGITAL SUPPLY CHAIN

According to McKinsey, Supply Chain 4.0 - the application of the Internet of Things, the use of advanced robotics, and the application of advanced analytics of big data in supply chain



“AUTOMATION SOFTWARE WILL BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER AS IT OFFERS BENEFITS SUCH AS INCREASING SPEED AND SCALE OF FULFILMENT, ACCESS TO REAL TIME FREIGHT DATA, EFFICIENCY IN DELIVERY SCHEDULES AND MORE.”

ALAIN KADDOUM,
GENERAL MANAGER, SWISSLOG
MIDDLE EAST

management: place sensors in everything, create networks everywhere, automate anything, and analyze everything to significantly improve performance and customer satisfaction.

One of the strongest factors for driving this trend has been the rapidly growing urbanization. As more and more people started moving to urban cities, demand rose for innovative solutions to induce more flexibility into the delivery and shipping models.

Alain Kaddoum, General Manager, Swisslog Middle East. “What does the trend of urbanization mean for logistics? More congested cities mean more traffic, so this could account for slower deliveries and longer lead times. While the industry will eventually adjust to these new conditions, it will also actively help to shape them by developing innovative concepts and strategies alongside new and, most importantly of all, flexible technologies. Automation software will be more important than ever as it offers benefits such as increasing speed and scale of fulfilment, access to real time freight data, efficiency in delivery schedules and more.”

“Logistics organizations all over the world are recognizing an opportunity to use IoT to their advantage through intelligently connected supply networks and systems. IoT-enabled processes reduce the risk of accidents and inefficiency in tasks that pose a greater chance of human error. IoT also pairs connectivity with machine learning to fuel faster, smarter processes and a fluid supply chain,” says Atif.

DRIVING SANS THE DRIVER

I couldn’t stop but laugh over the times when driverless cars used to be an integral part of horror movies. Windows roll down and you see that there is no one on the driver seat. Was

horrifying a few years back right?

But today, driverless cars and connected cars are increasingly becoming capable of providing benefits to more than just the driver or the vehicle.

The primary motivation was optimizing the flow of materials and reducing personnel, as a logical consequence of the ideas for raising productivity through improving work processes which had been spreading since the early 19th century from the timing of production processes.

According to a blog on shapiro.com, A world where a computer drives you from Point A to Point B or you receive a package from a flying unmanned aerial vehicle sounds like something out of a movie, but that is where we’re headed. Autonomous cars are already a reality with trucks not too far behind. Embark and Uber have already made long hauls using autonomous trucks, with Tesla releasing a truck this year. While it wasn’t completely driverless, with a driver in the passenger seat to monitor the computer, it is a huge step in this breakthrough technology and has the potential to increase efficiency in the delivery process.

Innovation in connected vehicles has also been impacting the optimal performance of transportation networks that is increasingly reliant on the quick and accurate collection and dissemination of large amounts of data. “Our software technology provides the option of a direct connection between vehicles and operators, it provides connectivity and status update in real time, and enables scenario management to be pre-planned so that the stakeholders can decide the mind of movement for the next day or week or month from strategy to execution,” says Andrea.

MATCHING UP SPEED WITH TIME

According to Swisslog, Since rapid delivery



“INSTEAD OF VIEWING DIGITIZATION AS A COMPETITION OF ‘ROBOTS VERSUS HUMANS,’ MODERN LOGISTICS ORGANIZATIONS ARE RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST LABOR SHORTAGES AND KEEPING UP WITH THE DEMAND FOR INCREASINGLY RAPID ORDER FULFILLMENT; WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ATTRACTING NEW TALENT WITH SPECIALIZED SKILLS.”

ATIF RAFIQ,
CO-FOUNDER AT QAFILA

and long distances are mutually exclusive, the warehouse must come to the customer; enter, the “micro-hub”. Defined as commercial rental space used for production, warehousing, and distribution in urban areas, these logistics facilities are many and they are everywhere. “Although micro-hubs are incredibly close to the customer, they are also tied to fixed locations within a city and can only be established in places with suitable real estate. Overcoming this issue is the Q’Tainer concept from Swisslog. Q’Tainer is a standard shipping container, which can be relocated and used intelligently for a purpose other than shipping, i.e., production and logistics in urban centers. Inside, these steel boxes are fitted out as state-of-the-art modules,” comments Alian. In Swisslog’s opinion piece, he also adds that According to Statista, in 2017 retail e-commerce sales worldwide amounted to 2.3 trillion US dollars and e-retail revenues are projected to grow to 4.88 trillion US dollars in 2021. It is a major retail trend, which shows no signs of slowing down. Online shopping is principally about expediting the delivery of goods to the buyer’s front door – and it is behind a meteoric rise in the number of transports.

Andrea Petti, Managing Director, PTV Group IMEA says, “We help logistics companies to harness the power of technology to create an agile and smart logistics system. When transporting your goods, you need to keep in mind, the need to reduce costs and boost efficiency. With our software solutions, you can optimize your territory/depot, route, do vehicle scheduling, appointment planning, real-time execution and dispatching, receive arrival notification, do Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) calculation and many more, at the click of a button.”

MINIMIZING RISKS AND INTERRUPTION

As with technologies like IoT, Artificial Intelligence reduces the need for human touch in many day-to-day delivery and warehousing processes. Logistics organizations all over the world are recognizing an opportunity to use IoT to their advantage through intelligently connected supply networks and systems. IoT-enabled processes reduce the risk of accidents and inefficiency in tasks that pose a greater chance of human error. IoT also pairs connectivity with machine learning (discussed later in this article) to fuel faster, smarter processes and a fluid supply chain.

By using predictive analytics, which gets “smarter” over time as more data is collected, AI works in tandem with machine learning to mitigate risk and prevent the mismanagement of resources. Predictive analytics can accurately forecast demand patterns, optimize route changes, and prevent potential bottlenecks along the supply chain that must be addressed before they have the chance to become an issue.

FINALLY

Since the last few decades, the supply chain has been transformed and re-transformed to suit the ever-changing demands of the customers. It has undergone years of centralization, decentralization, and mix of both and has had its own unique advantages and disadvantages depending on the type and complexity of the organizations supply chain operations. The combination of sensors, connected devices, big data (analytics) and mobile/cloud/connectivity technologies is adding additional possibilities to asset tracking and management.

With these, the future is clear yet a tad complex. ➡




KEEPING UP WITH THE DEMAND



For the growth of the business, vendors do not have to hire a new sales team – in fact, the immense growth opportunity could come from their extended arm – the channel partners. With a well-developed channel strategy, the partners not only exceed the sales goals but also boost the demand of products and the growth of the company.

■ BY: DIVSHA BHAT <DIVSHA@GECMEDIAGROUP.COM> ■ PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK



Recently, I found myself discussing how channel partners drive the product demands of their vendors. To my surprise, every channel partner has their strategies and plans to boost the demand.

For any business, boosting product demand is essential for earning revenue and profit. These are the ideal financial goals of a reseller that acquires products to resell to customers at a mark-up. The particular techniques used to enhance the product demand vary based on the time frame and current status of the product in the market. Over a period of time, products will have greater demands if it is enhanced in ways the customer wants.

THE CHANNEL SALES MODEL

The resellers, systems integrators, and distributors can provide a wide reach for the vendor's products in front of many prospective buyers. Going

through a channel partner is always a very cost-effective way when entering a new market as it spares the cost of managing a local office. If a channel partner is already prominent in the market, a vendor does not have to worry about establishing their brand presence. The brand will automatically be endorsed by the partners.

The major advantage of channel partners is that they let you experiment with new customer bases, products, promotions and

marketing campaigns in a low stake environment.

Garreth Scott, Managing Director – Europe, Middle East & India at Credence Security said that they have the ability to provide all pre-sales activity support on behalf of our vendors across our extensive product portfolio, whether it be a POC, technical workshop, solution architecture review etc. “We conduct extensive channel enablement sessions across the region on a regular basis as well as our fortnightly webinar sessions covering our product portfolio in order for our partners to have an in-depth, hands-on knowledge of the solutions they will be representing.”

“Credence Security has a dedicated project management and post-sales team to ensure we are successful in all the projects we engage, from receipt of the PO to project sign off and continuously during the support period resulting in happy partners and end users. We have a dedicated lead-gen team across the region to help our vendors and partners identify opportunities in both public and private sector enterprises as well as plan and execute 29 lead-gen activities across the region, from round tables to our 16-city roadshow to events like GISEC, Cyber Summit etc,” commented Scott.

K S Parag, Managing Director of FVC explained how they apply a number of techniques to boost their vendor's products and solutions from running timely campaigns and promotions to providing partners with attractive incentives. “Training, certification programs and special workshops for partners also help in better product knowledge to help them sell better. FVC's portfolio comprises of a



“We conduct extensive channel enablement sessions across the region on a regular basis as well as our fortnightly webinar sessions covering our product portfolio,”

GARRETH SCOTT,
MANAGING DIRECTOR – EUROPE,
MIDDLE EAST & INDIA AT
CREDENCE SECURITY

number of solutions under each product category for example, Unified Collaboration, Unified Communication, Audio-Video, Infrastructure and Information Security. This allows us to enable our partners to cross sell and upsell solutions, in addition to bundling complementing solutions. By participating at leading industry events such as GITEX, we also lend a discernible platform for our vendors to showcase their expertise and solutions. It helps us demonstrate the co-relation and compatibility of products that eventually transform into a complete solution. We also provide professional services that are aligned to industry best practices to deliver the best ROI for our customers and partners alike. This also helps greatly in adding value to our vendor’s products,” added Parag.

THE VALUE ADD

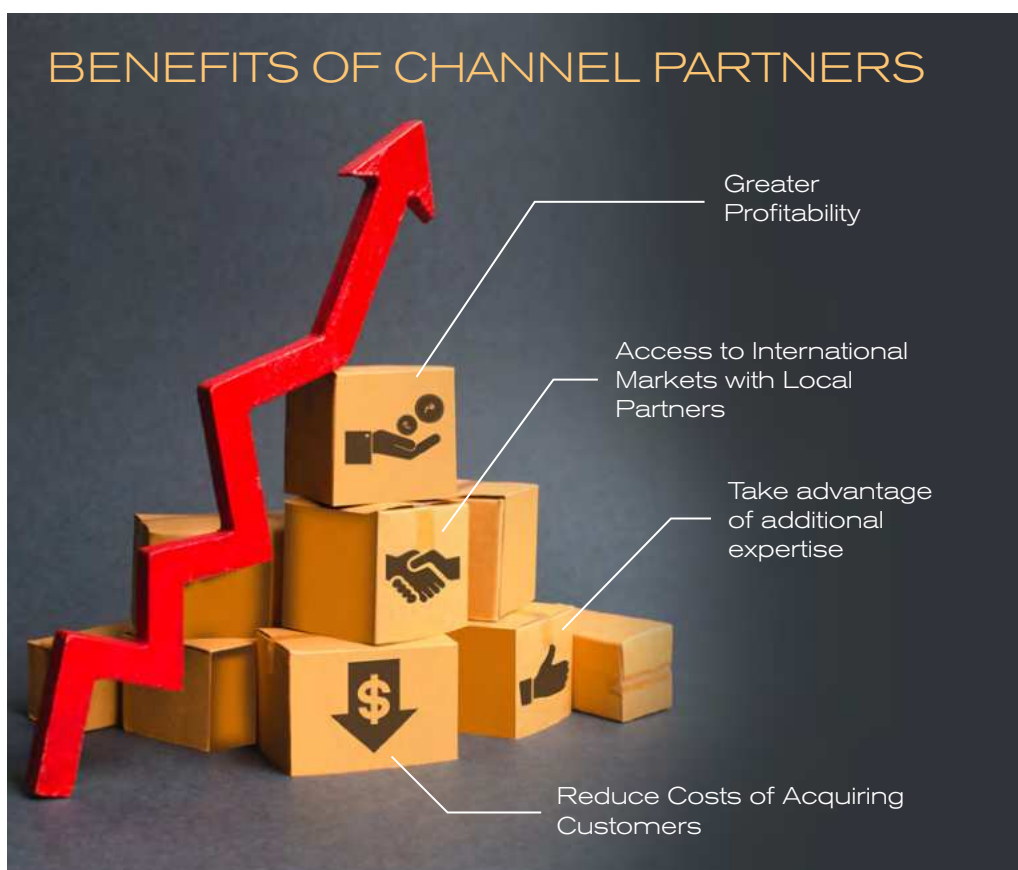
Channel partnerships can play a very influential role in the sales expansion of the vendor’s products. While increasing revenues through channels can take a long time, establishing a relationship with the right channel partner will allow the vendor to reach a much wider market at a quicker pace.

The channel partners can be a key differentiator in developing and delivering value to customers. Today, no company can deliver everything



“We provide professional services that are aligned to industry best practices to deliver the best ROI for our customers and partners alike. This also helps greatly in adding value to our vendor’s products,”

K.S. PARAG,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, FVC



that a customer needs. A channel partner can be effective in adding to the total value proposition, better addressing the customer needs and further modifying the total offering from the competition.

There are many ways a partner can add value – maintaining relationships with customers, implementation, and installation of products, local support, etc.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CHANNEL PARTNER

Vendors need to look for channel partners that have a comprehensive strategy in place. When

choosing a partner, it is important to select one that is willing to take the time to understand your business and your mission and vision. Vendors need to create and deliver services that reflect the business needs – if the product is not relevant to the business, then the partnership will not be profitable.

Finding the right partner, of course, takes time and experimentation. Diverse markets require a diverse approach for the same product offering. Understanding the partner’s strength will help a vendor to align the business with theirs. If there is no match, it is always good to re-evaluate the partnership. 🏹

SHIFTING GEARS: WHY BUSINESSES AND ORGANISATIONS SHOULD MAKE THE NEEDED SHIFT TO DEPLOY IPV6



■ CHAFIC CHAYA, RIPE NCC

If you are reading this article online, your device will be connected to the Internet with an Internet Protocol (IP) address. This is a unique identifier that is used to direct data packets between devices and websites on the Internet, in a manner that is rather similar to how postal codes direct packages and letters to your door.

For years now, the whole connected world has utilised Internet Protocol version 4, commonly known as IPv4. Since it was first deployed in 1983, IPv4 has widely been used as the core addressing protocol on the Internet. The problem however lies in the explosive growth of Internet-connected devices and websites. The number of IPv4 addresses is limited – there are only 4.2 billion of them. And at present, Internet companies are trying to connect nearly 7 billion people and several billion devices using this limited stock of IPv4 addresses.

This problem was foreseen a long time ago, and this is why IPv6 was developed – to become the protocol to replace IPv4. IPv6 offers 340 trillion, trillion, trillion addresses, which eliminates address scarcity as a factor and opening up new possibilities for network configurations, efficiency and innovation. This also means that networks will not hunt for unused addresses on an increasingly expensive IPv4 address-trading market.

Many businesses that rely on the Internet are not fully aware of the growing shortage of IPv4, or the problems that comes from this shortage. This is set to change in the coming years. If a business were to ask the question, “Is this a good time to transition to IPv6?”, most Internet experts would answer with a resounding “Yes!”.

So why should a business move to IPv6 if its

network is working just fine on IPv4? Well, networks are increasingly having to employ complex workarounds to compensate for a shortage of IPv4 addresses. Workarounds such as Carrier Grade Network Address Translation (CGNAT) add to the running costs for an operator. Moreover, CGNAT can actually stop certain Internet services working properly by not allowing direct communication between connected computers (gaming services are particularly susceptible to these issues). Also, if someone else behind your shared IP is banned, so are you. IPv6, on the other hand, eliminates the need for address sharing altogether. It can unlock innovative technologies and services that can help businesses to grow. This also makes it easier for Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to pinpoint the culprits behind cybercrime.

So why hasn't adoption of IPv6 risen faster despite the many warnings issued by organisations like the Regional Internet Registries (RIRs) and the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)?

The Internet community is still struggling to convince all players to start their preparation to deploying IPv6. This has partly been because of the misconception that there is no demand from the end users, that little content is reachable over IPv6 or that Customer Premise Equipment (CPE) such as modems are not geared to connect over IPv6. However, as major content providers such as YouTube, Facebook and Netflix are increasingly reachable over IPv6, and as outdated CPE is replaced by modern IPv6-compatible gear, these concerns should diminish. Furthermore, while network engineers might be up to the task at a technical level, other immediate business

concerns often end up taking priority due to a poor awareness at the C-level and decision makers. However, not planning for IPv6 deployment is risky in itself, as a company that does so will be pinning any future expansion to an unpredictable IPv4 address market.

In the Middle East, the RIPE NCC has partnered with the Telecommunications Regulatory Authorities in the region, creating awareness and delivering capacity building directed towards encouraging businesses and governments to deploy IPv6. Adoption of the new protocol, as pointed out by the TRA UAE, supports the move to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the UN sustainable development agenda, significantly increasing access to information and communications technology and providing universal and affordable access to the Internet.

Deploying IPv6 does require careful planning, training and testing. In line with this, The RIPE NCC offers a six-step guide and training around how to create an IPv6 project plan. This guide spans from identifying those affected by an IPv6 deployment, upgrading relevant hardware and software and ensuring that everyone involved is suitably trained, through to achieving management sign-off, deployment and how to effectively evaluate results.

This isn't to say that IPv4 is going to fade away, but businesses and governments do need to start seeing IPv6 as its inevitable and logical successor – something that can reinvigorate service portfolios and capture competitive advantage for Internet development and economy growth. ➡



KEY CAPABILITIES

- **Optimized for NAS with AgileArray™.** AgileArray enables dual-plane balancing and RAID optimization in multi-bay environments, with the most advanced power management possible.
- **Actively protect your NAS with IronWolf Health Management** focusing on prevention, intervention, and recovery.¹
- **High performance means no lag time or downtime** for users during workload traffic for the NAS. Seagate leads the competition with the highest-performing NAS drive portfolio.²
- **Seagate® Rescue Data Recovery.**³ IronWolf Pro comes with extra peace of mind for any mechanical, accidental, or natural disaster. With a 90% success rate of in-house recovery, Seagate has your back with a 2-year included Rescue Data Recovery plan.
- **Rotational Vibration (RV) sensors.** First in its class of drives to include RV sensors to maintain high performance in multi-drive NAS enclosures.³
- **Range of capacities up to 16TB.** More capacity options means more choices that will fit within the budget. Seagate provides a scalable solution for any NAS use-case scenario.
- **Do more in multi-user environments.** IronWolf provides a workload rate of 300TB/year. Multiple users can confidently upload and download data to the NAS server, knowing IronWolf can handle the workload, whether you are a creative professional or a small business.
- **Designed for always on, always accessible 24x7 performance.** Access data on your NAS any time, remotely or on site.
- **1.2M hours MTBF, 5-year limited warranty** represents an improved total cost of ownership (TCO) over desktop drives with reduced maintenance costs.

Seagate Ironwolf 16TB

Rewriting Storage Rules – Seagate Ironwolf – a way ahead in its pack is designed for storage hungry business. Built for multi-user environments and high workloads, the Seagate Ironwolf 16TB come with optimal reliability and system scalability. The 16TB IronWolf comes with a PMR + helium technology and 1.8TB platter density.

Creative professionals, SOHO users, and growing business have an opportunity to expand their horizons with the Seagate ironwolf without the need to have any additional expansion units.

Business who do not want to burn a hole in their pocket can consider the Ironwolf as an answer to their worries. The spindle speed of 7200RPM may have given several concerns among the techies, but Ironwolf's RV or rotation vibration sensors manages to detect excessive vibrations and protect the drive and heads against any potential damage.

A feature only present in the IronWolf family of drives is Seagate's IHM (IronWolf Health Management). This is an advanced feature that allows you to test IronWolf drives regularly, view logs of the results, run daily read/write statistics analysis tasks and load historical graphs of drive usage over time.

The standard 16TB IronWolf drive represents the entry point of this family and is designed to be used in consumer and small business NAS appliances with up to 8 bays. It still keeps the same 256MB cache as its bigger brothers, but its MTBF drops to 1M hours while its multi-user rating is quoted at 180TB/year – that's 120TB/year less than the IronWolf Pro.



Two modular 24 port LANmark patch panels

Nexans launched two modular 24 port LANmark patch panels suited for all snap-in connectors. Both panels combine the benefits of straight and angled panels.

KEY CAPABILITIES

- save space inside the cabinet
- require no recessed mounting positions for the cabinet door to close
- eliminate the need for patch guides
- both panels come with a straight front shape
- 1 panel has a cable support tray at the back (N521.681BK), the other not (N521.680BK)
- 30° mounted twin ports allow for connectors to be placed at an angled position
- 6 twin ports are oriented towards the left side, 6 others towards right side
- connectors must be inserted horizontally (latch right or left) using keystone clips
- 24 blue coloured keystone clips are included in each panel
- additional cable ties are supplied for the panel with cable support (N5213681BK)



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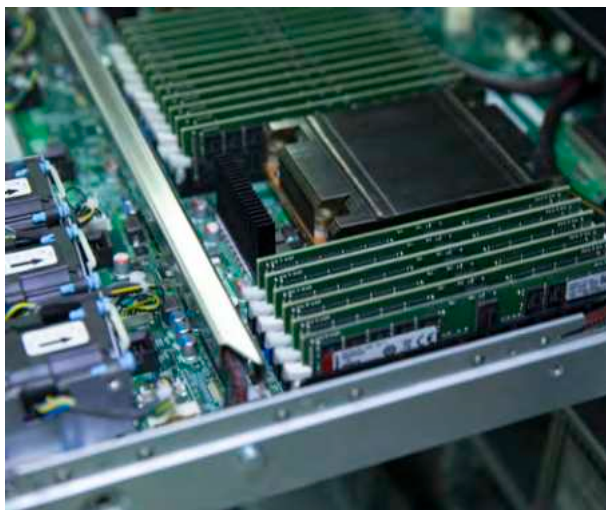
I-SENSYS PRINTER

i-SENSYS is updating its range to bring user-friendliness and simplicity direct to an office. Eight series. One print solution for any business. High performance, with laser quality printing so you never have to choose between speed and finish again.

KEY CAPABILITIES

- Automatically name scanned documents and send them to pre-assigned folders
- Enhance the text quality of scanned copy in one touch
- Change the language of the touch screen display in one easy step
- Fax and store a copy of the sent document in a specified location
- Access the Application Library setting guide, remote UI description and user manual link at the simple touch of a button
- 5" LCD touchscreen for one-touch control of daily tasks
- Smart toner cartridges, with auto-seal removal
- Verify System at Startup function blocks any unauthorized firmware or software being installed and run
- Secure PIN printing, Universal Login Manager and uniFLOW compatibility
- Enhanced, easy-to use Application Library allows effortless customization of function buttons.
- Set up takes minutes, with a smartphone-like touchscreen and a full on-screen keyboard for a slicker UI and better operability
- Insert or delete blanks between buttons however you like – you are in control
- Whatever your sector: medical, retail or office, you can tailor every printer shortcut for your own specific needs.





Kingston Server Premier Memory

Kingston Technology Europe Co LLP unveiled its 32GB, 16GB and 8GB Server Premier 3200MT/s DDR4 Registered DIMMs are available now to fully unleash the power of the new 2nd Gen AMD EPYC™ Processor (aka “Rome”). For over three decades, Kingston has been the memory brand that customers choose to power their data centers. Server Premier memory features a locked BOM (Bill of Materials) to ensure a consistent brand and revision of DRAM and undergoes rigorous, dynamic burn-in testing designed to root out early-life failures at the factory before being shipped out. A key component of the production test process is that Kingston simulates customer workloads on the very same motherboards that are found in their data centers.

KEY CAPABILITIES

- modules are specifically engineered to take full advantage of AMD's latest eight-channel server microarchitecture
- each DIMM provides peak bandwidth of 25.6GB/s
- When grouped for multi-channel performance, this provides a significant boost in performance
- Locked Bill of Materials (BOM)
- Part Change Notifications (PCN) of 45-90 days
- Server platform validation
- Leading server motherboard manufacturer qualification
- DDR4 speeds from 2400 – 3200MT/s
- Lifetime warranty
- Industry-leading service and support



Lenovo ThinkSystem SR635 & SR655

Lenovo introduced the its ThinkSystem SR635 and SR655 server platforms. As businesses are tasked with doing more with less, the new Lenovo solutions provide the performance of a dual-socket server at the cost of a single-socket. These new additions to Lenovo's expansive server portfolio are powered by next-generation AMD EPYC™ 7002 Series processors and were designed specifically to handle customers' evolving, data-intensive workloads such as video security, software-defined storage and network intelligence, as well as support for virtualized and edge environments. The result is a solution that packs power along with efficiency for customers who place a premium on balancing throughput and security with easy scalability.

KEY CAPABILITIES SR655

- Multi-GPU optimized rack server
- Provides support for up to 6 single-wide GPUs that offer more workload acceleration in AI Inference and VDI
- 64 cores to handle heavy-lift virtualization workloads
- Provides cutting edge application efficiency in health care applications such as EMR, PACS, and medical imaging or electronic trading platforms for financial services applications
- Support for up to 32 NVMe solid-state drives
- When paired with high speed networking, make the system an excellent choice for workloads that need large amounts of low-latency high-bandwidth storage

KEY CAPABILITIES SR635:

- High capacity storage
- Support for up to 16x2.5" drives
- An ideal platform for OLTP, Analytics, software-defined and HPC storage.
- Up to three single-wide GPUs to provide workload acceleration for AI inference and VDI applications.
- Full support PCIe Gen4 to achieve up to 16 GT/s for accelerated data transfer speeds.
- Enables the next-generation of technology for grid-computing and high-frequency trading analytics



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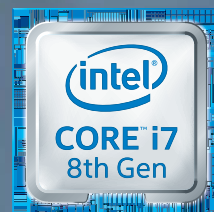
[The new] Dell Precision mobile workstations excel under your demanding standards. With Intel® Core™ i7 processor, NVIDIA professional graphics and Dell Precision Optimizer, they focus power and speed behind your biggest ideas.

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