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Our consultative approach makes us different, and the wav we deliver and commit to our customers really makes us stand out from the crowd."



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ON 'CLOUD' 7

On the front cover of April's edition of CNME is a brilliant interview with Ranjith Kaippada, Managing Director of Cloud Box Technologies.

Cloud Box Technologies have established themselves as one of the leading systems integrators across the Middle East region.

That is no mean feat, when you consider the competitive and saturated nature of the marketplace, especially in the UAE.

Their bespoke offerings has allowed them to differentiate themselves from their competitors, but Kaippada said that their consultative approach is what really makes them different.

"We talk a lot about consultancy, but ultimately what that translates to is getting the right products and solutions to our customers. Our consultative approach makes us different, and the way we deliver and commit to our customers really makes us stand out from the crowd."

It's a great interview, and Kaippada also talks about their approach to AI, the complexities associated with cloud migrations – and the importance of a dedicated Security Operations Centre (SOC).

You'll find the full 6-page interview on pages 26-31.

CNME also spoke to Giovanni Di Filippo, and an exchange with the Lenovo executive is always an enlightening experience.

Di Filippo is the EMEA President ISG at Lenovo, and he mapped out their vision for success in the KSA marketplace when we caught up in Riyadh, during LEAP 2024.

During LEAP, he appeared onstage and presented their concept of AI for All and the company is committed to democratising the technology for consumers and businesses.

You can check out that interview on pages

iDreamSky are a Chinese gaming company that have enjoyed phenomenal success domestically.

They are ready to expand, and with significant investors such as Tencent behind them, it's a name you're likely to hear more of over the coming years.

CNME spoke to Jeff Lyndon, President and Co-Founder of iDreamSky, to find out why the KSA is such a key market for them.

Lyndon said that no nation anywhere in the world has made such a commitment to gaming like the KSA - and said he was excited at the opportunities emerging within the gaming ecosystem across the country.

You can check out that interview on page 20.

Orange Business are another company that is looking closely at the sheer scale of transformation underway across the Kingdom.

Mohammed Al Jeraisy was appointed as the new Managing Director for the KSA & Africa at Orange Business in September 2023.

He is confident the global technology leader has the services, solutions, and products to capture significant market share across a whole host of key industry verticals in Saudi

You can catch that interview on page 38.

We also caught up with Walid Gomaa, CEO of Omnix International, and he outlined how they are focusing on Generative Conversational AI when it comes to deploying Gen AI.

In addition to this, he outlined their strategic vision for the KSA, and said that the demand and expectations of customers in Saudi Arabia was a challenge, but one his company is relishing.

Last month, CPI Media Group held our Women in Tech Awards.

The awards are designed to celebrate the female trailblazers that are leading the way in the IT and technology industry across the Middle East.

The IT ecosystem globally, but especially in the Middle East, has traditionally been a male-dominated arena, but that is slowly changing, and the award winners we celebrated are playing a key role in changing the landscape.

In addition to this, we also have brilliant thought leadership articles from ServiceNow, Confluent and Cisco AppDynamics.

In May's edition of CNME, we'll have full coverage from GISEC, which takes places from April 23-25th at Dubai World Trade

Enjoy April's edition of CNME.



Mark Forker Editor





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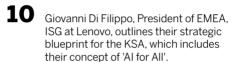




cnme







Walid Gomaa, CEO of Omnix International, discloses why the IT leader is focusing on Generative Conversational AI as they look to capitalize on the opportunities emerging in Saudi Arabia.

Jeff Lyndon, President and Co-Founder of Chinese gaming company iDreamSky, says the KSA's national commitment to gaming is completely unique.

38 Mohammed AlJeraisy, Managing Director, KSA & Africa at Orange Business, is confident that the company's strategic value proposition will strike a chord with the KSA marketplace.

46 Fred Crehan, Area Vice-President, Emerging Markets at Confluent, reveals the key steps businesses need to take in order to stay competitive in an ultra-competitive data-driven world.

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News

6

in enterprise technology, which includes the news that RUCKUS Networks have announced a new Al solution for hospitality, DXC Technology appoints Kylie Watson as their new Head of Security for Asia Pacific. Middle East & Africa - and Endava signs an MoU with Saudi Ministry of Investment.

CNME rounds up the biggest

regional and global developments

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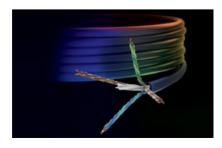
RUCKUS Networks launches Al-driven solutions for hospitality

CommScope, a global leader in network

connectivity, recently announced the immediate availability of a new suite of RUCKUS Networks solutions designed specifically to drive operational efficiency, sustainability and brand lovalty for the hospitality industry.

The turn-key suite builds on RUCKUS Networks' worldwide leadership in hotel Wi-Fi® — offering solutions that work in harmony to deliver personalised and elevated guest experiences across hospitality brands and locations. It features the latest AI-driven Wi-Fi 7 solutions for providing the latest high-performance services, and simplifies technology deployment at scale, using AI-driven cloud-based management and assurance to drive operational efficiency across owners, service providers, integrators, and IT managers at properties.

"The RUCKUS suite of hospitality solutions is purpose driven to meet two of the biggest needs in the hospitality industry: improving brand loyalty and operational efficiency", stated Bart Giordano, SVP and president, Networking, Intelligent Cellular & Security Solutions, CommScope. "We've leveraged AI, Wi-Fi 7, and our proven cloud-native network management and assurance solutions to make it easier than ever to deliver amazing guest experiences; scale that experience across services, brands, and locations; and create new efficiencies that span the entire value delivery chain. In other words, it's never been easier or more cost-effective to deliver and maintain the best digital hospitality experiences".



Pure introduces first external block storage for Azure VMware Solution



Pure Storage announced that the Pure

Storage Platform now delivers the first generally available external block storage for Microsoft's Azure VMware Solution, to improve TCO for VMware workloads in Azure.

For customers with storage-intensive VMware workloads, Pure Cloud Block Store provides the flexibility to match the organizations' Azure VMware Solution compute needs with its storage capacity needs—optimising spend in the cloud.

How It Works:

Pure Cloud Block Store for Azure VMware Solution is a software-defined storage array built on native Azure resources. Pure Storage and Microsoft co-engineered automated integrations to ensure storage is correctly provisioned to an organisations' Azure VMware Solution environment, ensuring consistent management

without any customer tuning. Native
Azure services such as a database volume
can be hosted in parallel with Pure Cloud
Block Store for Azure VMware Solution.
In addition, replication connectivity to
an on-premises Pure Storage FlashArray
or additional Pure Cloud Block Store
instances is fully supported.

Azure customers can leverage their Microsoft Azure Consumption Commitment (MACC) to purchase and attach Pure Cloud Block Store capacity to their Azure VMware Solution environment.

ESET spearheads cybersecurity innovation at GISEC 2024

ESET, a global leader in cybersecurity

solutions, proudly announces its participation at GISEC 2024, the Gulf Information Security Expo & Conference.

As the threat landscape continues to expand in complexity and sophistication, ESET remains at the forefront of cybersecurity innovation, delivering cutting-edge solutions designed to provide comprehensive protection against malware, ransomware, phishing attacks, and other cyber threats. At GISEC this year, ESET will unveil its latest advancements in threat detection, prevention, and response, empowering organisations to stay ahead of cyber adversaries and safeguard their digital assets with confidence.

Through interactive demonstrations, informative presentations, and engaging



discussions, ESET will demonstrate the capabilities of its industry-leading cybersecurity solutions, including its flagship ESET Endpoint Protection platform, which offers multi-layered defence mechanisms to mitigate risks and ensure the security of endpoints across diverse environments. Additionally, ESET will showcase its advanced threat intelligence services, threat hunting capabilities, and security management tools, providing attendees with valuable insights into proactive cybersecurity strategies and best practices.

IFS' biggest partner and customer event – IFS Connect Middle East returns

IFS, the global cloud enterprise

software company, has announced the second edition of IFS Connect Middle East to showcase IFS' technology innovation and customer value in the region.

The event will be held on the 6th of May, 2024 at the Hilton Riyadh Hotel & Residences in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with the central theme - 'Unlock Business Value: Productivity, Predictability and Agility'.

The event will highlight IFS' commitment to helping organisations resolve their productivity, predictability and agility issues and how they can 'unlock business value with Cloud and AI' throughout businesses. Additionally, IFS Connect will showcase its cutting-edge technologies including IFS.ai which is the company's flagship AI solution in an industrial setting, as well as IFS Cloud, it's composable enterprise software among others.



Mehmood Khan, Managing Director - MENA, IFS.

Speaking on the event, Mehmood Khan, Managing Director – MENA, IFS said, "Our flagship event, IFS Connect Middle East exhibits IFS' dedication to expanding and strengthening our relations with partners and customers in the region. The event will enable key industrial players and partners to gain meaningful insights into the latest IFS offerings and an opportunity to

network and share knowledge".

Global and regional IFS executives will be present at the event delivering keynote speeches and sharing deep insights into how IFS solutions are breaking down data and functional silos across industries and increasing business value. A fireside chat with IFS Executive – Simon Niesler will explore the power and challenges of AI and how customer insights are shaping IFS' products and services strategies.

Attendees can explore the exhibition stands where they can get first-hand experience of IFS solutions such as IFS Cloud, IFS.ai, IFS ERP, IFS EAM, IFS Assyt and interact with industry experts. Regional customers from diverse industries including telecom, aerospace & defence, manufacturing and key partners will be attending the event.

IFS Connect is taking place in IFS's key markets across the world, providing a market-level view of industry trends, business and product updates, and thought leadership to its customers, prospects, and partners.

BeyondTrust acquires Entitle, a pioneering privilege management solution



Janine Seebeck, CEO of BeyondTrust

BeyondTrust, the worldwide leader

in intelligent identity and access security, has announced a definitive agreement to acquire Entitle, a pioneering privilege management solution that discovers, manages, and automates just-in-time (JIT) access and modern identity governance and administration (IGA) across the entire cloud estate.

"The BeyondTrust acquisition of Entitle signifies a crucial evolution in our fight to ensure customers can protect all paths to privileges, focusing on identity-first security across all IT environments", says Janine Seebeck, CEO of BeyondTrust. "Adopting a unified, orchestrated approach that incorporates dynamic, just-in-time access is critical for safeguarding our customers' ever-changing paths to privilege. This strategy not only reduces operational friction, but also enhances the security of the entire identity infrastructure more effectively".

Check Point and Westcon-Comstor in AWS Marketplace collaboration



Rene Klein, Executive Vice President, Westcon Europe at Westcon-Comstor.

Westcon-Comstor, a global

technology provider and specialist distributor, recently announced an expansion of its partnership with Check Point Software Technologies Ltd, a leading AI-powered, clouddelivered cybersecurity platform provider, to equip channel partners with a competitive, streamlined and simplified route to transacting Check Point

products in AWS Marketplace.

The announcement comes after Westcon–Comstor was named EMEA distributor of the year at Check Point's CPX 2024 event in Vienna for driving significant growth across its solutions.

"It's fantastic to be adding a new strategic dimension to our long-standing, successful relationship with Check Point through this agreement", said Rene Klein, Executive Vice President, Westcon Europe at Westcon-Comstor.

DXC Technology appoints Kylie Watson as Head of Security for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa

DXC Technology, recently announced the expansion of Kylie Watson's role as the Head of Security for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa in addition to her current role in Australia and New Zealand.

With more than 30 years of experience in leading complex projects and teams, Watson is a highly experienced, innovative and outcome-focused cyber security leader with a proven track record of delivering results and transforming businesses for sustainable growth.

Kylie will be responsible for helping DXC's customers across the region enhance their cyber posture and protect them against threats with proactive advisory and managed security services – from threat intelligence through to compliance.

"I am very excited to be joining a team with the right focus that boasts experience across multiple industries and geographies. I feel confident in our ability to deliver expert services and threat intelligence to our customers across their IT environment and operations, while spreading awareness on how to withstand security threats by using smart cyber resilience strategies", Kylie said.



LinkShadow is positioned as a representative vendor in the 2024 Gartner Market Guide



LinkShadow, a global leader in intelligent

Network Detection and Response (NDR) has been recognised in the Gartner 2024 Market Guide for NDR solution.

This insightful Gartner Report elaborates on how NDR can amplify infrastructure security by seamlessly integrating with various technologies such as SOAR, SIEM, EDR, MDR and numerous others.

As per Gartner, "The network

detection and response market continues to grow and expand to hybrid network scenarios with IaaS deployment. Security and risk management leaders should reprioritise NDR as a key provider of AI analytics in the context of more automated

security operations assistants".

Commenting on this Fadi Sharaf, Regional Sales Director, LinkShadow said "We believe this Gartner recognition strengthens LinkShadow's positioning in the NDR domain. Our aim is to extend the robust LinkShadow NDR capability to enterprises and empower them to stay ahead of the threat curve, taking a proactive approach to safeguard their sensitive assets".

Global AI show and global blockchain show premiers in Dubai

VAP Group is pleased to

announce the inaugural edition of the Global AI Show and the Global Blockchain Show scheduled to take place on April 16 and 17, 2024 at the Grand Hyatt, Dubai.

The Global AI Show is a power stage hosting international and regional thought leaders in the artificial intelligence and the machine learning space, while the Global Blockchain Show will bring together experts from the web3 ecosystem to share their insights and discuss future opportunities in the rapidly-evolving industry.

The Global Blockchain Show will showcase the dynamic landscape of blockchain technology. Among the distinguished speakers, H.E. Justin Sun, the visionary Founder of TRON and Member of the HTX Global advisory



board, will take centre stage. Renowned for his groundbreaking contributions to the blockchain space, Justin Sun will grace the event with his profound insights and forward-thinking vision. Additionally, Global Blockchain Show will feature a fireside chat with Lennix Lai, Chief Commercial Officer of OKX, who will encompass the yin and yang of crypto trading. Dominic Williams, Founder & Chief Scientist of DFINITY Foundation, will discuss the decentralized cloud vision of the DFINITY blockchain.

Endava signs MoU with Saudi Ministry of Investment



In its ongoing effort to enable

world-leading technology companies to establish thriving operations in Saudi Arabia, supporting digital transformation in the Kingdom in line with Saudi Vision 2030, the Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA) has signed an MoU with Endava, the technology services company combining world-class engineering, industry expertise and a people-centric mindset.

The entities will collaborate to offer Saudi organisations a rapid path to impactful digital transformation, made possible by the world-class design and implementation expertise that Endava has developed through its work with thousands of global-leading enterprises.

The MoU builds on the investments that Endava has been making over the last two years to bolster its presence in Saudi Arabia as it engages with the Kingdom's largest players in the Government, Banking and Finance, Energy, Telecom and Retail sectors.

"We commend the Ministry on the work it is doing to afford globalleading technology companies like Endava an unmissable opportunity to actively shape the digital future of Saudi Arabia at this critical inflection point in the Kingdom's advancement. Our partnership with them is further validation of Endava's unwavering commitment to Saudi Arabia and its people. With our mission of making a profound and lasting positive impact on the societies and economies which we serve, such close collaboration with leading government entities is fundamental to our ambitions," said David Boast, Managing Director - MENA, Endava.

Tenable to highlight cloud and operational technology security at GISEC 2024



Tenable, the Exposure Management company, recently announced its participation at GISEC 2024, at the Dubai World Trade Centre, from 23–25

The company will showcase its exposure management solutions that

April, 2024.

illuminate the attack paths that exist within organisations' infrastructure, across IT and operational technology (OT) environments, before threat actors can exploit them.

As part of GISEC, on 23 April from the Critical Infrastructure stage, Marty Edwards, Tenable Deputy CTO – OT/ IoT, will participate in a CISO panel discussion titled "Capitalizing on AI & ML to Address Cyber-Security Challenges in the Energy Sector". Edwards will also present a talk titled, "Successfully Integrating OT Information into Your CISOs Security Program".

The United Arab Emirates is focused on becoming a global hub for business and innovation which is driving digital transformation in the region. This has led to rapid adoption of cloud technologies. A recent report from McKinsey & Company suggests that cloud services could deliver as much as \$183 billion in value by 2030, generated from creating and scaling new products. In tandem, the convergence of IT, OT and Internet of Things (IoT) is powering today's modern infrastructure. Against this backdrop the cyber threat to organisations has significantly increased with the head of cybersecurity for the UAE government warning that the public sector alone faces nearly 50,000 cyberattack efforts every day.

LENOVO

AI FOR ALL

Giovanni Di Filippo, President of EMEA, Infrastructure Solutions Group at Lenovo, spoke to CNME Editor Mark Forker onsite at LEAP 2024, to talk about Lenovo's strategy for success in the KSA, their 'Al for All' concept – and the performance of their Infrastructure Solutions Group (ISG) over the last 12 months.

Giovanni Di Filippo is undoubtedly one of the most respected technology leaders in the EMEA region.

In my capacity as the Editor of one of the region's leading B2B magazines, I am regularly afforded the opportunity to speak to the key business leaders in the IT ecosystem across the Middle East region.

However, very few match the sheer enthusiasm, energy and passion Di Filippo has for Lenovo and their mission statement across EMEA.

Globally, every business is looking at the opportunities emerging in Saudi Arabia. Its Vision 2030 program is the blueprint for a new tomorrow across the Kingdom.

Lenovo is well-positioned to leverage its product portfolio to help enterprises and governments across the Kingdom to achieve their digital transformation goals.

We caught up at LEAP in Riyadh early last month, and the focus of our conversation quite naturally was Saudi Arabia.

As Di Filippo pointed out Lenovo has the ability to provide solutions from the pocket to the cloud.

"We absolutely believe in the transformation of the KSA, and there is a plethora of opportunities emerging as a result of their Vision 2030 program. Lenovo are a Fortune200 company, so we can provide a whole range of products, services and solutions from the pocket to the cloud, and that is what the KSA needs for their transformation. Our strategy is very clear, the KSA is an investment market, but we also want to understand what the ROI is going to be for us as an organisation. We're in talks with a number of businesses and government organisations across the KSA, and the University space is very important for us, especially from a highperformance computing perspective," said Di Filippo.

Di Filippo delivered a keynote presentation on the main stage at LEAP, were he presented Lenovo's "AI for All" concept.

"During LEAP, I conducted a presentation





that demonstrated how as an organisation we really can provide AI for All. We are convinced it is the right step, and that it is the right investment to do. We really believe we can leverage our knowledge and expertise to help the Kingdom to diversify their economy in terms of education, tourism, IT, healthcare and many other key industry verticals," said Di Filippo.

The dial of the discussion then shifted to the financial performance of the ISG across EMEA over the last 12 months, and Di Filippo didn't shy away from the reality that it has been a challenging time for the company.

"Let's be frank, in the EMEA marketplace we have been going through a very difficult time, especially on the infrastructure side. On the infrastructure side we are seeing a delay in the uptake, but in relation to the PC side we can see there has been a strong recovery and we are growing again. On the infrastructure side, particularly with the x86 business I can see a slow recovery, but I expect by the second-half of the year to be back into one-digit growth," said Di Filippo.

Di Filippo said that significant funding made available by the EU for AI development has seen a huge increase in demand for highperformance computing AI – and as a direct consequence

of that he expects to record growth in the next two quarters.

"The interesting thing for us is the fact that in this quarter, and the next quarter we project significant growth in high-performance computing AI. One of the primary factors for that is the fact that the EU has established a fund of \$8bn, which will be invested into different markets, and we are starting to see this funding being materialised through our RFP response. We're not only seeing support for our RFPs, but we are all seeing them getting signed off and approved," said Di Filippo.

During LEAP, I conducted a presentation that demonstrated how as an organisation we really can provide AI for AII."

However, Di Filippo bemoaned high energy costs and inflation in Europe for the stagnation in their enterprise and public sector business.

"Our HPC business is on a very good track, and our SME business is also very healthy, but our enterprise and public sector business is still on a very low-level and the uptake is just not there. The main reasons for this has been high energy costs, and then coupled with inflation and the cost of capital has made it a real challenge for many enterprises. That being said, if you start to see this coming down then you will definitely start to see a recovery," said Di Filippo.

Lenovo has always been a company that has described itself as being 'partner-first' and channel focused.

Di Filippo believes that in order for them to achieve the success they want in the KSA, then that same approach of being partner-first is critical.

"When we commit to a market we also commit to being 'partner-first'. It is a fundamental core value at Lenovo - and because we are partner-first they know we are not playing games, they know we are serious when we say that we are a partner-first company. We're not opportunistic, we're fully committed, and we want to work with certified partners that can help us achieve the success we want in that particular market, which in this case is the KSA. We will have platinum, gold and silver partners, and once we establish these partners



we expand into the market with them. It is so important for us to have this channel ecosystem, because even though we will have people on the ground, in order to scale and to keep up with the growth which is expected in Saudi Arabia, then you have to go partner-first," said Di Filippo.

Di Filippo added that he doesn't just want his channel partners in the KSA to succeed in the country, but instead wants to see expand across the Middle East region.

"I really believe that the solutions have been built in

the market for the market. A couple of years ago we started to identify local partners that have been building solutions on our platform for the KSA marketplace. We don't just want to help them sell in the Kingdom, we want them to sell across the Middle East and Africa. Once we have established and built these solutions in the KSA, we then want them to expand in order for them to export," said Di Filippo.

Di Filippo concluded a brilliant interview by highlighting their investments in R&D and how



that is key to developing the disruptive technologies that are needed to really drive transformation in the KSA and beyond.

"During LEAP, I had a meeting with an organisation out of NEOM, and this entity is very keen to establish their own manufacturing capabilities, but also R&D. We talked a lot about R&D and in an area where we are spending 4% of our total revenue in R&D, I'm keen to understand what are the next-generation of products and capabilities – and learn how we can take them back

into our own R&D centre to help them to produce, build and design the next-generation of products. It's a two-way engagement. I also attended a VIP dinner and it became evident that they are very interested in the existing portfolio of products, but they are much more interested in investing in disruptive technologies. Essentially, disruptive

technologies means that you have to think outside the box, and you need to become very innovative. It's important to have exploration workshops, and take the information back to our own R&D engineering team in order to provide the disruptive technologies that are going to really enable businesses to have the transformation they seek," concluded Di Filippo.

Lenovo are a Fortune 200 company, so we can provide a whole range of products, services and solutions from the pocket to the cloud, and that is what the KSA needs for their transformation."

OMNIX INTERNATIONAL

LET'S HAVE A CONVERSATION

Walid Gomaa, CEO of Omnix International, tells CNME Editor Mark Forker how the company is focusing on Generative Conversational AI, its strategy for the KSA market – and its confidence that its suite of products, services and solutions can help the KSA achieve their digital transformation goals.

Can you tell our viewers what Omnix International is demonstrating here at LEAP 2024?

This year, our key focus is on how to bring key solutions and offerings to support the Saudi vision.

Looking at it from this angle, digital transformation is often a key demand from our customers.

A major demand from Saudi markets focuses on how to accelerate processes and how to enhance their operations. To this end we are displaying Hyper-automation solutions here at LEAP 2024 that can help businesses with their processes and customer experiences.

The second area is conversational AI, which is all about providing a good customer experience. Whether it is between citizen to government, enterprise to customer or enterprise to suppliers, we need to enhance the way communications are happening.

To better support these solutions, we are focusing on using the latest technologies such as natural language processing, or making considerations on compatibility with newer systems such as Chat GPT.

We like to think of this entire process as generative conversational AI, where we bring different technologies together to enhance the customer experience.

Thirdly, there are many projects in Saudi that require smart infrastructure solutions and we aim to help support these requirements throughout the process.

Lastly, the topic of
Engineering solutions is
an area where we aid our
customers from the design
phase to simulation and then
eventually to AR/VR and bring
devices like 3D scanners/
printers to finalize the
process.

We are highlighting all of this here at LEAP 2024, with our prime objective being to aid the customers in their digital transformation challenges.

You have referenced Generative Conversational AI – but can you tell us what your view is on the opportunities and challenges of Gen AI?

There are two separate elements of Generative AI. One is that it should be enterprise-based, meaning it starts from a position of using the data within the enterprise to leverage the organisation's assets.

This helps to alleviate concerns about data privacy and information bias as it removes outside data from the equation to focus solely on the enterprise data.

After this stage is completed, we can then bridge this data pool with outside world databases if the organisation so desires.

Ultimately, our approach with Gen AI is to make it more enterprise specific rather than generic.

Ultimately, our approach with Gen AI is to make it more enterprise specific rather than generic."



How do you tailor your strategy to both meet and manage the expectations of your customers in the KSA?

The biggest challenge is time as, in Saudi, the delivery speed requirements are extremely high when it comes to implementing solutions. Another challenge is skill requirements causing a barrier to entry. Omnix is bringing our knowledge into Saudi, with teams on the ground, to better accelerate the adoption of our solutions.

Managing the expectations of the customers concerned

about the project implementation is also a key factor. To better meet these expectations, we prioritise the deliverables such as KPIs that have the highest impact and then focus on the rest later on down the line.

This is great because it directly involves the customer in the decision-making process, helps us to stay on schedule, and better aligns our services with milestones set in tandem with the customer.

How important is an event like LEAP 2024 for Omnix International?

LEAP provides a fantastic opportunity for Omnix to network with our customers and partners simultaneously.

It allows for interactions where we share strategies with vendors and open dialogues with customers in order to gain a better understanding of their challenges as we all work collaboratively towards the Saudi 2030 Vision.

LEAP is also good for learning more about the vendors present in the region and discovering innovative technologies being announced on the showroom floor.

By taking in all these new announcements Omnix is better prepared to adapt our strategy to incorporate future opportunities and technological requirements.

Seeing what is available today will help us visualise how to put them into action later and what timelines we can expect for these advanced solutions.

VERITAS TECHNOLOGIES

WE NED ASSURANCE

Mark Nutt, Senior Vice President at Veritas Technologies, has said the decision by the UAE to introduce the Information Assurance (IA) Regulation is critical in helping financial institutions to combat the ongoing security risks posed by ransomware attacks.

The UAE is one of the countries integrating cutting-edge technologies such as AI, asserting its prominence in regional and international arenas. However, this has made it an ever-favourite target for cyber threat actors. It has been revealed that the UAE Cybersecurity Council thwarts about 50,000 cyberattacks a day, which could double or triple for the private sector in the time ahead. According to Veritas research, 98% of UAE organizations have faced reputational or financial threats in the last two years, with three-quarters (73%) admitting to having experienced a successful ransomware attack.

The increasing profitability of these attacks for the criminals, means a whole new industry – Ransomware–as–a–Service (RaaS) – is growing rapidly. Professional hackers, exploiting AI–driven target identification, breach execution, victim extortion, and ransom collection, all offering their malware as a service to the highest bidder.



The increasing threat this poses to national economies led the UAE to pass the Information Assurance (IA) Regulation setting out specific requirements for companies to raise the protection of all the information assets across all the supporting systems.

The Information Assurance (IA) Regulation specifically legislated on key areas, including reporting the accuracy of any ICT-related

incidents and implementing measures to safeguard against ongoing cyberthreats.

This means that when an attack on any financial services provider occurs, the decisions and actions taken in the hour following an attack will be decisive for the level of organisational impact and the ultimate survival of the business.

FOR FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, PROCESS PREDICTABILITY IS PARAMOUNT

IT teams must prepare thoroughly to anticipate an attack by implementing effective operational resiliency practices to secure their data. Ongoing training for IT and business teams, together with tools for data identification and visibility, are critical when it comes meeting regulatory requirements.

As part of the ICT risk management process to comply with Information Assurance (IA) Regulation, successful completion of a specialised audit to identify all types, locations and classifications of data and storage infrastructure must be carried out.

These rules have been developed to help prevent and mitigate cyber threats and ensure that financial entities can withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of ICT-related disruptions and threats

IT teams must prepare thoroughly to anticipate an attack by implementing effective operational resiliency practices to secure their data."

Compliance with these processes requires using tools that link isolated data sets, security policies can be deployed across all environments. IT teams can see at a glance what data the company owns, in what environment it is stored, to report quickly and accurately any loss.

To remain compliant, these must be constantly updated to ensure relevance and resiliency to the latest, constantly evolving, malicious threats.

EARLY THREAT DETECTION IS CRITICAL FOR OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE

Critical data is the prime target for malicious attack, so constant surveillance to monitor for unusual access or usage patterns in these datasets especially, should form the prime component for efficient reporting to satisfy international legislation requirements.

Unless detected early, cell-level data corruption attacks—code secretly implanted deep within a victim's database that lies in wait to covertly alter or corrupt specific but undisclosed data, often at a much later date than the initial threat penetration — can infect core records.

The real danger is that victims will not know what data, if any, has been altered or corrupted until after the repercussions set in, effectively rendering all their data untrustworthy. The only solution is maintaining secure, verified copies of data that organisations are 100% certain are uncorrupted and can be rapidly restored.

AI tools are able to continuously monitor for changes in behavioural patterns to see if users might have been compromised. If the AI detects suspicious activity, it can initiate automated recovery

processes to take immediate action to isolate backups with malware, ultimately minimising the impact of a successful attack.

For backups to remain resilient and reliable in the event of an attack, systems (such as media and metaservers) must be able to continually communicate with each other securely.

In the event that backup files have been encrypted by a ransomware attack, "immutable" storage systems enable data to be restored without error. However, financial institutions need to be vigilant about physical locations of back-up copies and regularly test the restoration process.

STAY ON THE BALL AND REACT QUICKLY

When an attack is reported, every minute counts to limit the business impact. The IT team must intervene immediately and ensure that affected end-users and systems are isolated from the network.

Data management tools can be used to quickly identify which data is being consulted by which users.

By analysing this information, it is then possible to determine which data has been infected or which data is missing. As long as company backups are properly protected, information can be restored without disruption or need to pay a ransom.

To mitigate further risks of fines of non-compliance charges, it must be possible to capture details of the ransomware they received relating to the attack, to share with relevant authorities. That is another reason why a comprehensive data management and reporting tool is an essential part of the overall organisational resiliency preparation.

PREPAREDNESS PREVENTS PROSECUTION

To ensure cyber security and true operational resilience in the face of ransomware, financial institutions need to prepare their defences in advance.

The Information
Assurance (IA) Regulation
sets out essential baseline
requirements for protecting
the UAE's critical information
infrastructure. Although it has
not specifically elaborated on
penalties for non-compliance,
not complying with the
regulation can lead to hefty
penalties.

Only through a culture of transparency and complete control of their data can any financial services provider be confident of remaining compliant.

Equally only by having a well prepared, continually rehearsed, internal ransomware attack action plan – that evolves to new threat requirements and is fully communicated to any 3rd party service providers involved – can any organisation be confident of having an effective cyber recovery strategy.

While this is a cost to the organisation in terms of time, technology and personnel investment, compliance with Information Assurance and other similar regulations, enable organisations serving the financial sector to reduce risk to their customers and increase their profitability.

By proving the security and reliability of their own ICT systems they are also reducing the potential costs associated with crisis handling for themselves and their clients.

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AGINODE

CONNECTING THE KINGDOM

Arafat Yousef, Managing Director MEA at Aginode, tells CNME Editor Mark Forker why the company rebranded in recent years, how its suite of connectivity solutions has attracted the attention of mega project NEOM – and why he believes the company can provide the connectivity needed for the KSA to achieve the digital transformation goals of their Vision 2030 program.

Can you tell us more about the recent rebranding undertaken by Aginode?

The decision was taken a couple of years ago, when the management decided to rebrand our systems.

Personally, I believe that this is the right time to rebrand our name, refresh our portfolio and the way we market ourselves. Aginode is arriving on the scene with new technology, new blood, and a new way to market these high-quality products to our partners.

The Aginode brand and portfolio has been reenergised and reimagined, and that energy has struck a chord with the Saudi marketplace. We're dynamic and adaptable and that fits perfectly into the landscape here in the KSA as they continue to push the boundaries as to what's possible in their attempts to complete reshape their economy and become a hub of technological progress and innovation.



Can you tell us about some of the key products and solutions you're showcasing at LEAP 2024?

We pride ourselves in delivering products of the highest quality and bandwidth available on the market.

Presently, we are taking a different approach by mixing our products with fibre, and we recognise that the market is trending towards IoT (Internet of Things) and M2M (Machine to Machine) which requires a technology that can operate at a high bandwidth.

This is why we aim for

Aginode is arriving on the scene with new technology, new blood, and a new way to market these high-quality products to our partners."

our fibre office solutions to provide the highest quality to our end users.

At LEAP 2024, we launched the LAN-active-fibre-to-the-office solution, which can take the fibre directly from the data centre to a room in the hospital, class, university or other work environment.

This will transform the way these industries conduct their operations, and ultimately enhance the services they provide for their customers.

We pride ourselves in delivering products of the highest quality and bandwidth available on the market."

What are some of the key technologies that Aginode is looking at that can help you continue to transform the way you deliver connectivity?

Currently there are many opportunities in our industry that are solely dependent on the types of fibre that we offer.

We can now build a full network from the central office to a remote room using only fibre-to-fibre connections.

We are committed to working with our partners in the hospitality sector to provide the right designs for their use cases.

We have also been able to implement similar projects in airports with the introduction of a structured cabling portfolio.

As a company, we're always looking at ways in which we can reinvent ourselves and improve the services we deliver in terms of connectivity.

You can't rest on your laurels in this industry, or you will simply be left behind, so with that in mind we will continue to innovate and deliver a connectivity service that is unrivalled.

How important is an event like LEAP 2024 to help promote your vision for the KSA?

It's the best way for us to meet all our end users in one place.

Normally it would require weeks of meetings to schedule talks with these attendees but at LEAP I've been able to speak with all of them within just the first two days.

It's the right time to invest in the KSA, and we're already working with our local offices and teams to better serve our KSA partners.

LEAP is one of the biggest technology events in the world, and the sheer scale and size of it in many ways is an illustration of what Saudi Arabia is trying to achieve with its transformation as a nation, and we're proud to be here at LEAP, and are committed to serving customers here and playing our role in achieving the aspirational goals of the Vision 2030 program.



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iDREAMSKY

GAME ON

Jeff Lyndon, President and Co-Founder of iDreamSky, spoke to CNME and tahawultech.com Editor Mark Forker at LEAP 2024, in which he highlighted how the KSA's national commitment to gaming is completely unique on a global scale, his company's desire to deliver the best gaming experiences for users in Saudi Arabia, and the significance of their MOU with SCCC.



Can you give our viewers a broader overview of what iDreamSky does?

The reason we're here at LEAP is that we see the huge growth potential within the Saudi Arabian market.

At iDreamSky we localise international video games for very specific cultures like China, and we believe we can offer something similar for the Islamic market.

Today we are also

displaying StrikeNova, which is our latest third-person shooter, and we're learning a lot about our customers.

One of the things we've noticed is that a lot of these e-sports players don't have great ping and that's why we've partnered with SCCC Cloud Saudi Araba. We want ensure that we can provide the best experience for MENA players, and by entering into an MoU with SCCC Cloud

Saudi Arabia allows us to do that by having the server we need to service our customers.

You have enjoyed huge success in China, and you clearly want to replicate that success here in the KSA. However, how excited are you by the opportunities for growth in gaming in the KSA, and what are the differences in this market compared to China?



The first thing that is very different in this market is the concept of the 2030 Vision and in this vision, gaming is one of the key areas.

I have 26 years of experience in the gaming industry, I've worked in Korea, Japan, China & America and in all that time I've never seen gaming positioned as a national commitment.

As a gaming entrepreneur, that tells me that I need to be here at the ground level. The second thing that is vastly different in this market and similar to the Chinese market is the increase in games developed in this region.

20 years ago in China, we didn't have games like Three Kingdoms or Monkey King representing the country on a global stage.

In the KSA we can see a similar market with thousands of years of history with untold story potential in entertainment media.

When you look at this

broadly, gamers from the region are looking for content that represents their culture. This represents a huge opportunity to promote and export KSA culture on the global stage.

The gaming industry is ultra-competitive, but what differentiates iDreamSky from your market competition?

Our business started out localising international games for the Chinese culture. 20 years ago, we did not have the experience, technology, or connections needed to branch out into AAA game development.

This time around, I may not know the KSA market yet, but I have the international connections to make us a serious contender in the region.

We pride ourselves on being a homegrown business and over the past 14 years we have trained over 5000 employees in mobile game development. We understand how to start from ground zero which is a point of difference with a lot of other companies that are used to working in a market full of talent.

We have enjoyed working with many of the same employees internally for the duration of our company's existence and we look forward to growing further with this new market.

Can you tell us more about the significance of your MOU with SCCC here at LEAP 2024?

For gaming to take off, you need good infrastructure such as internet hosting.

One of the first things I realised when I came to Saudi was how long the ping was here for online gaming.

I was surprised by how slow things could be here and one of the partners I met during my inquiries was SCCC and they explained how the most popular games in the region actually have their servers located elsewhere, like in Europe for example.

I found this unacceptable and set about to find a way to help with hosting game servers locally.

SCCC and iDreamSky both share a vision of wanting to deliver a good gaming experience to our audience.

Going forward, we hope to act as an example of how by properly serving your customers with good infrastructure you will enjoy increased consumer loyalty.

This MoU is the first of its kind between a cloud provider in the region and an official international game.

We are committed to this collaboration not just with our current projects, but all our future games to ensure we provide gamers with the best experience.

At iDreamSky we localise international video games for very specific cultures like China, and we believe we can offer something similar for the Islamic market."

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RADICAL RESILIENCE

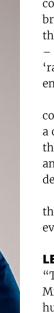
Tim Pfaelzer, Senior Vice President, and General Manager EMEA at Veeam Software, spoke to CNME Editor Mark Forker, about the concept of radical resilience, the impact of their record-breaking year in 2023 – and the trends they are seeing in relation to Data Protection and Ransomware recovery in 2024.

Tim Pfaelzer has established himself as one of the most prominent technology sales leaders in the Middle East, since relocating to the region from Europe in 2021. Pfaelzer was appointed as the new Vice President Enterprise EMEA at Veeam, after spending five years with Dell Technologies in Europe. In November 2023, Pfaelzer was appointed Senior Vice President and General Manager EMEA at Veeam Software, and has played a key role in what was a record breaking year for the company in 2023 in terms of market growth.

CNME managed to catch up with Pfaelzer during LEAP, which was held in Riyadh in March, in an effort to learn more about the factors that contributed to that record breaking year, the solutions they were showcasing at LEAP – and what their concept of 'radical resilience' actually entails.

We kickstarted the conversation by taking a closer look at some of the flagship products and solutions Veeam demonstrated at LEAP 2024.

Pfaelzer also highlighted the speed at which LEAP has evolved since its inception.



LEAP:

"This is massive. In the Middle East, you've got two huge technology conferences, and that is GITEX and LEAP. However, LEAP is a landmark



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event for the region, it is evolving so quickly, and has the potential to bring huge advances in innovation right across the table in the Middle East region. Recently, we launched Veeam Data Cloud, which is as-a-servicebackup, which is something that has been in high demand for years. We want to give our customers the ultimate peace of mind when it comes to their security infrastructure, and we're showcasing solutions that can enable them to have better security architecture," said Pfaelzer.

RECORD BREAKING:

2023 was a record-breaking year for Veeam.

However, when pressed on what the key factors were in their success, the Veeam General Manager for EMEA outlined a few, and highlighted the importance of integrating emerging and disruptive technologies with their existing business model.

"The best thing about this result is that it gets recognised in the market. Our success is not simply driven by having the best product, it is also driven by customers proactively looking for the best ways to protect their data and stay resilient. It's a two-way trade-off. Everyone is suffering from cyberattacks these days, if you look into our ransomware and recovery report, you will see that 75% of organisations say it is not a matter of 'if' but 'when' we will get attacked. The second, contributing factor to our success is our commitment to supporting the integration of emerging technologies within our business model. The third element is that we have always been looking for partners that can help deliver new services to our customers. We are vendors with a product, but a product alone is not a viable solution, and it can only become one with the right partners," said Pfaelzer.

TRENDING:

In terms of the trends that he sees emerging in the Data Protection space in 2024, Pfaelzer conceded that ransomware isn't going anywhere, and will continue to be a major headache for enterprises on a global scale.

However, he's confident

Our enterprise capabilities are so developed that we are able to help our customers wherever they store their data."



that their partnership with Sophos can combat potential issues for their customer base.

"Ransomware will always be an issue, and this is a key element driving the demand for an endto-end security solution. The sophistication of the attacks is always evolving, and it's hard to have all angles covered and predict when an attack will occur. However, with partners such as Sophos, we want to provide customers with the ability to predict incoming cyber-threats and get ahead of any potential damages with data backup. As I stated earlier, it's not a case of if I get attacked, it's a case of when, so you need to be able to predict as best as you can, but if that fails then you need to mitigate the damage done to protect your assets, and we do this, in partnership with Sophos," said Pfaelzer.

NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGE:

Veeam have established themselves as a market leader in the data protection space, and one of the reason they have struck a chord with so many enterprises in the market is the fact that regardless of the complexity they can help businesses overcome their issues.

"The bigger and more complex and organisation is, the more we can actually offer to help them. Our enterprise capabilities are so developed that we are able to help our customers wherever they store their data. Dispersed data storage locations are something that we see as a trend, and it pairs nicely with data

repatriation from the cloud, which we are well equipped to help companies with," said Pfaelzer.

BE RADICAL:

Veeam have coined the concept of radical resilience, and according to Pfaelzer what it means is essentially a commitment to provide their customers with the best data security that is humanly possible.

He also highlighted the importance of the hardware alliances they have with Lenovo and HP.

"Radical resilience starts with providing our customers with the best possible products to assure them that their data is as secure as humanly possible. The radical element comes from the advances to the security ecosystem that we have adopted, such as advanced threat detection. The next element is our hardware alliances with brands such as Lenovo and HP, which we are bringing together to make secure. Our cloud service providers and partner networks help deliver tie together this bubble of security that has never been seen before. So radical resilience is Veeam, our partners, our networks that are supported by our own capabilities and knowledge," concluded Pfaelzer.

Our success is not simply driven by having the best product, it is also driven by customers proactively looking for the best ways to protect their data and stay resilient."











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CLOUD BOX TECHNOLOGIES

THINKING OUTSIDE THE 'BOX'

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Ranjith Kaippada**, Managing Director at Cloud Box Technologies, to find out more about their perspectives on their approach to security, what makes them stand out from other system integrators in the market, challenges around remote working and cloud migration – and the opportunities presented by AI.

Ranjith Kaippada is one of the most respected channel leaders in the Middle East.

In a career spanning 20+years, he has established himself as one of the leading lights within the IT ecosystem across the region.

Kaippada started his career in Dubai with Ingram Micro, and remained with them until 2012. In 2012, he joined StorIT, a data storage specialist in the VAD space.

In 2019, he moved to Cloud Box Technologies as their Director of Sales Operations, but after one year he was appointed as the company's new Managing Director.

Under his tutelage, Cloud Box Technologies have enjoyed phenomenal success and continue to be heading in an upward trajectory under his guidance.

For the front cover of

April's edition of CNME, we sat down with Kaippada to examine and explore a whole range of different topics in a bid to get a better handle on what he sees the future direction of the company and what technologies and areas they are going to focus on to maintain their success.

Last year, Cloud Box Technologies decided to establish a separate entity called RA Technologies that was focused solely on providing best-in-class security services to their customers.

Kaippada began our conversation by stressing how their consultative approach was a key market differentiator for them and highlighted their commitment to security, which inevitably led to the creation of their Security Operations Centre (SOC).

"Cloud Box Technologies is one of the most premium and prominent system integrators in the Middle East region. Typically, we are very focused on projects where we take full ownership of end-to-end activities from a consulting perspective all the way to the implementation process. I think this is what gives us the upper hand over our market rivals in terms of the projects and customers that we handle. In addition to this, we are also very focused in terms of addressing the security needs of our customers. We strive to ensure that they receive the right support when it comes to their overall security architecture. This commitment to the security needs of our customers actually triggered us to establish our own separate organisation called RA Technologies that is completely focused on security operating services. This Security Operations Centre (SOC) has been purposedly designed to address all the security concerns of the customers, by identifying the vulnerabilities and gaps that exist within their security frameworks. We

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It's important to acknowledge that transformation isn't easy because everybody within the organisation needs to start thinking differently."

provide them with accurate feedback on what tools, solutions and software they need to implement and adopt to bolster their security and better protect their data and critical assets," said Kaippada.

The issue of data sovereignty is still a pressing concern for many entities across the UAE, but the benefit of the SOC established by RA Technologies is the fact that it is based locally.

"Businesses are reassured by the fact that the information we handle is not compromised by it being sent to another country to be analysed, it's all done in-house, and we're a local player that is fully committed to serving the needs of the region. Every business is offering SOC services, but there are some hard questions to be asked, such as is it a real SOC, is it based here in the UAE, or is their team sitting in a different country managing it? These are the assessments you need to carry out when considering a SOC, because you need to determine is the right support going to be extended," said Kaippada.

Kaippada reiterated how there are so many gaps when it comes to security, and the emergence of new threats all the time when life extremely difficult for CIOs and CISOs.

However, new technologies can equip IT leaders with the solutions they need to bolster their security offering, but again the challenge for businesses can be what technology works for them.

Again, this is an area in which Kaippada feels Cloud



Box Technologies excel in terms of selling their customers security products that are tried and tested.

"Organisations don't want to purchase software that is not the right fit for their organisation. There are plenty of security products on the market, but how do you know what is right for your organisation? A lot of these products are expensive, so a lot of businesses can't afford to experiment with some of these products. So that's where we are trying to be unique from other

players because we always have software that are tested in our SOC, and we have a demo, which is available for customers to work on it. We also offer our security services for short periods, whether it be for 1-month, or 2-months in order to allow them to touch and feel what they are going to get from us. We practice what we preach. So when we offer something to our customers, we make sure that has been rigorously tested in our SOC. We're confidently selling them a security product that we know works, and that is how we differentiate ourselves from our market competitors," said Kaippada.

Remaining on the topic of security, a huge challenge for businesses has been the advent of remote working.

The concept was born out of necessity in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic, but many employees have chosen to remain at home post-pandemic, and whilst that flexibility has empowered workers, it has also left them vulnerable to cyberattacks.

"The concept of working remotely started as we all know during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overnight companies were forced into having a different setup in order to be able to accommodate their employees to access their software and critical applications from home. However, there have been many challenges, and there has been some highprofile security breaches as a result of employees working remotely and offsite. The threats have always been there, but the access to the sensitive information that hackers want has changed. In the past they would have had to break firewalls, but now with employees sitting outside the compounds of the office at home, it is much easier for hackers to access their data. We're helping customers deal with this challenge of protecting their data and critical assets by providing them with expert consultancy. They need to determine what are the rights steps they need to take to ensure their staff

is protected at all times, and again we can leverage our knowledge and expertise through our SOC to enable them to do this effectively," said Kaippada.

Cloud Box Technologies is a nascent player in the channel ecosystem, but a testament to their success has been their ability to go toe-to-toe with players that have over 30 years of experience in the industry.

When pressed on what differentiates Cloud Box Technologies from the other players in what is both a saturated and ultracompetitive marketplace, Kaippada again emphasised their consultative approach as a key component in their success.

"I think a key factor in our success has been the approach we've taken when dealing with the challenges and needs of our customers. We talk a lot about consultancy, but ultimately what that translates to is getting the right products and solutions to our customers. We don't just sell a product for the sake of it, we view our relationships with our customers as partnerships and we want them to travel on a journey with us for several years. We don't want to make one sale, and then that's the end of it, we are all about partnerships. In addition to this, we're always

looking at integrating the newest technologies into the product, so as the lifecycle of that product evolves, our relationship with our customers also evolves. Our consultative approach makes us different, and the way we deliver and commit to our customers really makes us stand out from the crowd," said Kaippada.

Kaippada pointed out that many enterprises are still reluctant to embark on a cloud migration journey because they are so used to traditional on-premises methods and fear the complexity involved.

He added that the challenges facing customers are different depending on the industry vertical that they operate in, but there are some commonalties.

"In terms of cloud migration, the older more traditional players will find it harder to adopt new technologies and integrate it into their existing systems. It's important to acknowledge that transformation isn't easy because everybody within the organisation needs to start thinking differently. You can decide to embark on a digital transformation journey, but the challenge comes in terms of setting up things and knowing where to start, and where you want to go to. Businesses need help and that's where we as Cloud Box Technologies

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We talk a lot about consultancy, but ultimately what that translates to is getting the right products and solutions to our customers."

come in and devise a plan for them to successfully execute their digital transformation objectives," said Kaippada.

The Managing Director of Cloud Box Technologies also distinguished the differences that businesses face when it comes to complexity.

"What we hear from some CIOs is that they have to upgrade, but upgrading a system is not a challenge, how you actually transform your operations is where the challenge really lies. The real complexity with migration comes when businesses have multiple workloads, for example in the retail industry, the big players will have oceans of data, so when it comes to migrating to the cloud and upgrading those customers are going to face issues around complexity when it comes to transformation. Whereas, SMEs will not face the same complexity problems during their transformation program. But regardless of their size, it's our job to help, and that's what we're committed to doing," said Kaippada.

Gen AI is everywhere, and whilst the benefits the technology will provide are endless, there are some valid concerns over data privacy and security.

However, Kaippada stressed the need for businesses to know how to effectively harness the benefits of AI before adopting the technology, whilst he praised the UAE leadership for its progressive approach towards artificial intelligence.

"We all know that more and



more businesses are adopting AI into their operations. I think Dubai has become a real leader when it comes to AI adoption, and the UAE in general has been very progressive and forward-thinking when it comes to AI. It was the first nation in the world to appoint a dedicated Minister for AI. However, the questions businesses need to ask is how can we effectively

use AI, and how will the integration of AI improve our business? Again, with our consultative approach we are helping businesses determine what direction they need to go when it comes to harnessing the capabilities of AI. The Government in the UAE has shown tremendous vision and foresight when it comes to AI and you can see in industries like healthcare the impact the

We can bring simplicity, efficiency and profitability to our customers business when it comes to adopting Al."

APRIL 2024

introduction of AI has had in terms of transforming patient experiences," said Kaippada.

Kaippada reinforced his belief that the future is undoubtedly AI, and disclosed that it reminded him of the evolution of mobile technology.

He also revealed that the company had signed some major partnership agreements in relation to AI.

"We couldn't imagine our lives without our smartphones now, as it features in every facet of our daily lives. I think we'll get to that stage with AI, and it'll happen much quicker than it did with mobile technology. Everything in the future is going to be AI. From a Cloud Box Technologies perspective, we have signed some agreements with leading providers who are investing heavily into the R&D of AI. We have identified a couple of vendors who have the capability of executing some major AI projects. We're at the forefront of technology and the partnership we have with these vendors will only serve to help us address the needs of our customers when it comes to AI. Again, this is what makes Cloud Box Technologies unique, because we have people that can talk about AI, and know it inside out, and we can bring simplicity, efficiency and profitability to our customers when it comes to AI," said Kaippada.

A big part of the success of Cloud Box Technologies has been their desire to always push forward and always look at ways to which they can further innovate and better serve their customers.

Kaippada concluded a wonderful interview by reiterating the importance of being agile and adaptable.

"We know that new technologies inevitably mean that as a business you need to be agile and adaptable. That means that we need to alter our traditional way of selling and have to approach it in a different way. We know that our strength is our consultative approach, and we make sure that we can complete projects on time because we are all about serving our customers. The adoption of new technologies is a key focus for Cloud Box Technologies because we can't sit still, because in our industry if you become

stagnant then you won't survive. The landscape and conditions are changing, so we need to evolve and change with that. When you bring new solutions to the market customers want to learn more about them and people want to work with companies who are proactively looking to use technology to enhance the services they provide, and that's what we do at Cloud Box Technologies. The best illustration of that from our perspective is the agreements we have brokered with leading service providers in relation to AI. By working with them we are trying to bring out a unique solution and this will be a gamechanger for us in the years to come," concluded Kaippada.



SERVICENOW

LIFE LESSONS

Simon Morris, VP Solution Consulting at ServiceNow, has penned a thought leadership article that examines the four lessons we can take from the cloud when looking at ways in which we can adopt Generative AI.

Generative AI (GenAI) has made the Arab Gulf region sit up and take notice. Even to non-technologists, AI is now making its promise of eventually surpassing the human capacity for initiative and creativity.

As of December, the GCC GenAI market was projected to be worth US\$430 million last year and rise to US\$2 billion by 2030 — a CAGR of almost 25%. Drawing on estimates for overall regional AI spend, we can say that for every US\$8 spent on AI in 2030, US\$1 of it will be invested in GenAI.

These figures suggest the hype is alive and well and will remain so for the foreseeable future. That means technology and business leaders have some decisions to make.

As they gather to make their plans, there is some good news for these stakeholders. They have a template to follow because GenAI is not the first technology to put decision makers in a bind, caught between risk management on one side and a runaway adoption trend on the other.

Cloud computing was met with the same mix of enthusiasm and trepidation in the mid-2000s, but flash forward two decades and it saved countless businesses from ruin during the COVID pandemic. So let us learn some lessons from cloud migration and apply them to GenAI.

1. AN OPERATIONAL INVESTMENT

GenAI, like cloud computing before it, has an appeal that spans industries and scales. From the smallest retailer to the largest telecoms company,

2. A REVITALIZATION OF SECURITY

GenAI ingests data at a monumental rate. Its success depends upon it. But GCC regulators are clear on where, when, and how data can be used. Privacy laws in Gulf states are consumer-centric, and ecommerce business models are now so common that PCI DSS will also apply in most cases. And then there are international standards such as GDPR.

Even to non-technologists, Al is now making its promise of eventually surpassing the human capacity for initiative and creativity."

it has something to offer. Before cloud computing, any IT investment was in the form of significant capitalintensive outlays.

But over time, the cloud drew in more and more businesses that recognized the advantages of more sustainable operational expenditure. Offered as a cloud-native service, GenAI has the potential to attract adopters in a similar way — as an opportunity to convert investments from CapEx to OpEx, while still gaining benefits like enhanced productivity and lower costs.

The question of data security is no longer abstract. It is a core business function. ServiceNow research in conjunction with Opinium shows data security to be a top concern among EMEA consumers when deciding whether or not to engage with a brand.

This focus on the safety of data reflects the early days of cloud adoption. Technology and business leaders dwelt long on the issue of trust and devised ways of amassing and analyzing the required data to add value while still reassuring customers of its safety.

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They resolved these issues primarily by partnering with providers that gave the right guarantees and commitments to give confidence to cloud adopters. GenAI's adoption is in the nascent stages but lessons from cloud computing are clear. Data management and security must be at the top of the corporate agenda.

3. INVEST WISELY

Cloud migrators had plans.

They drew up roadmaps that included every prerequisite — skills, vendors, technologies — and every step taken.

Some cloud adopters failed to accomplish their implementation goals while others were more successful.

The difference between the two was having the right skills in play. It is well known that the GCC faces a shortage in STEM skills, especially in AI. But those AI skills will be critical in understanding data lifecycles, AI regulations, and other areas. Managing data for the purposes of training a large-language model is a tricky proposition. But once the right resources are in place, organizations will experience smoother transitions.

4. CONTRAST AND COMPARE

When a trend takes hold, it is natural to expect a rapid time to value once you board the train. The hype cycle goes from initial anticipation to early adoption to widespread caution. That caution, however, can lead to some being the last to board, when all the good seats are taken. No organization wants to be in that position.

A range of surveys suggest GenAI is in the early stages but that will not mean that there are no enterprises wringing their hands, anxious to move.

Just as for the cloud, it pays to be well-informed on GenAI because misinformation is bountiful. In its early days, the cloud was thought to be less costeffective, less secure, and less reliable than legacy, on premises infrastructure.

Today, this comparison

has reversed itself. However, we are now in a position to evaluate GenAI by looking at its various proven use cases. It is capable of idea generation, taking part in brainstorming just as humans can. It can rate, rank, and recommend, summarizing huge data sources into useful reports and journals and giving advice backed by chains of logic, much as human consultants can do.

GenAI can also generate content for us — draft emails, social posts, and responses to IT ticketing-service requests. Organizations should review the proven use cases to find out whether their individual objectives align with what has already been achieved.

IN YOUR OWN TIME

GenAI's adoption journey is no different to any other. Having addressed the similarities here between the new tech and cloud migration, I hope I have given you a strong foundation for your 2024 expedition into this exciting new area.

It helps to familiarize your teams with foundational AI before branching out into GenAI and its predictive intelligence, statistical analysis, and naturallanguage understanding capabilities. As ever, rather than trying to figure out where to incorporate the latest and greatest, ask what business problem you are trying to solve first, and then figure out where GenAI fits. If you move prudently, you can change the game and win the game in a single stroke.



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LENOVO

GOOD GOVERNANCE

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Alaa Bawab**, General Manager, Middle East & Africa, at Lenovo Infrastructure Group, during LEAP 2024, in which he revealed that the governance set by the KSA leadership is allowing companies like Lenovo to help them deliver on their digital transformation



Alaa Bawab is a distinguished sales leader in the IT and technology landscape across the Middle East, having worked in the industry for over 26 years.

During a decorated career, he has worked for technology leaders such as Dell, Cisco, Huawei and now Lenovo.

In an interview with CNME, conducted onsite at LEAP 2024 in Riyadh, Bawab discussed Lenovo's aspirations and ambitions for success in Saudi Arabia.

He kickstarted the conversation by highlighting how the governance that has been put in place by the KSA leadership has laid the foundations for the 'total transformation' that is happening across the country.

"Look, let's be frank, what is happening here in the KSA

is a total transformation. I believe that it's very important that the KSA builds a complete ecosystem when it comes to building the next stage of their transformation journey. However, it's important to acknowledge and highlight that the governance set by the KSA leadership really was the building block and foundation for the success of their digital transformation as a nation. That governance includes the procurement side of things, and that is crucial. In addition to this, the centralization of some of the key decision-making around their reforms has been a key component in their success, because if you leave these rules a little loose then it leaves the opportunity for things to go wrong," said Bawab.

Bawab also pointed out that due to the sheer scale of the transformation in Saudi Arabia, nothing happening there is small, or mid-sized.

"There are just megaprojects everywhere, and if you don't have the



governance around the execution of such initiatives then things very easily could go out of control," said Bawab.

Bawab also revealed that Lenovo is undergoing a transformation of its own, as it looks to expand its consultative services.

"We're No.1 in our enduser devices business on a regional and global level, and that gives us the infrastructure that we need to drive the growth on the end-to-end value proposition. Lenovo is also from point A to point B, with point A being the No.1 end-user devices company, and point B is moving to the solutions and services side of things. We want to be a trusted advisor to our customers and partners. The

undergoing a transformation

of its own. We're moving

vehicle to take them from A to B is our comprehensive end-to-end infrastructures, and compared to the rest of the offering from the market ours is truly the most comprehensive that is available," said Bawab.

Bawab also claimed that what makes Lenovo 'ready'

We're No.1 in our end-user devices business on a regional and global level, and that gives us the infrastructure that we need to drive the growth on the end-to-end value proposition."

APRIL 2024



for their transformation is the fact they've constructed the right ecosystem on top of a platform that he described as agnostic.

"I think Lenovo's readiness for this transformation is the fact that from Day 1 we have always focused on competency, which is ultimately building smarter, and more intelligent infrastructure solutions, and we never deviated away from that. We have built the right ecosystem on top of the platform, which is agnostic, and that allows us to deliver what the customer wants. That gives us a consultative view without

even asking for it, because if customers understand that message clearly, and see it in practice then they are going to be confident that Lenovo is not trying to push them into a certain direction because we deal with all the main players when it comes to software application, so it makes sense for them to work with Lenovo," said Bawab.

When it comes to customer pain points, Lenovo obviously works across multiple industry verticals, where the issues are nuanced, but in terms of commonalties, Bawab did say that when it comes down to it, it's all about services.

"There are commonalties with some of the challenges facing companies across the KSA irrespective of the industry vertical they are operating in. Every organisation wants to ensure that their transformation is aligned with the overall goals of the Vision 2030 program. When you strip it back what it all boils down to for most businesses in the KSA is goto market and services. The services that are delivered whether they are public, or private, it's all about the services. The goal of these enterprises is to be quickto-market, quick to service, better quality and consistency in delivering the services, and more integration with all the stakeholders to deliver a comprehensive service," said Bawab.

Lenovo's market performance has been remarkable over the last 18 months.

Bawab revealed that Lenovo have tripled their infrastructure Solutions Group business in META, but as a company that never rests on its laurels, they are now aiming to double the triple.

Whilst many observers would think that is overambitious, according to Bawab it is doable, but more importantly those types of lofty targets actually motivates and excites him.

"We have tripled our business in the last 18 months, which is huge for us. Now the objective is to go and double the triple! These are the types of aspirations and targets that we set for ourselves as a team. I spend a lot of time with my CTO Ashley Woodbridge, and he's my right-hand man in many ways. However, we both agreed that if we were given tasks that were more consistent then we not be as interested in them as we are now. We are built for this type of pressure, and the demands actually motivates and excites us. We need these big targets that is the way we are built, the targets we have set ourselves are difficult, but they are doable, especially with the right team, and the right governance around this we've been able to do it. We need to continue to deliver growth, but in terms of delivering premium-to-market, which is crucial, we are on the right track. In summary, we're growing year over year and definitely growing premium-to-market," concluded Bawab.

ORANGE BUSINESS

WE MEAN BUSINESS

Mohammed AlJeraisy, Managing Director KSA & Africa at Orange Business, tells CNME Editor Mark Forker how the company is focused on driving new growth across the KSA and capitalising on the opportunities emerging across the Kingdom, its strategic approach to AI – and the value LEAP derives for Orange Business in the Middle East region.



Mohammed AlJeraisy has established itself as one of the most prominent thought leaders in the IT ecosystem across the Middle East region since starting his career in 2000.

In September 2023, Orange Business decided that AlJeraisy was the ideal candidate to drive and lead their operations in the KSA and Africa.

During LEAP, which was held in Riyadh in early March, CNME managed to secure an exclusive interview with AlJeraisy in an effort to better understand the strategic direction Orange Business is going to pursue in the KSA as the country continues

to embark upon one of the most ambitious economic reformation programs ever seen globally.

AlJeraisy is confident that Orange Business can replicate the success it enjoyed in 2023 in the KSA.

"LEAP is one of the biggest technology conferences in the Middle East. For Orange Business, participating and being present at LEAP is a key strategic focus for us. In terms of the KSA marketplace, we enjoyed great success in 2023, and we are confident we can replicate that success in 2024. We're engaging with all our customers here in the KSA in relation to our strategic value proposition, and if you examine our product portfolio at Orange Business then you'll see that the offering we have is vast and diverse," said AlJeraisy.

AlJeraisy revealed that at LEAP, Orange Business was demonstrating their focus in a number of key areas, but highlighted its Digital Infrastructure offering as an area of key strategic importance for the company.

"At LEAP, we are demonstrating a number of key areas that we are focused on, but the first area is our Digital Infrastructure, and underneath that is what we call the triangle of the three Cs, which are connectivity, cloud and cybersecurity. This is an area that needs a lot of work in terms of redesigning, rearchitecting and it requires development. What we are showing to our customers is that the outcome of

mastering this is the fact that we can provide services to our customers that covers the employee experience, customer experience and operational excellence, which are obviously key objectives for the customers. We work with our customers closely on their digital journey, it's a partnership, and it's our job to help them achieve their goals and we're committed to doing that," said AlJeraisy.

A key theme at LEAP was unsurprisingly Generative AI. Again, unsurprisingly, AI is a technology that Orange

Business is investing

heavily in.

"We don't just provide Gen AI to our clients, we use it. We believe in the direction of AI, and we believe in the capabilities being provided by Gen AI. It's important that if businesses want to capitalise on the opportunities of AI then they need to organise their infrastructure and their data. You need quality data in order to start developing and building the applications that are going to make a difference. If you look at use-cases then the area of customer service has been transformed by the integration and application of AI. The current experience provided in a contact centre still leaves a lot to be desired, but the infusion of AI can completely transform that experience, and empower the call agent in that contact centre, and enable them to provide a much better experience for the end-user," said AlJeraisy.

AlJeraisy highlighted

how the sheer scale of what is happening across the KSA is unprecedented, but declared that the challenge is something that will only motivate a company as innovative and agile as Orange Business.

"The KSA is the largest economy in the Middle East region, so the opportunities emerging from here as a result of the Vision 2030 program are endless. It is the type of challenge that businesses want and at Orange Business we are excited and confident that we can leverage our products, solutions and services to really drive this new burgeoning economy. The demand here is huge, and the sheer scale of what is going on is unprecedented in many ways. Customers know what they want and they are in a rush to get to where they need to go, so you need to be able to deliver as it's an ultra-competitive space, one in which all the technology players are vying for opportunities," said AlJeraisy.

The Managing Director of Orange Business in the KSA believes that by establishing their regional HQ in Riyadh, and harnessing the right channel ecosystem will be a recipe for success.

"A key cog in achieving success in the KSA is to find the right partners in your channel strategy because you'll be able to address the customers in a much faster, and more comprehensive way. Orange Business has established their regional headquarters here and that will only serve to help us grow across the Kingdom and the Middle East region," said AlJeraisy.

AlJeraisy concluded a brilliant conversation by highlighting the benefits that a platform like LEAP provides for Orange Business, not only in terms of meetings with their existing customers and partners, but providing the opportunity to win new business.

"The biggest value at a conference like LEAP is the engagement. We're engaging with our customers and partners and it's great to meet all of them under the one roof. Next to our booth is Digital Saudi and what they are demonstrating gives you a clear indication of the direction the KSA is going and it's important for us to be exposed to that, and to speak to them to see where we can align with them. We are here talking to our customers, but we're also speaking to prospective clients too, so there's an opportunity to win new business and it's difficult to put a value on that type of engagement," said AlJeraisy.

It's important that if businesses want to capitalise on the opportunities of AI then they need to organise their infrastructure and their data."



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CONFLUENT

STAYING COMPETITIVE

Fred Crehan, Area Vice President, Emerging Markets at Confluent, has written an op-ed on how businesses can stay competitive in our data-driven driven world.



In today's digital economy, innovation, pricing, and a slew of other factors that determine business competitiveness are heavily influenced by the quality and availability of data.

We see this daily across the GCC – businesses trying to individualise their marketing campaigns, services, products, and aftersales in a hundred different ways through the use of data made available in real-time.

The frontline professionals that use this data are reliant on the backend systems that make digital processes possible. Speed up your ability to process data and you increase the rate at which you receive insights, thereby increasing the rate at which you can innovate.

How is this acceleration achieved? Through data stream processing. This method allows organisations to handle continuous, real-time flows of data and innovate fluidly rather than having to wait for batch processing to feed people insights periodically.

We lived with batch processing for years, and it still fits some modern use cases where time is not a factor. But if you are in a neck-and-neck race to gain an insight that will pull you ahead, then you must be able to access data that is accurate, current, and of high velocity.

STREAM ON

To understand the importance of real time stream processing consider just one-use case (albeit, one which ultimately impacts all businesses and consumers) – digital payments.

The UAE's market for digital payments alone is projected reach a transaction value of almost US\$29 billion this year. Spare a thought for the authorities trying to sift fraudulent transactions from legitimate ones in the

seconds taken for those transactions to complete.

Such real-time checks are made possible due to data stream processing. Through stream processing, IT teams can break millions of transactions into billions of events that can be processed in real-time.

For this to work effectively, we must turn to event-driven architecture such as that provided through technology rooted in the Apache Software Foundation (ASF).

ASF has won a special place in the hearts of developers and has become recognised worldwide among the opensource community.

The Foundation has embraced that community and found ways of bringing developers together. As such, it has resonated with individual developers and organisations, making Apache projects a cornerstone of the open-source ecosystem.

Apache delivers event-driven architecture (essential for stream processing) through two pillars: storage and processing. Apache Kafka is a distributed streaming storage platform designed for developers to build high-performance data pipelines, streaming analytics, and more.

And Apache Flink is an open-source streamprocessing framework that offers a distributed processing engine.

Kafka and Flink together are what allow organisations to deliver the real-time data stream processing architecture that leads to real advantage. This potent combo will deliver the speed that makes fluid insights possible. But we should be aware that it only delivers the data. It is up to the enterprise to devise ways of interpreting it and acting on it.

ENABLER OF EFFECTIVE AI

Part of the value of data stream processing lies in its ability to guarantee up-to-date, accurate information. We must learn an important lesson about the nature of results: they are only as good as the underlying data that feeds them.

When we deliver data stream processing, we are moving away from traditional AI models that are built on static data – data that can expire and end up giving results that are only important in a historical context, albeit a history that is only a few weeks old. Imagine an advanced AI model built on data that is continuously refreshed. It could generate results that are just as current.

As you can see, stream processing is the future for AI models. Many of the caveats of AI centre on data quality and relevance.

A model that is selfcorrecting can rid itself of drift and remain in service for longer. Competitive advantage is baked right into this system. With the most up-to-date information available, business leaders no longer need to worry about ever-changing markets.

Once again, to understand the potential impact, let's turn to an example. Consider two competing retail businesses. Both have hopped on the AI train and use the technology to deliver product-recommendation services.

Now imagine that both use plug-ins for weather data, but one uses overnight batch updates while the other receives real-time updates by meteorologists. The first may be advising shoppers to buy umbrellas because its data shows a prediction of rain.

But the second has moved on because current data shows more probability of sun, and it can recommend sunscreen instead. When the day is done, and customers from both websites compare notes, the second will have gained a bump in brand reputation.

RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Stream processing has real-world advantages. It empowers businesses to make better decisions based on the best possible version of the truth at every moment of operation. Stream processing gives a competitive edge to any business from any industry – the right data at the right time in the right context.

If you are in a neck-and-neck race to gain an insight that will pull you ahead, then you must be able to access data that is accurate, current, and of high velocity."

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CISCO OBSERVABILITY

TIME TO OBSERVE

Gregg Ostrowski, CTO Advisor at Cisco Observability, has penned an op-ed which outlines the three essential steps that businesses need to adopt on their journey to observability.

As IT departments battle against soaring levels of complexity and overwhelming volumes of data noise, the clamor for new solutions to manage an increasingly sprawling IT estate is getting louder.

Rapid adoption of cloud native technologies and the shift to hybrid environments is exposing the limitations of traditional approaches for managing applications and underlying infrastructure.

The Application
Performance Management
(APM) tools that IT teams
have relied on over the last
five or ten years were able to
perform well in predictable,
on-premises environments.
But such is the volatile and
dynamic nature of cloud
native technologies, they
simply aren't fit for purpose
when it comes to managing
modern applications.

Many IT departments are suffering from 'tool sprawl', where IT teams are using a whole host of different monitoring solutions to manage different aspects of their IT estate — such as applications, network and infrastructure.

The problem is that these tools and supportive teams are operating in silos and



have no way of generating a full picture of applications, particularly those with components running across hybrid environments. This is making it almost impossible to identify issues, understand root causes and apply fixes in a timely manner.

This inability to isolate issues across domains

increases the likelihood of disruption or downtime to customer-facing applications, something which no organization can afford in an era where consumers are completely unforgiving towards brands that fail to deliver seamless digital experiences.

THE SHIFT TO OBSERVABILITY IS NOW A STRATEGIC PRIORITY

To properly understand how their applications are performing, technologists need visibility across the application level, into the supporting digital services (such as microservices or Kubernetes) and into the underlying infrastructureas-code (IaC) services (such as compute, server, database and network) they leverage from their cloud providers.

And they need unified visibility across both cloud native and on-premises technologies to get a clear line of sight for applications running across hybrid environments.

Full-stack observability does just that, providing IT teams with real-time insights into availability and performance up and down the IT stack, from customer-facing applications right through to core infrastructure.

It enables IT teams to manage application availability, performance and security in real-time, so that they can quickly identify issues, understand root causes and dependencies, and apply fixes before end users are impacted.

With full-stack observability, organizations can improve key metrics such as Mean Time to Resolution (MTTR), freeing up their technologists from a neverending cycle of firefighting and enabling them to focus on delivering game-changing innovation.

With Cisco research finding that observability is now a strategic priority for 85% of organizations around the world, CIOs in all sectors are rapidly rolling out programs to implement new observability solutions.

MAPPING THE JOURNEY FROM APPLICATION MONITORING TO FULL-STACK OBSERVABILITY

Transitioning from traditional monitoring approaches to observability isn't an overnight process. For large enterprises it can take two to three years, starting out with an array of APM tools and incrementally adding in new capabilities to generate greater visibility and insights across the IT stack until they achieve genuine observability.

This is a key point.
Organizations generally
begin this shift by focusing
on adding a specific
capability based on an
immediate business need. It
could be to integrate security
into their monitoring or to
expand their visibility beyond
the application itself and into
supporting domains such as
network and infrastructure.

To do this, leaders need to generate buy-in and support from these teams, overcoming resistance to change and showcasing the benefits of new capabilities.

What helps with this is implementing an open and

extensible platform which allows teams to carry on using their preferred tools. So often, major technology transformations run into problems because IT teams don't like being told that they need to start using alternative tools. But having an observability platform which supports open standards gets round this problem because it can bring in and correlate signals from any tool. It also future proofs the organization's innovation plans because it will always be able to support new technologies down the line.

THREE MILESTONES FOR ORGANIZATIONS ON THE JOURNEY TO OBSERVABILITY

While each organization will follow its own unique path to get from APM to full-stack observability, it's useful to break down some of the additional capabilities that CIOs need to integrate into their observability programs, and the benefits that each of these bring:

1. Expanding visibility across domains

Often the first step for organizations is to add infrastructure visibility (such as Kubernetes and hosted environments) and network visibility into their monitoring.

This means that rather than just focusing on the

Transitioning from traditional monitoring approaches to observability isn't an overnight process."

application itself, IT teams can monitor the different domains that support the application — such as network and infrastructure.

By adding domain visibility, organizations can easily identify the domain specific area where a problem is occurring and bridge visibility gaps where application components are running across hybrid environments.

This leads to marked improvements in key metrics such as Mean-Time-To-Resolution (MTTR).

2. Building security into the monitoring strategy

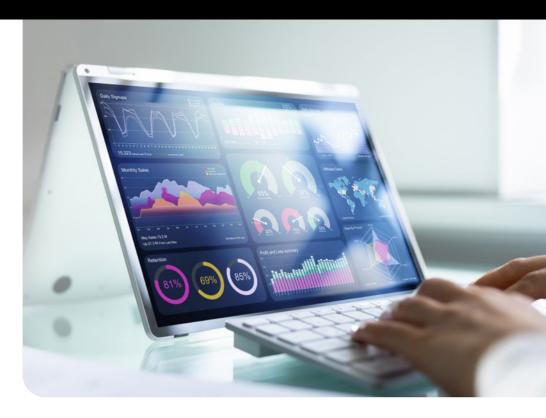
By integrating security monitoring into their observability capabilities, organizations can ensure complete protection for applications, from development through to production, across code, containers and Kubernetes.

Crucially, adding security into observability enables much greater collaboration between security and application teams, facilitating the shift to DevSecOps methodologies.

This new approach enables developers to embed robust security into every line of code, resulting in more secure applications and easier security management, before, during and after release.

3. Generating an end user view

By implementing digital experience monitoring (DEM), organizations can start to look at application



performance from the customer perspective, understanding and analyzing the experiences that end users are enjoying when using an application or digital service.

Functionality such as Session Replay enables IT teams to visualize how customers are behaving and engaging with their applications, and this insight can be game changing given the extent to which digital experience has become a determining factor for business success.

CIOs must approach observability as a change management initiative

With IT departments increasingly struggling to cope with the levels of complexity they are now encountering, the clock is ticking for organizations to implement observability.

CIOs need to map out a course towards observability, prioritizing the additional capabilities that teams need to meet their most immediate and urgent challenges.

Ultimately, leaders need to build trust so that every IT team and every technologist is willing to collaborate around a single source of truth for all IT performance data. This takes time and effort, and it requires education, upskilling and communication.

The reality is that no organization will ever reach the finish line on the journey to full-stack observability.

As new technologies emerge, there will always be a need to add new capabilities to enhance monitoring and visibility. And this is why a platform approach is so beneficial, with open standards enabling organizations to plug in new tools and solutions.

In this way, an incremental approach to observability provides the foundation for sustainable innovation.



PURPOSE-DRIVEN ENTERPRISE NETWORKS



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