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Enterprise
CHANNELS
MEA

ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS ADVISORY FOR CHANNEL PARTNERS

Ali El Kontar
CEO
Zero&One

FUTURE
READY APPROACH

Innovating to Simplify Complexity – Empowering businesses across EMEA to see the full potential of AI and Digital Transformation.

Shaping the future

Generative AI may still be in its early stages, but it presents a multi-billion-dollar opportunity for the channel ecosystem. According to a recent report from Canalys, the channel ecosystem stands to benefit from a US$15.4 billion market this year alone, with projections reaching US$158.6 billion by 2028. The report highlights the immense potential for channel partners to capitalize on GenAI by unlocking new revenue streams.

Recognizing this trend, many large VADs in the Middle East have already established dedicated AI business units. For channel partners, the primary opportunities in this domain include consulting, solution-building, implementation, and integration. As GenAI innovation and adoption accelerate within organizations, partners can also expect strong demand for AI services throughout the customer journey.

Undoubtedly, like any emerging technology, the market for GenAI offers significant opportunities for early movers. However, to capitalize on this wave, channel partners must focus on creating tailored solutions that address customer pain points and deliver value. In addition to building in-house expertise, system integrators and VARs can expedite time to market by partnering with AI giants that offer pre-built frameworks and infrastructure, enabling the development of cost-effective AI solutions.

In addition to offering GenAI solutions to the market, partners can also leverage this transformative technology to improve operational efficiencies, and advance their businesses in multiple ways. For example, channel sales teams can harness AI-driven insights to personalize outreach, predict customer needs, and identify new opportunities more effectively. By integrating GenAI both internally and in client solutions, partners can drive a holistic transformation that enhances competitiveness in a crowded market.

In this edition of EC, we have spoken to industry thought leaders about the channel opportunities in AI, particularly GenAI, and explored how it can transform partner ecosystems.

Thanks for reading.

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The World CIO 200 – Kenya edition toasts to innovation

The World CIO 200 – Kenya Edition concluded successfully, bringing together the brightest minds in the technology landscape to discuss, deliberate, and drive the future of digital transformation in the region. This landmark event, hosted by the Global CIO Forum, was a confluence of thought leaders, innovators, and technology experts who are shaping the digital future of Kenya and beyond.

The event kicked off with a warm and insightful welcome note by Jeevan Thankappan, Managing Editor of GEC Media Group, who set the tone for the day by emphasizing the crucial role of CIOs in steering the digital transformation journey. His remarks underscored the importance of collaboration, innovation, and leadership in navigating the rapidly evolving tech landscape.

The Country Inaugural Keynote was delivered by Bernard Rono, Head of ICT at Kenya Tea Packers Limited. Bernard highlighted Kenya's unique position as a burgeoning tech hub in Africa and the importance of leveraging ICT to drive economic growth and sustainability. His keynote set the stage for a day filled with thought-provoking discussions and actionable insights.

In the panel discussion titled "Unleash the Might: Creating a Unified Vision," moderated by Bernard Rono, industry leaders including Gilbert Mutai (Head of ICT, Car and General), Duncan Eric Ogonji (Regional Director IT, Plan International), and Maurine Awuor Onyango (Director ICT, County Government of Kisumu), delved deep into the critical need for aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision for transformation. The panel emphasized that true transformation is only achievable through a unified approach, where all stakeholders are engaged and aligned towards a common goal.

Imran Abdulla, GM of Middle East and Africa at Orbus Software, then took the stage to discuss "Accelerate Enterprise Transformation with Practical AI." His session provided practical insights into how AI is revolutionizing enterprise operations, driving efficiency, and enabling smarter decision-making across industries.

The final panel of the day, moderated by Jeevan Thankappan, explored "Gen AI – Use Cases, Infrastructure Readiness, and Adaptability." The panel featured leading experts including Samuel Loki Mbai (Chief ICT Officer, University of Nairobi), Nilton Mutungi (ICT Manager, Women Enterprise Fund), Hartnell Ndungi (Chief Data Officer, Absa Bank Kenya PLC), and Hamilton Opiyoh (Chief Technology Officer, BuntuLabs). They shared real-world examples of AI implementation, discussed the challenges of infrastructure readiness, and the importance of adaptability in harnessing AI's full potential.

Attendees left the event inspired and equipped with new ideas and strategies to implement within their organizations, ensuring they remain at the forefront of the digital revolution. ◤

World CIO 200 Summit in Ghana - A landmark gathering of technology leaders

The World CIO 200 Summit made a significant impact as it concluded its Ghana chapter, bringing together top CIOs, technology leaders, and innovators at a landmark event in Accra. The summit, organized by GEC Media Group, was a convergence of some of the brightest minds in the tech industry, focusing on critical themes of digital transformation, AI, and the power of a unified vision.

The event commenced with a warm welcome from Kwaku Asare Ofosuhene, Country Partner at GEC Media Group, who set the tone for the summit with a message of collaboration and innovation. His remarks highlighted the importance of fostering a strong tech community in Africa and the role of the World CIO 200 Summit in driving this vision forward.

Andrew Fening Okai, CEO of Precept Human Capital & Corporate Advisory Limited, delivered the Country Inaugural Keynote. In his insightful address, he shared his vision for leveraging technology to fuel economic growth and societal transformation in Ghana and beyond. His keynote emphasized the strategic imperatives of digital transformation and the critical need for strong leadership in navigating this journey.

Moderated by Benjamin Owusu-Ansah, Founder and President of CyberBells, the first panel discussion brought together industry leaders to explore the importance of aligning diverse stakeholders around a shared vision for transformation. The panel featured Steve Uma, Head of Information Services and Technology at Nsia Insurance Limited; Emmanuel Morke, CIO at Access Bank Ghana; Nehemiah Attigah, Co-founder & Ghana Director of Accelerayt; and Sylvia Sedo, Chief Information Security Officer at UBA. The discussion was a powerful exploration of strategies to drive collaboration and ensure successful digital transformation initiatives.

Imran Abdulla, GM for Middle East and Africa at Orbus Software, captivated the audience with his keynote on accelerating enterprise transformation through practical AI solutions. His presentation showcased the real-world impact of AI and provided actionable insights on how organizations can leverage AI to stay ahead in an increasingly competitive landscape.

The final panel discussion of the summit, moderated by Nyamal Tutdeal, Adjunct Professor at Arcadia University, delved into the evolving landscape of Generative AI. The panel, which included Stephen Ameyaw, CEO of ShrinQ Ghana Limited; Kojo Dougah, Advisory Council Member at RegTech Africa; Sheik Jobe, CTOO at Standard Chartered Bank; and Samuel Amanor, Founder and CEO of BlueSPACE Africa Technologies, provided a comprehensive overview of AI use cases, the readiness of infrastructure, and the adaptability required to harness the full potential of this transformative technology.

The World CIO 200 Summit in Ghana was a resounding success, offering attendees a platform to exchange ideas, network with peers, and gain valuable insights into the future of technology. The discussions and presentations underscored the importance of a unified vision, the transformative power of AI, and the need for continuous innovation in today's rapidly changing world.

As the summit concluded, it left a lasting impact on all participants, setting a new standard for technology conferences in the region. The World CIO 200 Summit continues to be a beacon of excellence, driving the tech community forward and shaping the future of digital transformation in Africa. ↘

The World CIO 200 Summit – UK edition highlights visionary leadership and future-ready strategies

The World CIO 200 Summit in UK recently convened a distinguished assembly of technology leaders, thought innovators, and digital visionaries, setting the stage for transformative discussions on the future of IT leadership. The event marked by engaging keynotes, thought-provoking panels, and a collective focus on aligning technology with strategic organizational goals.

The Summit kicked off with an inspiring welcome note by Venkatesh Mahadevan, Board Member of the Global CIO Forum. Venkatesh emphasized the pivotal role of CIOs in navigating today's rapidly evolving technological landscape. His address underscored the importance of fostering a collaborative environment where CIOs and technology leaders can share insights and strategies to drive innovation and digital transformation.

Following the welcome note, Saif Mohammad, Chief Product and Technology Officer (CPTO) of Diligencia Group, delivered the Ambassador Keynote. Saif set the tone for the event with a powerful message on the significance of a unified vision in steering organizations through complex transformations. He highlighted the need for CIOs to align diverse stakeholders around a common purpose, ensuring that technology initiatives are fully integrated with the broader business strategy.

Saif Mohammad then moderated a dynamic panel discussion titled "Unleash the Might: Creating a Unified Vision." The session brought together an exceptional lineup of panelists, including Peter Jackson, Chief Data and Technology Officer at OUTRA, Giles Lindsay, CIO of Agile Delta Consulting, Karl Hoods CBE, Chief Digital and Information Officer at the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero and Department for Science, Innovation & Technology, and Paul Whiteside, CTO of Globalscale Digital. The panelists shared their experiences in aligning diverse stakeholders, discussing the challenges and opportunities of creating a shared vision for transformation. The conversation provided invaluable insights into how organizations can drive successful change by ensuring that all parties are moving towards a common goal.

Rashik Parmar, Group CEO of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, delivered a keynote on "The Future-Ready CIO," highlighting the evolving role of CIOs. He stressed the importance of adaptability, foresight, and understanding emerging technologies, offering a roadmap for CIOs to prepare their organizations for future competitiveness and resilience.

The day concluded with a panel on "Agility and Adaptability: How CIOs Enable Rapid Innovation," moderated by Ilham Ismail (Head of IT & Data | CISO at Karibu Community Homes). Panelists included Dean Garvey-North (Affinity Water), Andrew Raynes (Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust), Mark Bramwell (Said Business School, University of Oxford), and Paul Smith (Amnesty International). They discussed how CIOs drive agility and innovation, sharing strategies to foster a culture of innovation and adapt to emerging challenges.

The event was a success, offering technology leaders a valuable platform to exchange ideas and explore IT leadership in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. ↖

World CIO 200 Summit in Cochin: A landmark gathering of 75+ CIOs and IT leaders

The inaugural World CIO 200 Summit in Cochin was nothing short of a landmark event, bringing together over 75 of the region's most influential CIOs and IT leaders. This grand gathering marked the first edition of a summit that not only exceeded expectations but also set a new benchmark for industry events in the technology and digital transformation space.

The summit was a powerhouse of innovation and strategic insight, featuring a series of compelling keynote addresses, insightful panel discussions, and cutting-edge vendor presentations. With the participation of top-tier technology minds, the event delved deep into the critical themes of forging a unified vision and cultivating agility within organizations to navigate the accelerating pace of technological change.

The overwhelming turnout and active engagement of these industry leaders demonstrated the vital role CIOs and IT heads play in steering their organizations through the complexities of digital transformation. The success of the summit underscored the necessity of collaboration, forward-thinking strategies, and a relentless focus on innovation.

The inaugural World CIO 200 Summit in Cochin exceeded expectations, establishing itself as a premier event for regional technology leaders. It set a high standard and paved the way for a promising future for the local tech community.

Event Highlights:

Opening Remarks:

Jeevan Thankappan, Managing Editor of GEC Media Group, welcomed attendees, highlighting the evening's focus on collaboration and innovation in the digital age.

Country Ambassador Keynote:

Pratap Pat Joshi, EVP IT & Chief Evangelist at Yotta Infrastructure Solutions, delivered a keynote on IT infrastructure and digital transformation, setting the stage for the event's discussions with his insights on strategic imperatives for future-ready infrastructure.

Vendor Keynote – YOTTA:

Anil Pawar, Chief AI Officer at Yotta Data Services, delivered an impactful keynote on AI's role in business innovation, showcasing YOTTA's cutting-edge solutions that are transforming industries and enhancing competitiveness.

Panel Discussion: Unleash the Might – Creating a Unified Vision:

Moderated by Jeevan Thankappan, the panel featured Prince Joseph (Group CIO, NeST Group), Selestin K Thomas (GM – IT Security, Nissan Digital), and Arindam Sengupta (CIO, Wipro Enterprises). They discussed strategies for uniting stakeholders and driving successful digital transformation through collaboration.

Vendor Keynote – F9:

Gopan Sivasankaran (General Manager, META, Secureworks) and Rajesh Radhakrishnan (Co-Founder & CTO, F9 Infotech) shared insights on the evolving cybersecurity landscape and the importance of innovative solutions for protecting digital assets, stressing the need to adapt to emerging threats.

Panel Discussion: Agility and Adaptability – Staying Ahead of the Curve

Moderated by Pratap Pat Joshi, the panel featured Lakshmi Das (COO, Prophaze), Ramkumar Mohan (CIO, Air Works India), and Jomy Luke Xavier (CIO, UNIMONI FINANCIAL SERVICES). They shared strategies for fostering innovation and responsiveness, helping organizations stay agile and adapt swiftly to market changes.

World CIO 200 Summit Mumbai edition celebrates success with industry leaders and key insights

The World CIO 200 Summit, held on August 6, 2024, brought together industry leaders, IT experts, and influential CIOs for an evening of insightful discussions, knowledge sharing, and transformative ideas. Hosted by GEC Media Group, the event proved to be a resounding success, offering a platform for thought leaders to explore the latest trends and innovations shaping the future of technology.

Opening Session: The summit commenced with a warm welcome note from Anushree Dixit, Global Head, GEC media Group, setting the tone for an evening of engaging discussions and networking.

Panel Discussions:

Creating a Unified Vision: Moderated by Amit Saxena (VP-IT, Millennium Semiconductors), with Sabyasachi Chakraborty Thakur (CIO, Parksons Packaging), Mahesh Toshniwal (IT Operations, Jindal Steel), Ajay Awale (Head IT, Aquapharm Chemicals), and Rajesh Kulkarni (DGM – IT, Piaggio Vehicles). Focused on aligning stakeholders for successful transformation.

Advancing Organizational Resilience: Rajeev Dutt (GM MEA & APAC, Swiss GRC) shared insights on building enterprise resilience in a dynamic environment.

Agility and Adaptability: Led by Pradipta Patro (Head IT & Global CISO, RPG Group), with Shrenik Kothari (IT Infra Head, Gestamp Automotive), Prashant Kurhade (DGM IT, Suhana Group), Rahul Mergu (VP IT, MarketsandMarkets), and Vivek Sakarde (Chief Data & Analytics Officer, Leading Bank). Discussed enabling rapid innovation.

Gen AI – Use Cases and Infrastructure: Moderated by Jeevan Thankappan, featuring Satish Mahajan (Sr GM IT, VFS Global), Shabbir Badra (VP & Head IT, Apraava Energy), Rajeev Khade (Chief Digital, Blue Star), Lalit Trivedi (CIO & CISO Global, FlexM Global), and Shashi Mohan Singh (Chief Digital Officer, Reliance Retail). Focused on AI's future in business.

Technical Sessions:

Unified Cybersecurity Platform: Satyen Jain (Technical Director, LTS) emphasized the need for a unified cybersecurity approach.

Trends and Technologies in Networks: Gokul Sorari (Manager of Systems Engineering, CommScope) covered current and future network technology trends.

Application Security: Lakshmi Das (COO & Co-Founder, Prophaze) and Diptesh Saha (CISO & Practice Head, Accel Cybersecurity) discussed crucial aspects of application security.

The World CIO 200 Summit provided an invaluable opportunity for networking, learning, and collaboration among top IT professionals. The event underscored the importance of innovation, agility, and strategic vision in navigating the complexities of today's technological landscape.

Unlocking new potential for channel partners in the evolving cloud space

Alvin Heib,
Sr. Director of Alliance EMEA/APAC
at Cloudera

What is the impact of the shift to the as-as-service model for channel partners?

The shift to the as-a-service model significantly impacts channel partners by transitioning them from a traditional one-time sales approach to a recurring revenue model. This shift requires channel partners to adapt their sales strategies and customer engagement models to accommodate subscription-based offerings. It introduces challenges like managing cash flow differently and ensuring consistent customer satisfaction to reduce churn rates. We can also support the best of both worlds with Pre-Paid Credits, taking advantage of cloud flexibility and also of cash flow prediction with controlled fluctuation. However, it also presents opportunities for steady revenue streams and deeper customer relationships through continuous engagement and value delivery.

How can channel partners leverage cloud services and incorporate them into their core offerings?

Channel partners can leverage cloud services by integrating them into their core offerings to meet evolving customer demands for flexible, scalable, and cost-effective solutions. They provide managed services, custom cloud solutions, and hybrid cloud environments that cater to specific client needs. Additionally, partners can enhance their portfolios by offering disaster recovery, cybersecurity, and data analytics services on cloud platforms. Also, for ephemeral platforms (like development), good practice would be to create them only during working hours, pushing teams to commit daily work. By becoming proficient in cloud technologies and obtaining relevant certifications, partners position themselves as trusted advisors and strategic partners to their clients.

How can channel partners provide added value beyond essential cloud services?

Channel partners provide added value beyond essential cloud services by offering comprehensive customer lifecycle management, personalized support, and tailored solutions that address specific business challenges. They can co-innovate with cloud providers to develop unique solutions, leverage advanced technologies like AI and automation, and create seamless, end-to-end customer experiences. Providing educational resources, training, and ongoing support help clients maximize the benefits of cloud adoption and can differentiate themselves in a competitive market by focusing on customer success and satisfaction. In short, innovate quickly, with security control, and supporting our customers' time to market.

What are the future prospects for channel partners in the cloud space?

The prospects for channel partners in the cloud space are promising, with opportunities for growth driven by the increasing demand for cloud-based solutions and services. Businesses are becoming more and more complex, with migration to cloud, security on prem, and multi-cloud sourcing moves us defacto to a hybrid-multi-cloud environment. The way partners consume also needs to be flexible, like subscription, pre-paid and as-a-service models. The rise of hybrid-multi-cloud environments and the need for integrated, tailored solutions will further expand the role of channel partners. Additionally, partners that invest in skill-building and co-innovation with cloud providers will be well-positioned to capitalize on emerging technologies and evolving customer needs.

As the 'Age of AI' beckons, it's time to get serious about data resilience

Rick Vanover,
Vice President of Product Strategy,
Veeam

Almost two decades ago, Clive Humby coined the now-infamous phrase "data is the new oil". With artificial intelligence (AI), we've got the new internal combustion engine. The discourse around AI has reached a fever pitch, but this 'age of AI' we have entered is just a chapter in a story that's been going on for years – digital transformation.

The AI hype gripping every industry right now is understandable. The potential is big, exciting, and revolutionary, but before we run off and start our engines, organizations need to put processes in place to power data resilience and ensure their data is available, accurate, protected, and intelligent so that their business continues to run no matter what happens. Look after your data, and it will look after you.

Take control before shadow sprawl does

It's far easier to manage with training and controls early on when it comes to something so pervasive and ever-changing as a company's data. You don't want to be left trying to 'unbake the cake.' The time to start is now. The latest McKinsey Global Survey on AI found that 65% of respondents reported that their organization regularly uses Gen AI (double from just ten months before). But the stat that should give IT and security leaders pause is that nearly half of the respondents said they are 'heavily customizing' or developing their own models.

This is a new wave of 'shadow IT' – unsanctioned or unknown use of software, or systems across an organization. For a large enterprise, keeping track of the tools teams across various business units might be using is already a challenge. Departments or even individuals building or adapting large language models (LLMs) will make it even harder to manage and track data movement and risk across the organization. The fact is, it's almost impossible to have complete control over this, but putting processes and training in place around data stewardship, data privacy, and IP will help. If nothing else, having these measures in place makes the company's position far more defendable if anything goes wrong.

Managing the risk

It's not about being the progress police. AI is a great tool that organizations and departments will get enormous value out of. But as it quickly becomes part of the tech stack, it's vital to ensure these fall within the rest of the business's data governance and protection principles. ↖

Asset visibility is critical to OT security, uptime, and so much more in the UAE industrial sector

Rami Nehme,
Regional Sales Director, OPSWAT

The United Arab Emirates proceeds ever onwards in its stated goal of increasing the industrial sector's contribution to GDP. Industrial exports have grown 17% since the launch of Operation 300bn, the government program to boost the sector's output to AED300 billion (US$81.6 billion) by 2030. In 2023, the UAE industrial segment's economic contribution stood at AED197 billion, demonstrating great progress for a sector that is now the third largest in terms of its almost 10% share of nominal GDP.

But amid this, risks remain to the progress the region has made. Leaves on the line can come in many forms – supply chain issues, talent gaps, geopolitical turmoil. But perhaps the most urgent is the cyberthreat ecosystem, which has become something of an industry itself. Now more sophisticated and capable of refined, stealthy campaigns (bolstered by AI), the community of malicious actors has flourished. And without addressing fundamentals, the technical teams entrusted with protecting the UAE's critical infrastructure will be flailing at specters.

Specters are difficult to spot. But what if their target were also invisible? Such is the case in many of today's complex OT environments. As the rise of IoT has forced IT and OT to merge, asset visibility has become synonymous with security. Cybersecurity talent gaps in OT and IT do not prevent organizations' leaders from reaching one simple conclusion: you cannot protect what you cannot see. Real-time asset visibility solutions help with so much more than compliance. To the OT security professional, they are both telescope and microscope, offering the ability to recognize trouble from afar and drill down into vulnerable nooks.

Push and pull

In an environment where operational uptime is everything, plant managers will often be in conflict with CISOs who must prioritize compliance and security. The latter must find ways of compiling and maintaining detailed information on all things OT – hardware, platforms, and software tools. It is only then that the security team can discover vulnerabilities (allowing triage for patching purposes) and establish baselines for normal asset behavior (allowing advanced real-time threat detection). Once the CISO knows what is to be protected, they can segment the network and isolate the most important assets. If everything is designed appropriately, mitigation and response in the face of genuine threats is quicker, as are recovery times. You will note that all this is good news for uptime-focused plant managers.

The agility described is made possible by the company's asset-visibility platform, which delivers real-time insights into every element of the OT environment. Enterprises can optimize inventory management, which goes a long way towards boosting their ability to detect threats early. So armed, the organization will be more resilient to the burgeoning threat landscape and will find it easier to remain compliant with UAE government and industry standards.

Imagine what a manufacturer or a utility could do when equipped with real-time asset visibility. I mentioned slicker reporting, but what about resource allocation and maintenance scheduling? Both are made frictionless. Meanwhile, vulnerabilities are laid bare, allowing tech and security teams to collaborate on fixes. Where patches require downtime and flaws are less critical, operations staff can be made aware of ways to avoid damaging errors.

Let's get visible ↖

Tenable research discovers critical vulnerability in Microsoft Copilot Studio

Tenable has disclosed that its Tenable Research Team has discovered a critical information disclosure vulnerability in Microsoft's Copilot Studio via a server-side request forgery (SSRF), which allowed researchers access to potentially sensitive information regarding service internals with potential cross-tenant impact. This vulnerability exists due to improper handling of redirect status codes for user-configurable actions within Copilot Studio.

An SSRF vulnerability occurs when an attacker is able to influence the application into making server-side HTTP requests to unexpected targets or in an unexpected way, for example forcing an application on a remote host to make requests to an unintended location. If an attacker is able to control the target of those requests, they could point the request to a sensitive internal resource for which the server-side application has access, even if the attacker doesn't, revealing

Jimi Sebree, Senior staff research engineer, Tenable

potentially sensitive information. Had this issue been exploited by a malicious actor, they would have been able to access the internal infrastructure of Copilot Studio, which is a shared environment among customers. This could have allowed access to Azure's

Instance Metadata Service (IMDS) allowing a threat actor to obtain access tokens for the environment, granting further access to other shared resources, such as a Cosmos DB, where sensitive information regarding the internals of Copilot Studio are stored.

Pure Storage embraces next-generation networking for AI with Ultra Ethernet Consortium membership

Maciej Kranz, GM, Enterprise, Pure Storage

Pure Storage has announced that it joined Ultra Ethernet Consortium (UEC), a Linux Foundation initiative dedicated to building a complete, open, and accessible Ethernet-based architecture to accelerate critical, data-intensive AI and HPC applications.

As the leading data storage platform

serving the most advanced enterprise AI initiatives, Pure Storage commits to further defining and integrating UEC technology standards, while building and delivering a forward-compatible platform to optimize performance for enterprise AI and HPC workloads using Ethernet, supporting rapid

innovation and faster time to market.

Industry Significance:
As enterprises strive to achieve their AI goals, they face significant challenges with existing network solutions that are difficult to manage and scale, hindering the flexibility and efficiency needed for growing AI workloads.

To address these challenges, UEC aims to advance Ethernet technology, offering a scalable and efficient solution to support AI innovation.

Ethernet's increased adoption in data centers, due to its lower TCO, extensive interoperability, and proven reliability, has made it the foundation for many of the world's largest AI clusters. The advancement of new Ultra Ethernet standards will allow enterprises to maximize their existing AI and HPC investments while deploying performance-intensive applications, driving innovation, boosting productivity, and enhancing operational efficiency.

Lenovo launches AI-Powered Yoga PC lineup across the Middle East with exclusive AI pop-up at Mall of the Emirates

Lenovo has launched its innovative AI-powered Yoga PC lineup in the Middle East and is celebrating with an exclusive AI pop-up at Mall of the Emirates from August 20 to 30. Visitors can explore the Yoga series' advanced technology and enjoy creator masterclasses and interactive competitions.

As the PC industry enters a new phase of the artificial intelligence era, Lenovo is poised to offer new levels of personalization in personal computing across its PC portfolio. Intelligent software-powered local processing of tasks, and increased productivity, creativity, and security, these Copilot+ PC's combine to deliver a whole new experience in PC interaction. Lenovo is expanding its already comprehensive portfolio of AI-ready devices, software, and optimized services with a new laptop for consumers and business users—the Lenovo Yoga Slim 7x.

Powered by Qualcomm Technologies' new Snapdragon X Elite processor featuring the 12-core Qualcomm Oryon™ CPU, Qualcomm

Adreno™ GPU, and a dedicated Qualcomm Hexagon™ NPU (neural processing unit), the new laptop delivers leading PC performance per watt with the fastest to date AI NPU processing up to 45 trillion operations per

second (TOPS). With the latest enhancements from Microsoft and Copilot+, users can now access Large Language Model (LLM) capabilities even when offline, offering seamless productivity and creativity.

IFS named Customers' Choice in 2024 Gartner peer insights field service management report

Max Roberts, Chief Operating Officer at IFS

IFS has been named as a Customers' Choice in the 2024 Gartner Voice of the Customer Field Service Management report. This year, IFS has

the additional distinction of being the only company to receive the recognition and attain a placement in the top right section of the Peer

Insights Quadrant.

Max Roberts, Chief Operating Officer at IFS, said: "We feel this recognition represents an important independent validation of our leadership position in this market, and is a further reinforcement of our differentiators in service and asset-centric sectors, our industry depth, and our focus on innovation. As the only vendor with a Customers' Choice Distinction for field service management, the recognition is provided to vendors for meeting or exceeding the market average for both Overall Experience and User Interest and Adoption, a recognition the team at IFS is proud of.

IFS's field service management solutions comprise service management software with industrial AI embedded designed to deliver service excellence, optimize workforce efficiency, and grow service revenues. We feel that customer feedback is a key contributor that helps IFS to shape its product and continuously innovate to enable service-centric organizations to accelerate growth and deliver innovation in their business.

Mindware signs strategic partnership with Siav in MENA region

Mindware recently signed a strategic distribution partnership with Siav. This collaboration aims to expand Siav's market presence and accelerate digital transformation for organizations across the MENA region. Under this partnership, Mindware will represent Siav in the region as exclusive distributor of Siav's flagship software platform, Siav Connect.

Nicholas Argyrides, Vice President – Gulf at Mindware, comments: "The push for digital transformation is prompting the necessity for ECM modernization. Organizations aiming to be competitive in the MEA region must efficiently access,

Nicholas Argyrides, Vice President - Gulf at Mindware (L) and Massimiliano Bot Siav General Manager (R)

manage, and utilize their documents and the associated data. We are excited to partner with Siav to cater to the increasing demand in the region for Cloud Content Management solutions and we believe that the market will respond favorably to the strong value

proposition that the solution has to offer."

Siav offers software, Cloud solutions and outsourcing services for Electronic Document Management, Workflow Management, Electronic Invoicing and Digital Storage. The Group is characterized by a wide range of proprietary software developed in-house and specialized skills matured in the realization of digitalization projects for companies and organizations. With over 4000 customers, the company's clientele is mainly made up of medium to large-sized companies seeking advanced technological solutions and investing in digitization.

Epson launches 'Most Ambitious' Back-to-School Campaign for 2024 the summer holidays.

Epson has launched an exciting new campaign to support parents and children as they plan their return to school after the summer holidays.

"This is one of our most ambitious campaigns yet, as Epson looks to help parents nurture their kids' talent in the back-to-school season," said Frank Oliveira, Consumer Sales Manager, Epson Middle East. "Research shows that having the right products at home can make a significant difference to a child's performance over the course of the academic year, and Epson EcoTank printers are cost-effective, reliable and fast solutions for families."

As part of the campaign, Epson has partnered with sports and activity groups including Gymnation, Cobra Fitness, Elite Sports, Mamalu, Ocean Kids and Precision Football amongst many. In addition to offline classes, Epson's partnership also includes global learning platforms such as Piano Academy, Perlego and many more.

With every purchase of an Epson EcoTank home printer, children will be able to take part in up to four after-school and online classes at more than 100 locations across the region, including football, tennis, painting, Arabic language, dance classes and more.

Frank Oliveira, Consumer Sales Manager, Epson Middle East

Customers will also have access to the Epson Creative Corner arts and crafts platform, an

online space with a range of fun, exciting and free activities.

UAE-Headquartered Quest Nutra Pharma digitises critical quality management and operational processes with Kissflow

Quest Nutra Pharma has partnered with Kissflow to streamline and enhance its mission-critical workflows using the vendor's Low-Code platform. By digitalising over 30 processes, Quest has not only been able to move towards paperless operations, but also managed to automate large portions of its operations, yielding efficiencies and accuracies, translating to enhanced quality assurance, market compliance, deviation and change control, and more.

From its factories and entities in the UAE, UK and EU, Quest manufactures 8 million blister packs, 200 million tablets, and 14 trillion probiotic bacteria, annually. Smoothly running operations at this impressive scale is a significant undertaking said, Abhra Chandra,

Prasanna Rajendran,
Vice President - EMEA, Kissflow

Sr. Executive Quality Management System (QMS) at Quest.

Seeking to address the lack of visibility and accountability in its legacy paper-based processes, the company's IT team implemented Kissflow's Low-Code platform. This platform enables all employees – not just IT staff – to conveniently design and deploy detailed digital workflows. Commenting on the value that this 'democratisation of IT' brings, Chandra said, "Unlike an off-the-shelf product, Kissflow as a platform not only streamlines the Quality Assurance process but also many other core processes related to HR, Engineering, IT and more which were manual processes earlier. It is a single solution that caters to all our organisational needs. This saves us a lot of money and eliminates the struggle of managing multiple tools."

Ransomware groups weaponize stolen data to increase pressure on targets who refuse to pay, Sophos report finds

Sophos has released a new dark web report titled "Turning the Screws: The Pressure Tactics of Ransomware Gangs." The report reveals how cybercriminals are using stolen data to intensify pressure on targets who refuse to pay. Tactics include exposing the contact details or doxing the family members of CEOs and business owners, and threatening to report any illicit activities found in the stolen data to the authorities.

In the report, Sophos X-Ops shares posts found on the dark web that show how ransomware gangs refer to their targets as "irresponsible and negligent," and in some cases, encourage individual victims whose personal information was stolen to pursue litigation against their employer.

"In December 2023, in the wake of the MGM casino breach, Sophos began taking note of ransomware gangs' propensity to turn the media into a tool they can use to not only increase pressure on their victims but take control of the narrative and shift the blame. We are also seeing gangs singling out the business leaders they deem 'responsible' for

Christopher Budd, Director, threat research, Sophos

the ransomware attack at the companies they target. In one post we found, the attackers published a photo of a business owner with

devil horns, along with their social security number" said Christopher Budd, director, threat research, Sophos.

Juniper Networks unveils first blueprint for accelerating AI-native network platform adoption, delivering up to 9x faster time to value

Juniper Networks introduced its Blueprint for AI-Native Acceleration, designed to simplify and speed up the adoption of its AI-Native Networking Platform. This framework offers free education, trial offers, flexible licensing, and innovative support services, helping customers and partners quickly validate, deploy, and optimize Juniper's secure networking solutions across various environments.

Juniper's AI-Native Networking Platform is purpose-built to leverage industry-leading AIOps that enable exceptional end-user experiences and simplified, end-to-end operator experiences. The platform leverages the right data, the right real-time responses and the right infrastructure, enabling every connection to be reliable, measurable and secure for every device, user, application and asset. Benefits of the Juniper

Jeff Aaron,
GVP Product Marketing,
Juniper Networks

AI-Native Networking Platform include up to 85 percent reduction in OPEX and up to 90 percent fewer network trouble tickets. With the Blueprint for AI-Native Acceleration, customers and partners can reap similar benefits of up to 9x faster deployments.

Building Trust in AI

The complexity of today's distributed IT and application environments is matched by the relentless demands and high expectations of them from users and business leaders. This pressures CIOs to ensure that the network—across multiple domains—can deliver consistently excellent experiences, which are closely tied to key business goals. AIOps is highly effective in enabling exceptional network experiences, but many organizations remain uncertain how to tap into the value of AI, confused and distracted by un-proven claims and market hype.

HPE Aruba launches Wi-Fi 7 access points, redefining secure AI networking in MEA

Hewlett Packard Enterprise has introduced Wi-Fi 7 access points (APs) in the UAE, that provide up to 30% more capacity for wireless traffic than competitive products. The new APs also strengthen network security and improve location-based services to provide connectivity for demanding enterprise AI, Internet of things (IoT), location, and security applications.

As a market leader in enterprise wireless, and 18-time Leader in Gartner Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Wired and Wireless LAN Infrastructure, HPE Aruba Networking continues its innovation with new Wi-Fi 7 APs that exceed the requirements of the standard. This performance is achieved with HPE's patented ultra tri-band hardware technology, which fully utilizes the 5GHz and 6GHz bands to automatically and continuously eliminate wasteful contention between the bands.

"We believe that with security-first, AI-powered networking, the network becomes a security solution. With a commitment to reliable, secure, high-

Jacob Chacko, Regional Director, Middle East & Africa at HPE Aruba Networking

performance connectivity, this latest Wi-Fi innovation leadership will empower our customers in the Middle East and Africa region to deliver cutting-edge experiences to their end-users," said Jacob Chacko, Regional Director, Middle East & Africa at HPE Aruba

Networking.

The announcement was made at HPE Discover Dubai which took place at HPE's Digital Life Garage, the next-generation HPE co-innovation center showcases how transforming technology impacts society.

Siemon's new Generative AI solutions guide provides valuable product and infrastructure design advice for emerging AI networks

Siemon has published a new guide, designed to support data centre professionals in making well-structured decisions for their data centre network infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future AI developments.

From AI cloud service providers with the power and cooling to support higher rack power densities and ToR configurations within large HPC clusters consisting of thousands of interconnected GPUs to large enterprises looking to build their business-specific AI infrastructure within an existing on-site or colocation data centre, the guide provides valuable advice to any user that is involved in the infrastructure design for complex AI environments.

Highlighting the unique requirements

Prem Rodrigues,
Vice President Sales for India, the
Middle East and Africa at Siemon

that data- and compute-intensive ML and GenAI applications are placing on network infrastructure including very high bandwidth and extremely low latency, the guide provides

guidance on products that best meet these needs. Amongst the recommendations are AI-ready fibre solutions such as high-density, end-to-end singlemode and multimode MTP fibre systems that deliver high-performance, ultra low-loss (ULL) transmission to 800G and beyond for compute and storage fabrics. In addition, direct attach cables (DACs) and active optical cables (AOCs) should be considered for point-to-point high-speed, low-latency connections within back-end AI clusters for Ethernet, RoCE and InfiniBand networks.

Siemon's new guide also provides advice on suitable cabling configurations in order to meet the higher power and cooling demands of GPU-based servers and it discusses the latest developments surrounding Infiniband and Ethernet, suggesting connectivity options that support both technologies.

HPE launches UAE's first managed AI data center with direct liquid cooling, in partnership with Khazna Data Centers

Hewlett Packard Enterprise has announced a new managed data center hosting service in the UAE in partnership with Khazna Data Centers (Khazna), a leading provider of state-of-the-art hyperscale data center solutions. The new service supports the UAE's national artificial intelligence (AI) strategy, which includes a series of AI projects with leading institutions in the region. The service provides access to a data center facility fitted for end-to-end high-performance computing (HPC) technologies, purpose-built for AI, spanning compute, accelerated compute, software, networking and direct liquid-cooling (DLC).

The investment in a DLC data center, a significantly energy-efficient method compared to conventional air-cooling, supports the UAE's effort to address rising power demands in the age AI, which is expected to grow by tenfold by 2026, according to the International Energy Agency.

The new data center facility addresses power consumption challenges by efficiently absorbing more heat with a liquid-based coolant solution, offering 20.7% higher

performance per kW than air-cooled solutions With DLC the data center facility can reduce the need for space up to 77.5%by allowing customers to place fewer, more tightly packed servers into the racks.

To accelerate time-to-production, HPE Services, which provides worldwide, 24/7

onsite and remote support to install and deploy systems, worked closely with Khazna to optimize its Abu Dhabi data center to run AI and HPC workloads. Through HPE GreenLake, new or existing customers gain flexible options to scale and pay for services monthly.

CNTXT offers sovereign controls to Google Cloud customers in Saudi Arabia

CNTXT has expanded partnership with Google Cloud to introduce a new premium cybersecurity offering to the Saudi market: Sovereign Controls by CNTXT. The new offering is designed to support the digital transformation journeys of organizations operating in the region who must meet strict data sovereignty, regulatory and security requirements.

With this offering, CNTXT, a reseller of Google Cloud Platform services for Saudi-based customers, helps local organizations meet digital sovereignty requirements by delivering a managed External Key Management (EKM) with Key Access Justifications (KAJ) service, as well as localized support. EKM with KAJ encrypts customer data at rest with keys stored outside of Google Cloud's infrastructure. This

Abdullah Jarwan,
CEO at CNTXT

offering also requires detailed justifications each time access to keys is required, offering customers the ability to deny access for any reason, including extraterritorial data requests. This innovative solution is designed to protect highly sensitive workloads that would typically remain on-premise, providing an additional layer of control for organizations moving to the cloud

The EKM solution is offered in Saudi Arabia by SITE, as an integral part of the "DATA SHIELD powered by Fortanix" product and Google Cloud's Cloud External Key Manager service. SITE provides innovative, reliable Digital and Cybersecurity services and solutions, and develop future technologies to address needs, aspirations, and threats, while fostering an entrepreneurship ecosystem and developing a highly talented pool of Saudi human capital.

Marsh launches US$50 million port blockage insurance facility amid heightened supply chain risks

Marsh has announced the launch of a first of its kind US$50 million port blockage insurance facility, covering shipping ports and terminals around the world.

Created by Marsh following the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and subsequent disruption at the Port of Baltimore, the insurance facility can be purchased independently or used to supplement existing cover. Available to Marsh clients globally, it is specifically designed to provide clients with cover for loss of revenue caused by third-party accidents such as a vessel sinking in a channel, a vessel impact resulting in a waterway closure, or a natural catastrophe.

The facility is backed by a panel of Lloyd's of London and London market A+ rated insurers, and offers capacity of US$50 million, with higher limits being available on a case-by-case basis.

Port blockage is a growing concern for businesses operating in the maritime industry and can result in significant disruptions to global supply chains and loss of revenue. The facility's wording can

Louise Nevill, CEO, UK Marine, Marsh Specialty

be customised to meet the specific needs of individual clients, meaning that coverage can be aligned to specific risk exposures and operational requirements.

Louise Nevill, CEO, UK Marine, Marsh Specialty, said, "Port blockages around the world are increasing with frequency and

severity, and are resulting in debilitating consequences for businesses involved in international trade. As global trade continues to expand, this new facility offers clients a rapidly available layer of insurance cover to protect operations and recovery in the event of port and terminal disruptions."

CyberKnight signs partnership with Digital.ai to enhance application security in the Middle East

Organizations are rapidly adopting DevOps practices to speed up customer value delivery and enhance scalability. However, security has often been an afterthought, not integrated into the pipeline, making it challenging to meet security and regulatory standards without compromising speed. Gartner projects that by 2027, 85% of product development teams will incorporate DevSecOps practices, up from 30% in 2022.

To support enterprise and government organizations across Middle East, Turkey and Africa (META) to better automate software releases, improve mobile application testing and security, and gain insights across the software lifecycle, CyberKnight has become a distributor partner of Digital.ai Software, Inc. (Digital.ai), an industry-leading technology company dedicated to helping enterprises automate software delivery workflows across complex technology

Wael Jaber, CSO at CyberKnight & **Mike Woodard,**
VP, Product Management at Digital AI

environments.

Digitial.ai's renowned AI-powered DevSecOps platform automates software releases, improves mobile application testing and security, and provides insights across the software lifecycle. The platform offers unparalleled capabilities in securing mobile, web, and desktop applications,

making it a crucial tool for enterprises looking to safeguard their digital assets. Its DevOps and DevSecOps orchestration tools further streamline and automate the development process, allowing security to be embedded at every stage without compromising speed or agility.

Equinix boosts multicloud networking with AWS for faster private cloud connections

Equinix has launched the Equinix Fabric Cloud Router, a virtual routing service that improves performance and cost-efficiency for multicloud environments. Available on AWS Marketplace with AWS Direct Connect, it allows businesses to easily establish private, dedicated connections across hybrid multicloud setups.

Research from TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group in 2023 revealed that 94% of organizations are using multiple public clouds as they seek to optimize performance and scale applications. Fabric Cloud Router, a virtual routing service, helps enterprises easily connect applications and data across clouds and on-premises deployments. It provides an easy-to-configure, enterprise-grade, multicloud routing service that can be deployed in minutes. Fabric Cloud Router removes the costs and complexities of owning and operating a physical router or licensing a virtual router, improving application performance and reducing cloud costs.

According to a Canalys study, cloud marketplace revenues are expected to

Arun Dev, Vice President of Digital Interconnection at Equinix

increase to US$45 billion by 2025, up 84% CAGR over five years. AWS Marketplace, a curated digital catalog, makes it easy for customers to procure, deploy and manage third-party software solutions and services.

By making Fabric Cloud Router with AWS Direct Connect available in AWS Marketplace, Equinix is offering these advantages to those needing secure, private connectivity.

Top European and British start-ups to debut at Expand North Star in Dubai this October

Expand North Star is back from October 13-16, 2024, at the iconic Dubai Harbour, showcasing its largest-ever European and British presence. The 9th edition of this premier start-up event will host over 2,000 start-ups, including more than 400 from Europe and the UK, for an exciting four-day exhibition.

Hosted by Dubai Chambers and organised by Dubai World Trade Centre, Expand North Star is part of GITEX GLOBAL, the world's largest tech event. Exhibiting start-ups will be showcasing their solutions and real applications in Agritech, Artificial Intelligence, Climate Tech, Fintech, Health Tech, HR Tech, Mobility, Creative Economy, Software as a Service, and more. Germany is leading among the new country pavilions from the region, with 40 start-ups debuting at the show

this year, followed by Ireland, Poland, Latvia, Austria, and Portugal.

Returning participants include the United Kingdom, with 50 start-ups on their flagship stand, a twofold growth compared to their participation in 2023. Close behind are France, Italy, and Turkey. Omar Hassan, Managing Director of Global Growth Hub in the UK said: "We are thrilled to have the fastest-growing technology companies joining this

year's delegation, spanning across FinTech, AI, Sustainability and EdTech."

As the world's third most valuable start-up ecosystem, with a market value exceeding $1.1 trillion, the UK is home to over 150 unicorns and 25,000 funded start-ups, many of which are poised to scale up, according to global data company Dealroom. This challenging journey can be significantly enhanced through a trusted connector, enabling companies to forge impactful cross-regional collaborations and explore new investment opportunities.

"Expand North Star as a global platform provides UK tech with a great path and connectivity both into local markets in the region and beyond, particularly in Asia and Africa. The delegation is ready to explore expansion into the UAE, and that will be the biggest takeaway for many participants," said Hassan.

Yango Group launches smart speakers with human-like AI assistant Yasmina

Yango Group has launched the Yasmina Midi and Yasmina Mini smart speakers in the UAE. These speakers feature a bilingual AI assistant designed for the Middle East, providing engaging conversations in both Khaleeji Arabic and English.

More AI capabilities unlocked with Yasmina Midi and Mini speakers

Yasmina Midi and Yasmina Mini combine advanced technology with a deep understanding of the region's unique cultural nuances. This is made possible by Yasmina, the AI assistant built into the speakers.

Powered by a proprietary large language model (LLM), Yasmina engages in human-like conversations in both Khaleeji Arabic and English and can even tell local jokes. This experience is now available in two new products — the Yasmina Midi and Mini speakers, which unlock Yasmina's potential with advanced technologies:

- Personalised content: Yasmina can identify up to four family members by voice and adapt to their preferences. It remembers their likes and dislikes and suggests songs they might enjoy

based on their tastes. When interacting with children, Yasmina provides age-appropriate content.

- Multimodal interaction: Yasmina can display information such as the time and weather and communicate emotions on the LED screen. Yasmina

also uses dynamic lighting to match the mood of the music or interactions.

- Cultural immersion: Yasmina can recite surahs from the Holy Quran, play Adhans, and tell you the date according to the Hijri calendar. It also knows the prayer times for any city in the world.

SentinelOne announces second quarter fiscal year 2025 financial results

SentinelOne has announced financial results for the second quarter of fiscal year 2025 ended July 31, 2024.

"Based on strong execution and broad based demand, SentinelOne delivered exceptional results with industry- leading growth and our first ever quarter of positive net income and earnings per share," said Tomer Weingarten, CEO of SentinelOne. "We're seeing a distinct rise in customer interest and appreciation for the advantages of our patented AI-powered Singularity Platform to help build higher quality and more durable cyber defense. We remain committed to an open ecosystem platform, superior technology, and earning customer trust through transparency."

"We outperformed on all key metrics, including record margins and profitability. We continue to lead the industry in terms

Tomer Weingarten,
CEO, SentinelOne

of technology, revenue growth, and margin expansion. Q2 marked our 12th consecutive quarter with double digit operating margin improvement," said Dave Bernhardt, CFO of SentinelOne. "We continue to invest in innovation and scale, which will extend our competitive advantages and reach over time. Based on stronger execution and business momentum, we're raising our revenue outlook for fiscal year '25."

Letter to Shareholders
We have published a letter to shareholders on the Investor Relations section of our website at investors.sentinelone.com. The letter provides further discussion of our results for the second quarter of fiscal year 2025 as well as the financial outlook for our fiscal third quarter and full fiscal year 2025.

Swisslog to transform KSA logistics with automation at Saudi Logistics Expo 2024

Swisslog will be at the Saudi Logistics Expo 2024, taking place from September 2-4. This premier event is Saudi Arabia's largest platform dedicated to supply chain, warehousing, and logistics, bringing together over 11,000 industry professionals and showcasing the latest in innovative technologies and solutions.

Swisslog will feature a dynamic demo of its cutting-edge solution, AutoStore, providing visitors with an opportunity to experience firsthand the efficiency and precision of automated storage and order processing. It integrates with existing infrastructures, effortlessly meeting the surging demand for rapid, precise, and reliable order fulfilment. As a leading global and regional logistics provider, Swisslog sets new standards in warehouse automation, keeping businesses competitive in the fast-evolving economy.

Projections indicate that the Middle East and Africa (MEA) automated materials handling market will reach over US$1,885 million by 2026, with Saudi Arabia holding one of the largest market shares in the region. Saudi Logistics Expo offers the ideal stage for Swisslog to showcase its holistic

Rami Younes, General Manager at Swisslog Middle East

state-of-the-art warehousing and supply chain solutions designed to maximize space utilisation and streamline operations with sharper insights, faster services, scalability, and cost efficiencies for local industries. The company's participation underscores its commitment to delivering future-proof solutions that meet the unique needs of

its local customers, backed by a highly experienced local team and over 3,000 global experts.

Rami Younes, General Manager at Swisslog Middle East, said, "As businesses in Saudi Arabia continue to expand and evolve, the need for reliable, efficient, and scalable automation solutions has never been greater."

Gartner: 75% of enterprises to prioritize SaaS backup by 2028

By 2028, 75% of enterprises will prioritize backup of software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications as a critical requirement, compared to 15% in 2024, according to Gartner, Inc.

SaaS-based applications have become a preferred choice for new and modernized deployments, with the data these applications generate expected to be among the fastest-growing sets of critical enterprise data over the next five years. According to Gartner's latest forecast, worldwide end-user SaaS spending is projected to grow 20% to total $247.2 billion in 2024, and is forecast to reach nearly $300 billion in 2025.

"The risk of IT outages underscores the urgent need for regular backup and recovery of critical enterprise data," said Michael Hoeck, Sr Director

Analyst at Gartner. "As businesses are more dependent on SaaS technologies, it becomes crucial to ensure that SaaS data is both protected

and recoverable. Given the vulnerability of SaaS data to errors, cyberattacks, and vendor mishaps, robust backup solutions are indispensable."

"Integrating Backup as a Service (BaaS) is essential for safeguarding cloud workloads and maintaining operational continuity. Furthermore, enterprises must understand the shared data responsibility model of SaaS applications and evaluate their vendors' data protection measures. If these measures are inadequate, third-party solutions should be considered to guarantee comprehensive data protection," said Hoeck.

Seventy-Five Percent of Large Enterprises Will Adopt BaaS Alongside On-Premises Tools by 2028

"Protection and recovery of SaaS applications have often been a lower priority for many enterprises," said Hoeck.

Introducing Einstein SDR and Einstein Sales Coach: New AI agents to boost your sales team

Salesforce has introduced two new fully autonomous AI sales agents: Einstein Sales Development Rep (SDR) Agent and Einstein Sales Coach Agent. Generally available in October, these sales agents are built on Salesforce's Einstein 1 Agentforce Platform to help sales teams accelerate growth.

Einstein SDR Agent autonomously engages with inbound prospects to nurture pipeline 24/7. Unlike chatbots that can only answer specific programmed questions, Einstein SDR Agent makes decisions and prioritizes actions that align with the desired outcomes and analyzes a prospect's question to autonomously determine what to do next — whether that's answering product questions, handling objections, or scheduling a meeting. Each response is trusted, accurate, and personalized because it is grounded in a company's CRM and harmonized external data using Agentforce's retrieval augmented generation (RAG) service. Einstein SDR Agent seamlessly transitions leads to sellers and can handle multiple leads at once, across channels, and in various languages. This means sellers can offload time-consuming,

Sam Allen, EVP & Chief Pipeline Officer, Salesforce

top-of-the-funnel activities and focus on connecting with customers.

Einstein Sales Coach Agent coaches sellers by autonomously facilitating role-plays, tailored to each deal, providing personalized and objective feedback afterward. During the role-play, Einstein simulates a buyer, using generative AI to convert text into speech.

Einstein uses RAG to emulate how a buyer might respond, grounding every response in relevant information stored in Salesforce — such as information on the deal, account, and previous correspondence with that customer. This means sellers can practice pitching, handling objections, or negotiating before meeting with real customers.
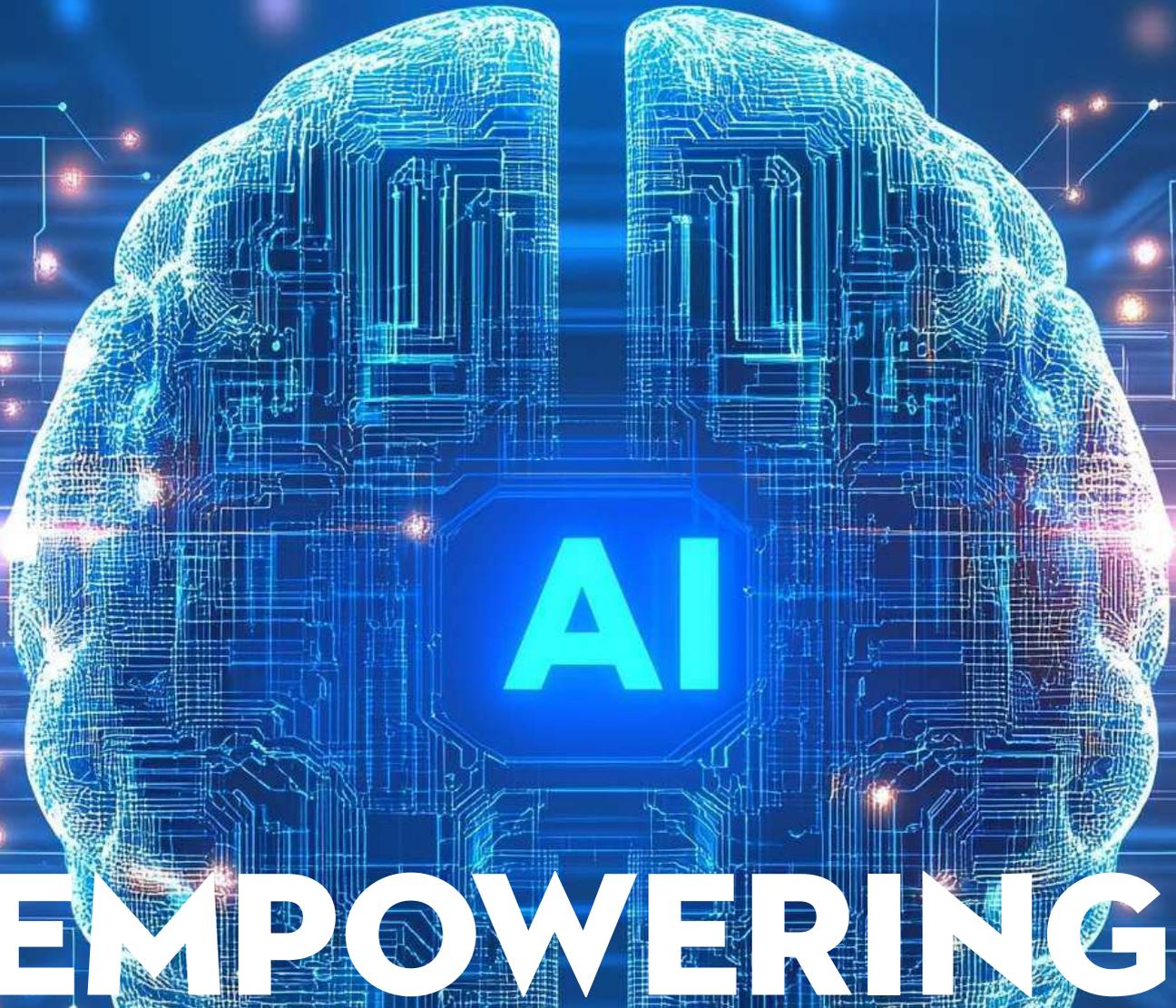
EMPOWERING
CHANNEL PARTNERS
THROUGH AI

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming the technology landscape, creating a multitude of opportunities for channel partners to drive efficiency, security, and growth for their customers. As AI continues to surprise us each day, it opens doors to innovative solutions and services that can significantly impact various sectors. We explore the transformative potential of AI, the critical areas where it offers substantial benefits, and the strategic approaches channel partners can adopt to harness its power effectively.

Channel opportunities in AI

AI has emerged as a cornerstone of digital transformation, influencing everything from customer experience and cybersecurity to automation and predictive analytics. For channel partners, this presents a golden opportunity to use AI to enhance their service offerings, differentiate themselves in the market, and drive growth. Alexandre Boutin, Director – AI at Mindware, emphasizes an important role AI plays in reshaping the channel partner landscape. Mindware is dedicated to empowering its reseller community by providing them with the necessary knowledge, industry insights, and technical skills to navigate the vast opportunities AI presents. By focusing on areas such as customer experience, cybersecurity, and automation, Mindware ensures its partners are well-equipped to leverage AI's transformative potential. Boutin's vision underscores the importance of not just understanding AI but mastering it. This involves gaining deep technical expertise, staying updated with the latest advancements, and applying AI solutions in real-world scenarios. For channel partners, this translates into a strategic advantage, allowing them to offer cutting-edge solutions that address complex customer needs and drive business growth.

Key Areas Where AI Offers Transformative Opportunities

Among the numerous ways AI can revolutionize business operations, several key areas stand out for their impact on channel partners and their customers:

Threat Detection and Analysis

For the cybersecurity world, AI is a game-changer. AI algorithms excel at processing large volumes of data quickly and accurately. This capability is particularly valuable for threat detection and analysis. AI systems can identify patterns and anomalies in network traffic and user behavior that may indicate a potential cybersecurity threat.

For channel partners, this means the opportunity to offer advanced threat detection solutions that go beyond traditional methods. AI-driven solutions can detect unusual activities, such

Abdul Rehman Tariq Butt,
Regional Director Middle East at SolarWinds

Alessandro Porro,
VP, Global Channels OPSWAT

as unauthorized access or suspicious transactions, in real-time. This proactive approach helps prevent potential breaches before they escalate, providing a significant advantage in safeguarding customers' digital assets.

Research and Development

AI's role in research and development is transformative, particularly in the cybersecurity domain. Researchers can leverage AI to process and analyze vast amounts of data, facilitating the identification of patterns and insights that might otherwise go unnoticed.

This capability accelerates innovation by enabling researchers to develop more effective security measures and solutions. For channel partners, this means the ability to offer cutting-edge research and development services that drive advancements in cybersecurity and other fields. By integrating AI into their R&D processes, partners can stay ahead of emerging threats and deliver state-of-the-art solutions to their customers.

Phishing Detection

Phishing attacks are a significant threat to cybersecurity, with scammers continuously developing more sophisticated techniques. AI offers a powerful defense against phishing by analyzing email content and identifying

potential phishing attempts.

AI algorithms can detect subtle signs of phishing, such as unusual language patterns or suspicious attachments, and prevent these emails from reaching end users. For channel partners, this translates into the ability to offer robust phishing detection solutions that protect customers from falling victim to these deceptive attacks. By integrating AI into their security offerings, partners can enhance their ability to detect and mitigate phishing threats effectively.

Vulnerability Management

AI's role in vulnerability management is akin to having a vigilant guard constantly monitoring systems and infrastructure. AI can continuously scan and analyze networks for vulnerabilities, identifying weaknesses that could be exploited by attackers.

This proactive approach to vulnerability management enables channel partners to offer comprehensive solutions that address security gaps before they can be exploited. By leveraging AI to identify and address vulnerabilities in real-time, partners can provide their customers with enhanced protection and peace of mind.

Automated Threat Response

Beyond detection, AI can also automate responses to threats, streamlining incident

Alexandre Boutin,
Director AI at
Mindware

Ghassan Abou Rjeily,
Regional Channel Sales
Manager, Emerging
EMEA at Riverbed

management and reducing the burden on IT teams. AI systems can isolate affected systems, block suspicious IP addresses, or apply patches to address vulnerabilities.

Alessandro Porro, VP Global Channels at OPSWAT, highlights the significance of AI in automating threat responses. By integrating AI into their security solutions, channel partners can offer enhanced automation that improves efficiency and effectiveness in managing and mitigating security incidents. This capability not only reduces response times but also ensures that threats are addressed promptly and effectively.

Strategic Approaches for Channel Partners
While AI offers substantial opportunities, channel partners must adopt strategic approaches to fully harness its potential. Here are some key strategies for channel partners to consider:

Invest in Training and Expertise
To effectively utilize AI, channel partners need to invest in training and developing their expertise. This includes gaining a deep understanding of AI technologies, staying updated with the latest advancements, and acquiring hands-on experience with AI solutions.

Alexandre Boutin underscores the importance of having the right resources trained and ready to support customers. By investing in training and development, partners can ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to implement AI solutions effectively and deliver value to their customers.

Educate Customers and Demonstrate ROI
A critical differentiator for channel partners is their ability to educate customers and demonstrate clear, measurable ROI. AI solutions can be complex, and customers may need guidance in understanding their benefits and potential impact.

By providing education and showcasing the tangible benefits of AI solutions, channel partners can build trust with their customers and highlight the value of their offerings. Demonstrating clear ROI through case studies, metrics, and real-world examples helps customers see the practical benefits of AI and makes a compelling case for investment.

Forge Strategic Vendor Partnerships
Choosing the right vendors is crucial for channel partners seeking to maximize their

AI offerings. Vendors are typically more inclined to collaborate with partners who align with their technologies and do not have competing solutions in their portfolios.

Ghassan Abou Rjeily, Regional Channel Sales Manager – Emerging EMEA at Riverbed, emphasizes the importance of strategic vendor partnerships. Partners should carefully evaluate vendors based on their technology alignment and compatibility with their strategies. By forging strong partnerships with the right vendors, channel partners can access valuable resources, support, and opportunities that enhance their AI capabilities.

Expand Focus Beyond GenAI
While Generative AI is garnering significant attention, it is essential for partners to broaden their focus and explore other areas of AI. Multimodal AI, Open Source AI, and predictive analytics are emerging fields with substantial potential.Ghassan Abou Rjeily advises partners to consider these areas in addition to GenAI. Multimodal AI integrates various data types and sources, Open Source AI offers flexibility and customization, and predictive analytics provides valuable insights for forecasting and decision-making. By expanding their focus, partners can uncover additional opportunities and stay ahead in the evolving AI landscape.

Abdul Rehman Tariq Butt, Regional Director - Middle East at SolarWinds, suggests that partners begin by integrating AI into their own processes. This approach not only enhances their understanding of AI but also allows them to combine this knowledge with their grasp of local market dynamics and customer needs. By leveraging AI internally, partners can strengthen their relationships with AI vendors and demonstrate their commitment to the technology.

It is quite evident that in the dynamic world of AI, channel partners have the chance to not only enhance their capabilities but also play a crucial role in shaping the future of technology. By staying informed, adaptable, and proactive, they can direct new possibilities and drive success in an increasingly AI-powered world. ↖

CAAS©

CIO AS A SERVICE

A Strategic Imperative

TechOps

Streamline their IT infrastructure and improve operational efficiency, which can result in lower costs and increased productivity.

Competency Framework

Assess your current capabilities architecture and identify areas for improvement, helping you to make informed decisions about where to invest your technology resources

TechSust Align

Optimize and improve your technology systems, ensuring they are operating at peak efficiency and effectively supporting your business goals.

Biz Insights

Provide advanced analytics services, leveraging the latest technologies and techniques to help you turn your data into actionable insights.

DXT

Develop a digital strategy that aligns with your business objectives, enabling you to stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

iamcaas.com

FUTURE READY APPROACH

Ali Kontar, CEO of Zero&One, discusses how the company is using AWS's Generative AI tools to boost innovation and support digital transformation in the Middle East. By addressing challenges and expanding AI services, Zero&One is helping businesses adapt and succeed in the changing tech landscape

How is Zero&One using the AWS Generative AI competency to boost AI solutions for clients in the region?

At Zero&One, we anticipated the rise of Gen AI long before it gained momentum in the market. Our deep understanding of emerging technologies positioned us to lead from the forefront, and if you're curious as to why we were among the first in the entire EMEA region—and possibly globally—to achieve this level of expertise, it's not by chance. It's a direct result of our long-term vision, proactive preparation, and unwavering commitment to innovation.

From the very beginning, we were strong advocates of data as the "new oil"—an invaluable asset in the digital age. Our strategy was always centered around helping our customers build data-driven organizations, where decisions are informed by robust data strategies.

As conversations around AI and machine learning began to evolve, our customers naturally began asking how they could leverage their data to take advantage of these new technologies. It wasn't just about collecting data anymore; it was about utilizing that data in meaningful ways—through the application of machine learning models, predictive algorithms, and AI-driven insights. Customers had begun to build data lakes, establish governance frameworks, and ensure data quality.

That's where we came in. We began partnering with our customers, helping them implement innovative models on top of their existing data infrastructure. Whether it was personalization of customer experiences or forecasting business outcomes, we were there to guide them through the process.

Our vision for building data-driven organizations wasn't limited to just data governance or strategy. We looked ahead and understood that the real potential lay in unlocking the value of that data through AI and ML capabilities. When Generative AI finally gained mainstream traction, we were already prepared. We had laid the groundwork through partnerships, skill development, and extensive use-case creation, allowing us to hit the ground running. We could revisit earlier use cases with customers, helping them accelerate their AI journeys with immediate impact.

When you walk side by side with customers through their digital transformation journey, it becomes a natural progression to stay ahead of technological advancements. At Zero&One, our motto has always been "Innovate to Simplify Complexity." This principle is what drives us, regardless of whether we're working as AWS specialists or as experts in AI and Gen AI. For our customers, the specific technology is less important than the solution we deliver. Tomorrow, we could be specialists in quantum computing or another technology that hasn't

Ali El Kontar
CEO,
Zero&One

yet emerged. The point is that technology is an enabler—it's about solving real-world problems, not just adopting the latest tools for the sake of it.

Now, as for success stories in generative AI, it's important to note that achieving tangible results goes beyond experimentation. Everyone seems to be jumping on the AI bandwagon— conducting proof of concepts (POCs), running pilots, or playing with the technology to explore its potential. However, many organizations face a significant challenge: transitioning from POC to full-scale production. This is where we've seen a gap in the market.

At Zero&One, we built a structured approach based on thorough research and consulting. Our success wasn't achieved alone; we collaborated with industry leaders like Gartner and PwC to refine our strategy. Through this, we identified that while many were experimenting with AI, very few were actually planning for the critical stage of

moving from POC to production. This process involves much more than simply testing AI in a lab environment—it requires consideration of scalability, security, trustworthiness, and responsibility.

To bridge this gap, we created a program called "BRAiN," which stands for "Building Responsible AI Narratives." As with all our work, we approach AI as a story within the broader context of an organization's goals. AI is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and not every company needs to implement it. BRAiN guides customers through a journey we call the P3 framework, which stands for Prepare, Proof, and Productize..

- Preparation Phase: We begin by bringing together key stakeholders from different departments to assess potential AI use cases. This phase helps organizations identify the most relevant and impactful use cases, aligning them with business goals and metrics.

- Proof Phase: Once the use cases are selected, we help organizations define and align business objectives with the technology's feasibility. We employ a scoring system that weighs business value against technical feasibility, ensuring that the chosen use cases deliver high impact and are technologically achievable.

- Productization Phase: Finally, we focus on ensuring a smooth transition from proof of concept to production. By eliminating low-value or high-risk opportunities early in the process, organizations can avoid the pitfalls that prevent AI projects from becoming operational.

Through this process, we've achieved significant results across various industries. For example, in e-commerce and retail, we partnered with Snoonu—the leading delivery platform in Qatar, similar to Careem or Deliveroo. We helped them implement generative AI to automate item categorization, which improved both search accuracy and recommendation engines, ultimately enhancing customer satisfaction and increasing average purchase values.

What challenges do you see business in Middle East facing during digital transformation and how does Zero&One address these challenges?

At Zero & One, we approach digital transformation with a broad and comprehensive mindset. It's not just about rolling out new ERPs, CRMs, or moving workloads online—although these are important steps, they don't define true digital transformation. For years, we've talked about digital transformation, but it's much bigger than launching an e-commerce platform or implementing SAP or Oracle systems. True digital transformation revolves around four key pillars: culture, organizational structure, mechanisms, and technology. Without addressing all these aspects, any transformation effort falls short.

First, let's talk about culture. It's crucial to foster an environment where people feel empowered, can take initiative, and collaborate across different teams. Yet many organizations are stuck in a hierarchical command-and-order structure, a model we inherited from the 1950s, designed for production lines.

Next are the mechanisms—the processes and systems we use to achieve our goals. It's not enough to say, "We want to innovate." We need to ask ourselves: How are we measuring success? How are we enabling our teams to make data-driven decisions? What platforms and tools are in place to help them?

At Zero & One, our focus is on two of these pillars: mechanisms and technology. When we work with customers, we don't come in with a one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, we spend time understanding their pain points, what they're trying to achieve, and then work backwards to build the right solution. Whether they're looking to increase revenue, cut costs, or explore new revenue streams, we focus on the end goal. Technology is just the tool that helps us get there.

When it comes to technology, we trust AWS as our platform. To us, it's like a "Lego box," full of all the tools we need to build custom solutions. Whether it's generative AI, data services, storage, compute, networking, containers, or DevOps, AWS provides us with a wide range of options.

How do you ensure that your cloud solutions are tailored to meet the unique needs of clients?

At Zero & One, we aren't focused on selling products. Instead, we position ourselves as trusted technology advisors. When a CEO or CIO approaches us, they already have a clear understanding of their challenges or the new initiatives they want to pursue. Our role is to guide them toward the right technological solutions to address these needs.

To achieve this, we follow a structured process. One of the most important tools we use is what we call the "Thinking Backward" workshop. This one-day session, inspired by design thinking, allows us to deeply explore the client's problem, goals, and vision. During the workshop, we go through an ideation phase, map out different contexts and empathies, and develop wireframes and user journeys. By the end, we produce two key deliverables: FAQs and a press release.

The FAQs and press release document everything we've gathered from the discussions with the stakeholders in the room. Once we have this written down, we share it with them for validation. They either confirm that we've accurately captured their needs or provide feedback to further refine the understanding. This iterative process ensures that we're fully aligned with their vision before moving forward.

After this initial phase, we move into the next step: proof of concept (POC) or proof of value (POV). This stage is essential because, often, the technology we recommend is something the client hasn't experienced before. For example, if we tell them that we can reduce video translation time by 15 minutes, which could lead to significant cost savings, they need to see tangible results before they fully commit. It's about building trust in the technology—"seeing is believing."

What future goals do you have to expand in the market?

We are currently working on a larger go-to-market strategy focused on delivering AI as a service in this region. We've already developed a robust model framework, tested it thoroughly, and successfully piloted it with some of our customers who are actively using our service. Now, we're preparing to officially introduce AI as a service to the broader market.

Though this offering hasn't been formally launched yet, I can share a bit of a preview. We're gearing up to introduce AI Plus and AI 360, two new AI-managed service offerings that will be central to our strategy. These services are part of what we call our Brain Program, which is focused on building responsible AI narratives and ensuring that our AI solutions are ethical, transparent, and highly effective.

Our AI as a service offering, including AI Plus and AI 360, is set to launch within Q4 of this year, allowing us to be fully prepared for 2025. Up until now, the market has been in a phase of exploration, trying to understand the potential of AI. While they're not completely ready for full-scale adoption, we believe the market is now at a point where companies are actively seeking partners to support them on their AI journey.

Transforming IT operations with AI observability platform

In this exclusive interview, Salman Ali, Senior Manager of Solution Engineering at Riverbed for the META region, speaks about the transformative role of AI in IT observability.

Tell us more about AI Observability and how it's going to work and change what Riverbed is working on?

We're focusing on how AI can enhance our daily lives and bridge gaps in IT by automating as much as possible. Monitoring and observability are key here. Observability involves continuously collecting and analyzing data, metrics, and even user sentiments. This data feeds into Riverbed's engine, producing outcomes that guide decision-making, whether it's an IT admin or another role managing the solution. Some outcomes require human intervention, while others can be automated for efficiency.

Our priority has been on collecting comprehensive data—without it, the mechanisms and systems we build around that data might not yield the right outcomes. We ensure we capture every piece of data, across IT infrastructure, users, applications, devices, networks, and cloud services. This data is then fed into the Riverbed data repository, where it's analyzed and assessed. We generate reports and take necessary remediation actions. This process feeds into our remediation library, which currently includes around 170 pre-built remediations, and we continue to expand this library based on customer feedback and use cases.

As for the product launches, we've revitalized our AI automation platform, Riverbed IQ. This platform acts as the brain, aggregating data from both Riverbed and third-party solutions. It helps customers reduce the volume of tickets by prioritizing what matters most, thus saving time and resources. By processing data through our intelligence engine, we can identify the root cause of issues, reducing the noise and focusing on what's critical.

We also gather user feedback and sentiment, which is integrated back into IQ to continually refine the system. With all the data collected, actions can be automated or managed by the IT team, depending on the scenario. For example, when a recent update from CrowdStrike caused widespread issues, we were able to quickly identify the impact, roll back the update, and resolve the problem without extensive troubleshooting.

In addition to IQ, we also launched other key components, including Aternity Mobile. We've been monitoring end-user experience for years, and now we've expanded our capabilities to include mobile devices. This means we can monitor applications used remotely on any device—laptops, tablets, or mobiles—regardless of where the application is hosted. We also enhanced our flagship network performance monitoring tool, NetProfiler, adding software-defined visibility, topology mapping, and cloud insights to provide a comprehensive view of network performance.

Salman Ali,
Senior Manager – Solution Engineering, META, Riverbed

> "*By providing a unified, centralized view of the entire IT ecosystem, observability tools can compare current performance to past benchmarks, thanks to machine learning algorithms that forecast potential future issues based on historical data.*"

Could you provide some examples of how this platform has helped or will help in reducing troubleshooting time?

The first and most crucial aspect of troubleshooting is visibility—you can't fix what you can't see or understand. To begin troubleshooting, you need the right data and feedback. There are two ways to gather feedback: through user sentiment and data collection. While user sentiment provides insights based on individuals' experiences, it can be influenced by their mood or perception, making it subjective. Therefore, it's essential to match these sentiments with accurate telemetry and data.

For instance, if a user reports poor performance, we must verify if the collected data supports this sentiment. If it does, we know where to focus our troubleshooting efforts. This makes data collection critical, as it ensures we're not guessing or hoping the issue lies elsewhere.

To achieve this, we collect data from every point within the IT enterprise environment—network, applications, infrastructure, cloud, end-users, and devices. With a comprehensive 360-degree view, we can filter the data down to what matters most for the business. This allows us to prioritize applications and map data to create an end-to-end holistic overview of the user experience, including the devices used, the application performance, and response times.

This process helps identify fault domains and guides our troubleshooting. Typically, when a user encounters an issue, they might try basic troubleshooting steps, like restarting the system, before contacting the IT service desk. The service desk then prioritizes these calls based on the impact on the business.

Our AI automation platform, LUMIQ, analyzes these tickets and events, comparing them with the data collected to reduce the overall impact on IT. For example, if hundreds of tickets are related to a Microsoft Exchange bug, LUMIQ can consolidate these into a single issue, allowing for centralized problem-solving and automatic remediation, rather than addressing each ticket individually.

Given that you collect a vast amount of data, how does the platform ensure that this data is kept private?

We ensure full GDPR compliance in our approach to data privacy. For instance, in highly secure environments like banking, which we frequently work with, we employ data masking techniques for any personal data we collect. This means that while we gather the necessary data, it is encrypted to protect sensitive information. Additionally, we adhere to the existing encryption policies that organizations have in place. Whether they use technologies like secure traffic, TLS, Diffie-Hellman encryption, or others, we align with those standards. Our commitment is to maintain the highest levels of encryption and protect personal data, ensuring that it is masked and secure at all times.

Are there any challenges that you face for the large IT environments for this platform?

World right now is having a complex IT environment, where users are accessing corporate applications from various locations like their homes, airports, or coffee shops, and often on different devices—some corporate-controlled, others not—the challenges have multiplied. First, the "bring your own device" (BYOD) culture has surged, particularly post-COVID, introducing a wide array of devices into the mix. This raises the critical question: how do organizations maintain visibility and control over these varied environments?

Secondly, as users are now spread across different regions, cities, and even countries, many IT enterprise organizations have expanded their IT infrastructure beyond local data centers to include multiple cloud platforms like Azure, AWS, Google, Alibaba, and Oracle. This multi-cloud, multi-device scenario further complicates IT management.

As IT infrastructures become more complex, it's increasingly difficult to fully understand how everything functions and to anticipate the impact of changes, whether it's upgrading core banking applications, transitioning to modern ATMs, or shifting supporting systems to cloud-based platforms like NetSuite. The more complex the IT landscape, the harder it becomes to manage and monitor these changes.

This is where observability becomes essential. By providing a unified, centralized view of the entire IT ecosystem, observability tools can compare current performance to past benchmarks, thanks to machine learning algorithms that forecast potential future issues based on historical data. This allows for proactive troubleshooting and mitigation.

Moreover, observability simplifies the complexity by offering tailored dashboards for different roles within the organization. For example, application owners can focus on application-specific data, while network teams can view network-specific metrics. Both can eventually drill down to the same root cause of an issue, thereby streamlining the troubleshooting process.

In essence, observability platforms like Riverbed are not just about monitoring network or application performance; they offer a comprehensive view of the entire IT environment, supporting organizations as they evolve. Whether it's addressing today's challenges with remote devices or preparing for tomorrow's multi-cloud architectures, these platforms are designed to meet the growing needs of enterprise IT.

Additionally, as artificial intelligence and machine learning become increasingly integral to IT strategies, Riverbed continues to enhance its machine learning algorithms to provide more accurate predictions and forecasts, helping organizations better prepare for future changes in their IT landscape.

AI-powered cyber defense

In this exclusive interview, we speak with Tim Grieveson, Senior Vice President and Global Cyber Security Risk Advisor at Bitsight, Tim sheds light on how Bitsight's innovative tools are transforming the way organizations manage their cyber risks.

How does Bitsight Security Performance Management (SPM) help CISOs and risk leaders prioritize remediation and manage cyber risks effectively?

Bitsight SPM automatically and continuously provides threat informed, actionable insight into the vulnerabilities facing an organization – such as unpatched systems, misconfigured software, open access ports, and compromised systems so that security leaders can identify areas of weakness, to allow them to remediate them quickly, taking action against possible threats before they occur.

Bitsight SPM enables security leaders to effectively communicate the performance of cybersecurity programs to the Board of Directors, investors, insurers and other key stakeholders to ensure sufficient understanding, commitment and investments can be made to support securing their enterprise. Bitsight's financial cyber risk quantification solution provides a quick, efficient, and repeatable assessment of your financial exposure to cyber risk so that cyber risk can be articulated in a way in which executives can easily understand in order to make business decisions such as investment prioritisation, resource allocation, risk reduction actions or insurance coverage requirement to support the security leaders in their objectives to protect and secure critical services, systems and data.

In what ways does Bitsight SPM provide unique analytics insights that enable security leaders to understand financial exposure and improve their cybersecurity strategies?

Bitsights comprehensive data set which contains hundreds of millions of assets and connected devices across the internet provides objective, independent, and evidence-based metrics which empowers leaders to quantify risk and demonstrate performance in a meaningful way. Bitsight for Security Performance Management (SPM) features advanced cybersecurity analytics that take the guesswork out of analyzing performance and setting program goals with metrics based on your own cybersecurity needs and appetite for risk.

SPM combines quick analysis with actionable insights so Security Leaders can move from reactive to proactive protection and start protecting against security threats instead of dealing with crises.

Bitsight provides a comprehensive set of capabilities to enable security leaders to identify, prioritize, communicate and inform remediation of cyber threats from an inside and outside view as well as supply chain risk management perspective and has a number of critical views on the risk posture of and organisation such as - Peer Analytics, Attack Surface Analytics, Financial Quantification, Control Insight, Risk Remediation Planning, Enterprise Analytics & Forecasting to understand the impact, likelihood and velocity of future vulnerabilities or associated remediations.
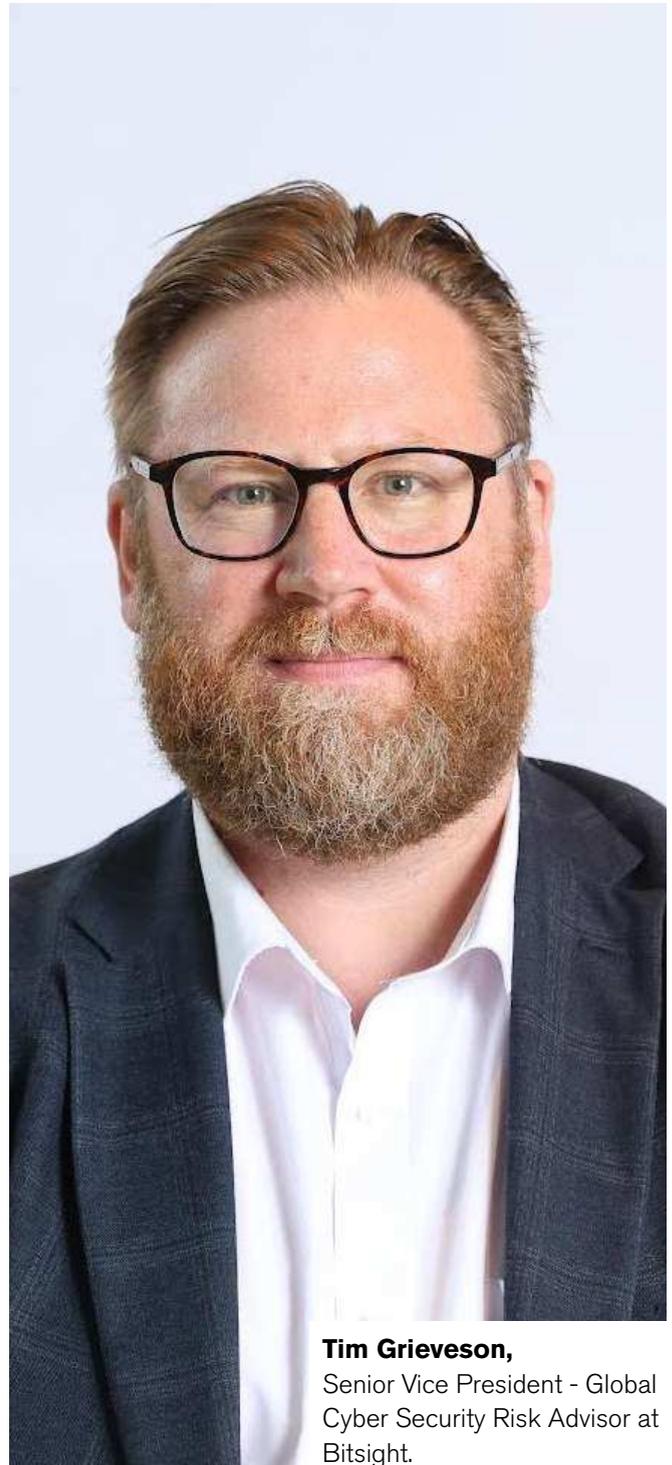
Tim Grieveson,
Senior Vice President - Global Cyber Security Risk Advisor at Bitsight.

How does Bitsight External Attack Surface Management help organizations discover and manage vulnerabilities in their digital assets and vendor networks?

Bitsight Attack Surface Analytics provides the tools that work together to continuously discover and segment the assets, applications, and devices that make up an organisation, government or geographies attack surface. With Bitsight, it is possible to visualise the attack surface clearly, assess your current risk exposure, prioritize high-risk assets, and take actions to mitigate risk. Bitsights Trace Team which enhances the data by providing threat intelligence data based on real time events to ensure that actively exploitable threats can be identified and remediated quickly across an organisation's landscape or indeed landscape of its critical supply chain.

What advantages does Bitsight External Attack Surface Management offer in prioritizing and

responding to emerging cyber threats?

Bitsight sees the extended attack surface at the core of understanding an organization's total security posture and have invested significantly in R&D over the last three years in order to harness the power of AI combined with Human Intelligence and this connection between our developers, technical researchers and analysts separates our insights from other solutions.

In May 2024 Bitsight announced a new Discovery and Attribution Engine that creates a dynamic map of an organization's internet-connected assets, making it faster and easier to view exposure across the extended attack surface, assess risk and prioritize remediation. The engine combines two complementary technologies:

• Bitsight Groma continuously scans the entire internet to discover assets, collect asset attribution evidence, and identify an ever-growing set of security observations, such as vulnerabilities and misconfigurations.

• Bitsight Graph of Internet Assets (GIA) applies advanced graph technology and AI models to map assets to specific entities – and the relationships between entities – at a global scale.

"Today's Enterprises have digital footprints that are constantly evolving and remote working has become the norm and therefore the effective use of AI to quickly and accurately build and visualize an external picture of organizational enriched with key remediation recommendations is essential if risk and security leaders are to keep pace with the evolving threat landscape"

"The AI models that power Bitsight's GIA are trained with human-curated data leveraging the IT infrastructure of hundreds of millions of assets and connected devices across the internet and utilises the power of AI to automate and scale discovery and visualization, whilst Bitsight's team of 100-plus security researchers verify the results and continuously improve the models in order to deliver ever increased entity map accuracy." ◤

Bridging the gap

In this exclusive interview, Jason Ellis, VP of Channel Sales at Sophos, shares valuable insights into how the company is driving growth through its channel partners.

How is Sophos growing its channel business, and what strategies are you using to support and involve your partners in this growth?

Over the past few years, we've been working hard to launch and refine our MDR (Managed Detection and Response) service. MDR addresses the critical challenge in security where having multiple products isn't enough unless they're monitored effectively. Without proper monitoring, threats and alerts can be missed, leading to potential issues down the line.

In today's market, customers and partners struggle to find the necessary expertise, which is where our MDR service comes in. With MDR, when customers purchase an endpoint, Sophos provides a 24/7 monitoring service. Over the past three years, we've been training our partners to educate their customers on the importance of not just selling a product, but also offering an additional service to ensure protection against threats like ransomware. As a result, 30-40% of our partners are now selling MDR services, enabling them to offer higher-quality products and services to their customers.

Our key objectives include ensuring that our partners provide what customers need, encouraging cross-selling of our products—since our endpoint and firewall products work better together—and expanding our MSP (Managed Service Provider) offerings to meet the growing demand for flexible, subscription-based services.

To foster better collaboration with our channel partners, we're currently running a roadshow across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, where we're engaging with over 2,500 partners in 20 locations. The roadshow focuses on market opportunities, where to invest, and our enablement programs, particularly around MDR and MSP. We're also launching an MDR certification program soon, allowing partners to differentiate themselves in the market based on their expertise.

Our partner program follows a classic tier system: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Authorized, with criteria based on technical certifications and revenue. We also support partners in developing their MSP practices with dedicated training and resources.

As we continue to evolve our channel strategy, we're focusing on partners with service capabilities, particularly in the mid-market (100-1,000 users). We want partners who can offer not just products, but also services that add value.

Finally, we're committed to helping our partners

Jason Ellis,
VP, Channel Sales, Sophos

differentiate themselves in a crowded market, especially through specialization in MDR. This not only sets them apart but also ensures they stay ahead of the competition.

How are your channel your partners doing things so that mdr stands out from the rest of the products in the market?

We don't offer a specific badge or certificate as part of our program, but our focus is more on the day-to-day strategies and plans we have with our partners. It's primarily about sales engagement. For instance, we provide more support to partners with advanced skills in areas like Managed Detection and Response (MDR). We invest in them by allocating additional marketing funds, integrating them more closely with our sales teams, and inviting them to customer events that we host. Additionally, we're planning to offer more certifications around MDR in the future, which is a direction we're heading towards.

What's your long-term vision for Sophos' channel partner strategy?

We're quite satisfied with our current partner-centric channel strategy. Our long-term goal is to continue providing a comprehensive platform. As I mentioned, we're a multi-product company, not just focused on a single offering. Our aim is to keep empowering our partners to sell our platform and add their own services. We recognize that we don't provide all the services our customers might need, so it's our responsibility to help our partners differentiate themselves in the market. This involves enabling them to articulate the service opportunities surrounding the products we offer.

If I were to look ahead two years, I'd expect to see a more service-oriented channel. Our partners will be offering their own services alongside Sophos services. We're focusing on the mid-market segment, and our MSP (Managed Service Provider) network is expanding rapidly—we're currently adding about 10 new MSPs per month, with 3,500 MSPs already in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. I see this growth continuing. Additionally, AI will play a crucial role in helping our partners scale their operations. We've set up a dedicated AI website at ai.sophos.com.

How will AI benefit your partners?

AI is already integral to our technology, particularly in threat analysis, which we've been doing for years—though we may not have called it AI initially. We're developing AI tools to assist our partners in creating proposals and reducing their training requirements. For example, instead of watching a one-hour training video, they'll be able to use an AI model to quickly grasp the seven most important points from that video.

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Avaya appoints Cameron Thomson to lead EMEA Theatre

Cameron Thomson, Group Vice President for the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA)

Avaya has appointed Cameron Thomson as Group Vice President for the Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) theatre, including Turkey and Pakistan.

Based in the United Kingdom, Thomson joins Avaya off the back of extensive success in regional CX leadership at Alvaria and that company's previous incarnation, Aspect Software. With extensive knowledge of the theatre and segment of the market, Thomson will enable local teams as they closely support their customers and partners to drive business growth through delivering outstanding customer and employee experiences.

"This theatre is full of potential, ranging from the large-scale Enterprise CX opportunities for innovation without disruption that we see in developed markets across Europe, to the emerging, large-scale customer-centric CX projects we're seeing across the Middle East and Africa. This is an exciting time to be joining Avaya, which is best placed to help large-scale organizations tackle their unique CX strategies head on, at a pace that suits them, with advanced technologies that integrate seamlessly with what already works," said Thomson.

"Cameron leads from the front, empowering his teams to overachieve and reach their full potential. His reputation as a customer- and partner-first leader within the region will be of great value to the business," said ML Maco, Chief Revenue and Customer Experience Officer, Avaya.

Nutanix Appoints Chris De Vere as EMEA MSP Leader

Chris De Vere,
MSP Director, EMEA,
Nutanix

Nutanix has named Chris De Vere as its new EMEA Managed Service Provider (MSP) Leader, effective August 1. Chris will oversee the MSP Sales and Business Development team, including existing members and new hires as part of FY25's headcount expansion.

The appointment is part of Nutanix' consolidation of its MSP sales efforts and resources in EMEA following its EMEA Channel organisation. The changes will support accelerated development of Service Provider opportunities with Account Executives as well as better handling of ecosystem requirements for the MSP Channel, such as developing Nutanix' Service Provider Aggregator ecosystem.

"I feel in good company and I am very happy to be here," commented Chris. "I look forward to building an MSP team and practice that will not only deliver incremental success to Nutanix, but also inspire innovative thinking and partnerships."

Chris joined Nutanix recently from a 13-years spell at VMware. In his final role there, he was responsible for VMware's MSP SaaS business across EMEA. Prior to VMware, he spent 11 years at IBM. Chris lives in the South of England, is married with a grown-up daughter. His main interests outside of work are motor boating across the South Coast of England.

When will AI be smart enough to outsmart people?

Sehrish Tariq
Assistant Editor
GEC Media Group

The question of when AI will be smart enough to outsmart humans is a million-dollar question—and in some ways, it's already happening. If you ask me, I'd say AI is outsmarting humans in certain areas, while in others, it depends on how we define "outsmart."

The human brain is unique, with its remarkable ability for creativity. Yet, humans have also trained machines to mimic this creativity. But that raises a thought: is teaching a machine to imitate creativity the same as being truly creative?

Machines are undoubtedly transforming our lives, making them more efficient and memorable. However, should we expect or want machines to behave and think like creative humans? While an AI could imitate Picasso's style, there was only ever one Picasso—a true original.

At first glance, it might seem simple, but the day may come when AI dominates entire fields, making things more complex than ever. A more dystopian view imagines what's known as the "technological singularity," where superintelligent machines take control, potentially altering human existence forever through either domination or destruction. Even if AI never reaches this extreme, it can still become so complex that we may not fully understand how it makes decisions. This lack of transparency poses a challenge, particularly when things go wrong—making it difficult to fix algorithms or correct unintended behaviors.

Now the question is for you all:

How can we benefit from AI while making sure it stays under our control?

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