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NETAPP INSIGHT LONDON

DIGITAL OKTA'S SVP

TEKSALAH'S Ceo

SECURING SMARTCHES

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It's important in the coming weeks and months ahead, that we all work collectively together to do our best to help fight this pandemic"

STRONGER TOGETHER

t would be remiss of me to write my editorial letter and not talk about the current COVD-19 pandemic. The crisis has impacted global supply chains, grounded flights, sent stock markets in to freefall and disrupted the sporting calendar.

However, the biggest consequence of this deadly outbreak is that it has thus far claimed the lives of almost 5,000 people. The UAE moved quickly to shut down schools a number of weeks ago in an effort to prevent the spread of the highly contagious Coronavirus, and in recent days have shut down nightclubs, gyms and any other large gatherings in order to get the outbreak under control.

It's important in the coming weeks and months ahead, that we all work collectively together to do our best to help fight this pandemic, and ensure we protect the most vulnerable in our society, and get all of our lives back to normal as quickly as possible.

On the front cover of this month's magazine is Amir Kanaan, Managing Director, Middle East, Turkey & Africa at Kaspersky.

The global cybersecurity vendor has developed a new OS platform that it believes will pave the way for the accelerated deployments of emerging industry verticals such as autonomous driving and 'smart cities'.

In addition to this, he talks about how companies need to become more proactive and declared that in Industry 4.0 they need to adopt a new mindset to security.

In GovTech, digital transformation leader Moro Hub discusses the importance of its partnership with Avaya, and highlights how its innovative solutions are helping them deliver better results for its customers.

Ahmed Helmy, Vice President – CTO, Avaya International, also documents how the company has become the 'ultimate' CX partner, and discloses some of the findings of its recent report entitled the Global CX Happiness Index.

For this month's Women in Tech feature, we spoke to the women behind Dubai's first Women in Tech community. Ming Hu, Yasmine Fadel and Roxana Jula, the group's founders, are providing a supportive environment for women in STEM professions throughout the Emirate. More on page 14.

Finally, CNME and CPI Media Group would like to urge our readers to stay safe during these difficult times, and wish those affected a speedy recovery.

Mark Forker Editor

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FOUNDER, CPI MEDIA GROUP Dominic De Sousa (1959-2015)

Publishing Director Natasha Pendleton natasha.pendleton@cpimediagroup.com +9714 440 9139

ADVERTISING Group Sales Director . Kausar Syed kausar.syed@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9138

Business Development Manager Youssef Hariz youssef.hariz@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9111

Senior Sales Manager Sabita Miranda sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9128

EDITORIAL Editor Mark Forker mark.forker@cpimediagroup.com +971 4440 9153

Deputy Editor Giorgia Guantario giorgia.guantario@cpimediagroup.com +971 4440 9146

Online Editor Adelle Geronimo adelle.geronimo@cpimediagroup.com +9714 440 9135

PRODUCTION AND DESIGN Senior Designer Analou Balbero analou.balbero@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 375 5680

Designer Mhar Delaben marlou.delaben@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9156

Operations Manager Cherylann D'Abreo cherylann.dabreo@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9107 DIGITAL SERVICES Web Developer

Published by

Jefferson de Jova Abbas Madh Photographers

Charls Thomas Maksym Poriechkin

webmaster@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9100

CPI MEDIA GROUP C P I M E D I A G R O U P. C O M

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> Tel: +971 4 440 9100 Fax: +971 4 447 2409

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NEWS

UAE leads \$2.5 billion MENA fintech market

The UAE is leading the Middle East

and North Africa (MENA)'s fintech market reaching a record-high of \$2.5 billion by 2022.

The figures were announced by industry experts announced as part of the Middle East Financial Technology (MEFTECH) conference.

Regional and multi-national financial institutions are rolling out digital platforms to transform customer experiences, optimize costs, and meet data regulations. As a result, Clifford Chance says MENA's fintech market will top \$2.5 billion by 2022.

"As the Middle East's fintech market reaches record-highs, the UAE's banking and financial institutions are leveraging real-time information management to enable mobile banking, e-commerce, digital remittances, and secure real estate contracts," said Praj Calthorpe, Deputy General Manager, of the leading UAE-based IT infrastructure and information management consultancy and solutions provider Condo Protego.





OKI Europe expands smart MFP portfolio



OKI Europe has launched the MC883, a versatile A3 colour smart multifunction printer (MFP) that's fully equipped to support construction businesses where the ability to print and scan documents and plans to a professional quality at any time is key to keeping projects on track and customers satisfied.

Having a reliable printer is essential for construction businesses where meeting tight deadlines is critical to project delivery, costs and timelines. OKI's MC883 is a smart MFP construction professionals can depend on. Easy user maintenance eliminates the need for engineer callouts, ensuring documents can be scanned, stored, copied or printed at all times, including site badges, contractor information, delivery orders, and health and safety certificates.

"With its small footprint and supersharp print resolution, the new MC883 is ideal for construction businesses that need to print fine line drawings and supporting instructions, as well having the requirement for sharing plans and information quickly with project partners and key stakeholders," says Javier Lopez, General Manager Vertical Solutions, OKI Europe Ltd.

"In an industry where documents are essential to site activity, device downtime can be a major headache. This is no longer a worry as the MC883's easy self-maintenance and smart, proactive consumables management tools, minimise the need for engineer intervention, saving time and cost."

Dubai's RTA announces collaboration with Google to run real-time bus updates

Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority

(RTA) has announced a new collaboration with Google, which will see the tech platform run real-time updates of bus timetables on Google Maps.

According to the RTA, with the move, Dubai has become the first city in the Middle East to use open data in public transport at par with 100 smart cities across the globe.

Previously, Google Maps could only display fixed RTA bus timetables without any updates, which meant commuters don't get updates on any disruptions.

"Linking and providing instant updates of bus schedules on Google Platform will help public transport riders and keep them informed of bus timetables, especially in the event of an anticipated early departure or late arrival. Such updates will enable them to better plan their journeys and minimise potential complaints from changes in timetables for unavoidable reasons," said Khaled Al Awadi, Director of Transportation Systems at RTA's Public Transport Agency.

The new initiative aims to overcome delays or early arrival of buses for emergency factors thanks to instant updates now provided. Accordingly, riders will be aware of their revised journey times. Real-time updates are run using GTFS-RT system (General Transit Feed Specification – Realtime).

"Google Maps are commonly used and are extremely popular worldwide. The initiative is in line with our leaders' efforts to cater to the needs of Dubai residents, especially riders of public transport; the backbone of people mobility in Dubai. It serves many other strategic goals of RTA such as 'Smart Dubai,' 'People Happiness' and 'Advance RTA'," added Al Awadi.

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OUTY SECURITY



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NETAPP INSIGHT LONDON

NSIGHT OND **"THE DATA CENTRE IS DEAD": NETAPP**

CNME reports back from NetApp Insight London conference, where the data services company discussed the future of data centres and their plans in the Middle East.

> ompanies have to embrace new ways of dealing with their data to remain competitive, a senior NetApp executive has said in a keynote address at NetApp Insight London conference.

> Anthony Lye, the company's Senior Vice President and General Manager for Cloud Data Services, said that digital transformation's effects were becoming ever more significant and affecting all types of organisations.

"We are now at a point unlike any other before. Digital transformation is the most important thing and the most scary thing that all of our companies face now," said Lye.

Illustrating this, Lye said that more than 60 percent of software

engineering jobs were now outside the technology sector, because non-tech companies were having to employ more people with tech expertise.

"Every single company, every single industry now has to be a tech company. What's driving this is digital innovation," said Lye.

At the event at the O2 InterContinental Hotel in east London, Lye said that the tech revolution had widescale consequences, such as allowing start-up companies to build applications for as little as \$1,000 or \$2,000 that enable them to compete with large, established firms.

Examples include app-based food delivery firms, which have generated huge revenues and have led some restaurants to close their premises and focus on online orders instead.

Over the next five years, according to Lye, 500 million new apps will be created - more than have been created over the past 40 years.

A key challenge, said Lye, was extracting insight from data, something hampered by the creation of "enormous data silos" that affect the ability of larger companies in particular to compete. Smaller, more nimble organisations, by contrast, are less affected.

Within digital transformation, the US-based SVP highlighted four key factors, namely that "speed is the new scale", that

Anthony Lye, SVP and General Manager for Cloud Data Services, NetApp



digital transformation requires IT transformation, that hybrid multicloud is the de facto IT architecture and that there has been a move from data centres to data fabric.

Data fabric – architecture and data services spanning on-premise and multiple cloud environments – is NetApp's central offering. The idea of the data centre is, said Lye, "arguably dead."

"Customers have to move beyond data centres; customers have to create data fabrics," said Lye.

He said NetApp developed its data fabric in response to customer demand, because, "if the customer wants to be in the public cloud, we'll let them." "We see ourselves not just as a strategic vendor, but as a partner that can help [customers with their] data," said Lye.

The data services company also aims to be the secondplaced firm in market share in the Middle East, Marc Montiel, NetApp's Vice President for Enterprise Focus Countries, has said.

Key markets for NetApp, and the ones for which its market share is typically calculated, are all-flash arrays and enterprise storage.

"For us, we're still on double-digit growth in the [Middle East] region. This year again it will be double-digit growth," said Montiel, who is based in Paris but who visits the UAE three to four times a year.

"This region for us is an investment region. So we've increased the size of our team in Saudi and Dubai.

"We are around 10 percent market share. We are number three on the market. Our objective is to reinforce our market share. For me, the objective in all our markets is to be at least in the number two position."

NetApp has previously said that its market share in the Middle East is lower than in some other parts of the world because it entered the region in earnest later than competitors such as Dell EMC, but is now fully committed.

In the Middle East, NetApp has an office in Dubai, which is also

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Customers have to move beyond data centres; customers have to create data fabrics."

responsible for projects in Abu Dhabi, and an office in Riyadh.

NetApp has a dedicated team dealing with organisations in the oil and gas sector, while other important areas include telecommunications and the public sector.

Speaking on the sidelines of the NetApp Insight London conference, Montiel added that the company was gaining market share in Saudi Arabia and the UAE after it "closed some big opportunities."

In many markets, the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) is helping to spur demand for NetApp's services.

"In the Middle East, AI is driven by the public sector – for CCTV and projects related to smart cities. We see the states investing a lot on this," said Montiel, adding that these were large, multi-year projects.

"We continue to embrace the digital transformation around AI, which is a strong driver in the region.

"We see a strong public sector in the region regarding the digital transformation. They're sometimes ahead of the private sector," Montiel concluded.

VERITAS

VERITAS OUTLINES ITS 'VISION' FOR 2020

CNME Editor Mark Forker attended Veritas Vision 2020 which was held at The Address Skyview, Dubai on February 10th. Veritas used the conference to illustrate how it is removing 'complexity' for its customers in terms of how it manages its data.



undreds of attendes came together at Veritas Vision 2020 to discover the threats, trends and opportunities set to emerge in the vertical of data management in 2020.

Veritas executives Mark Nutt, Johnny Karam and Deepak Mohan, all discussed the opportunities of data and how it has become the most important asset for businesses across multiple industries on a global scale.

Ian Wood, Head of Technology Practices at Veritas, delivered an engaging keynote presentation which was entitled 'Powering Business Critical Outcomes'.

Wood claimed that the combination of availability and trust were the key factors in how Veritas has become the market incumbent in the data management sector.

"We believe that trust is a key component that absolutely

underpins our relationship with our customers. Our systems must always be operational and running and we need to be available 24/7. The fusion of availability and trust is crucial for our clients," said Wood.

Deepak Mohan, EVP, Data Protection Business at Veritas, was next on stage and his presentation examined the enterprise data protection challenges that currently exist in the IT ecosystem.

Mohan highlighted the success of its NetBackup platform which has had a huge impact in the market, claiming that it has enabled its customers to take virtual data protection to the 'next level'.

"We don't need to deploy agents to protect the platform. It's now agentless. Our NetBackup platform has really resonated with our customers because they know that they are protected at all times," said Mohan. Rich Rose, Senior Distinguished Architect at Veritas, then wowed the crowd with a live demonstration of its new analytics solution APTARE IT.

Rose said the solution has the capabilities to significantly reduce costs for users and help them be more compliant in terms of data regulations.

"Customers use APTARE IT to mitigate cost, risk and compliance. They are the three major usecases. However, in addition to this, APTARE allows customers to determine what exactly the cost of their on-prem operations are," said Rose.

The event was then concluded with a panel discussion on digital transformation, which was moderated by Veritas' Ian Wood.

The panelists included Fayaz Ahamed Badubhai, Group IT Director, Al Yousuf Group; Shujah Ahmed, Executive Director, Dubai Holdings; Nitin Bharghava, CIO, Mashreq Bank; and Mahmoud Yassin, CISO, United Arab Bank.

In a though-proviking discussion, the panelists agreed that digital transformation is all about better serving the customers based on information and data.

Johnny Karam, RVP, Emerging Region at Veritas, wrapped the event up with a brief synopsis of what had been discussed throughout the day.

"Our executives highlighted the advantages of data and outlined how the effective utilisation of data is empowering enterprises to do more with the data they have to achieve better business outcomes. I think it's also key for us to get visibility into the data to ensure that applications that use that data are constantly available so we can deliver that competitive advantage for our customers," concluded Karam.



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BICSI

CONNECTING THE FUTURE

The 2020 BICSI EMEA Conference and Exhibition will shed light on the latest trends and best practices in the ICT space. **John H. Daniels**, CEO and executive director, BICSI, gives us a lowdown on what to expect at the show.



lobal spending on information and communications technology (ICT) is expected to reach \$4.3 trillion this year, according to research and analyst firm IDC. The growth will be driven by purchases of devices (mainly mobile phones and PCs) and enterprise applications. Technology is changing at an exponential rate with new innovations and systems emerging, and continually keeping pace with this is no easy task. The Middle East region, in particular, is on the verge of massive digital disruption, with countries such as the UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia leading the charge. To maximise the myriad economic and social gains in the digital era, nations are proactively adopting requisite technologies and developing the associated human capital.

"The rapid pace of technological advancements requires organisations to spare no effort on being at the forefront of change if they intend to stand out and be successful," says John H. Daniels, CNM, FACHE, FHIMSS, CPHIMS, CEO and executive director, BICSI.

"As technology evolves, organisations such as BICSI are constantly evolving with new curriculum, standards and publications geared toward enabling harness the value of this technological evolution."

BICSI is a professional association supporting the advancement of the ICT/ extra low-voltage (ELV) professions. To date, it currently serves more than 26,000 members and credential holders.

With the aim of providing regional organisations with the





latest trends and best practices in the ICT space, BICSI is hosting the 2020 edition of its annual conference for the EMEA region.

The 2020 BICSI Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Conference and Exhibition, which will be held at the Dubai World Trade Centre, is targeted towards a global audience of ICT/ELV professionals, including architects, consultants, engineers, cabling infrastructure installers and designers, integrators, decision-makers, and anyone else involved in the ICT/ELV profession.

"Like the ICT/ELV profession, BICSI is evolving," says Daniels. "Attending BICSI events and keeping up with our latest information including manuals and standards help industry professionals keep up with the ever-evolving business landscape.

"Furthermore, by being a part of BICSI through membership and credentials, individuals will gain access to this knowledge and keep current on what is changing in the industry so they can remain relevant and competitive in their work," he adds.

BISCI promises to deliver an engaging agenda focusing on wide-array of topics including intelligent buildings, smart cities, the Internet of Things (IoT), the latest developments in ICT/ELV standards, wireless and distributed antenna systems (DAS) and more.

Two keynotes are scheduled throughout the conference namely the 'Global Trends in ICT Infrastructure' by Lone

The rapid pace of technological advancements requires organisations to spare no effort on being at the forefront of change if they intend to stand out and be successful." Hansen of BSRIA in the United Kingdom, and 'Developing Deeper Connections' by Eugene Seah of Trainium Academy in Singapore.

This year's BICSI EMEA Conference and Exhibition will also feature a full-day of pre-conference Masterclasses, where delegates can choose between 'Fundamentals of Passive Optical LAN'; 'Converged Networks – the Future of Intelligent Buildings as defined by BICSI 007'; or 'Effective Data Centre Cooling Strategies.' The annual EMEA Awards Ceremony will be held on the evening of the sencond day of the conference.

In addition to the robust conference agenda, the event also presents an excellent platform for industry peers to exchange insights and network with colleagues and other likeminded delegates from all over the world.

"Knowledge transfer is key in our industry and the best place to gain the latest insights is at a BICSI event," says Daniels.

WOMEN IN TECH



BETTER TOGETHER

CNME sat down with **Ming Hu, Yasmine Fadel and Roxana Jula**, the women behind Dubai's first Women in Tech community, to understand how the group is providing a supportive environment for women in STEM professions.

here is one thing most women in STEM professions have in common: isolation. When a few years ago Uber's whistleblower Susan Fowler published a 2,900 words blog post on the ins and outs of working at Uber, the second most appalling aspect of her story, following the sexual harassment, was the lack of women engineers in the organisation. Fowler counted six women out of over 150 engineers in Uber SRE a number that had shrunk drastically during her time at the multinational ride-hailing company.

Women in STEM subjects feel lonely because they are, and

unfortunately this prompts the few women who are in the field to leave it. Research by AAUW showed that isolation, maledominated work environments, bias and a lack of effective women role models are some of the leading factors pushing women to leave STEM jobs.

Ming Hu, Software Engineer at Namshi.com, took matters in her hand when last year she contacted Yasmine Fadel, Software Engineer at Track24, in hopes to connect with more women in tech.

Hu said, "I was trying to find a community for women in tech in Dubai, and when I didn't find any, I decided to create one myself. It was a very spontaneous idea, but I soon realised I wasn't the only one who was looking for more women in this field."

Fadel, who loved Hu's idea and was thrilled to pursue it, continued, "Women often feel like they're alone in this field. It's very hard to have a look around the room and realise you're only surrounded by men – you get used to it, but the feeling of isolation doesn't fade away. The Women in Tech group was created to show women they're not alone, that there are others facing the same challenges and doubts.

"We organise study groups, inspirational talks and workshops to help one another. It really resonates with people and we now have more than 200 people on our Meet Up group."

One of these 200 is Roxana

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Jula, Associate Senior Mobile Developer at Nodes. Although not one of the founding members, Jula has soon become a vital part of the group.

Jula is a facilitator for #IamRemarkable, a Google initiative to empower women and underrepresented groups to speak openly about their accomplishments in the workplace – a topic that she is passionate about and she introduced to the Women in Tech Dubai community.

She explained, "At university, I was the only girl on the Computer Science course, and on my first day of class someone asked me if I was lost.

"I started coding when I was 13, and by the time I went to university, I was very confident in my skills and didn't let that remark upset me. However, I can only imagine how that could've distressed someone who might have just been approaching this field – it's very hard to be confident when you're a minority, and self-promotion plays a big part in ensuring a successful career."

Creating the Women in Tech group gave Hu, Fadel and Jula a way to show women they are not alone in the tech sector – however the three understand that organisations must lead the change to make a real impact on the future of women in IT.

In fact, although tech giants are openly promoting gender equality based on meritocracy, a study by MIT explains how seemingly meritocratic organisations can unintentionally favour men over "equally performing women" due to ingrained, demographic bias.

Jula and Fadel believe that the first step to overcoming the

"paradox of meritocracy" is to acknowledge biases, rather than ignoring them.

"We've seen a lot of organisations creating initiatives to reduce the gender gap, but the truth is that these won't help as long as companies don't address unconscious biases. Although these prejudices are very hard to change, acknowledging them is the first step towards eliminating them. Recognising a problem often feels uncomfortable to people, but it's that feeling of unease that leads to change" explained Jula.

Fadel continued, "Female engineers very often leave tech within six to ten years of their careers. It all comes down to company culture – women who don't feel supported by their organisation won't stick around. Companies risk losing all the knowledge, resources and time they've invested into that person just because a manager, or the company itself, are not providing any support for their female employees."

Maternity leave, equal pay, sensitivity and understanding are just a few of the aspects Fadel, Hu and Jula believe organisations should focus on to ensure retainability and workplace satisfaction for women in tech. As easy and straightforward as

The Women in Tech group was created to show women they're not alone, that there are others facing the same challenges and doubts." that might sound, the majority of organisations –including the ones that are loudly advocating for equality– still struggle to provide a safe and inclusive working environment for women.

In 2015, seven women who worked in Silicon Valley's tech industry conducted a revealing study entitled "The Elephant in the Valley". The study showed that eighty-four percent out of the over 200 respondents said they were told they were too aggressive on the workplace, while other revealed they had been considered too meek for the environment. Either way, women seem to feel a growing pressure to behave in a certain way - a pressure that it's not put on their male counterparts.

"Pressure to perform is amplified for women, and too often that pressure leads to burnouts and a change in career. Women have to prove themselves twice as much as men, while at the same time we are told to be modest and celebrate others, rather than ourselves," said Jula.

Fadel and Hu also shared their concerns over the stress women face on the workplace and reiterated the group wants to address all these challenges by creating a supportive environment for women to express themselves and overcome whichever issue they may face in the industry.

Hu explained, "The group has grown very quickly over the past year because of the support we show towards one another. Men have also shown a lot of interest and support. It's exciting to have so many different people coming together to advocate change and help each other – we can't wait to see what's in store for the future."

EXTREME NETWORKS

TAKING CLOUD NETWORKING TO THE 'EXTREME'

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Maan Al-Shakarchi**, Regional Director, Middle East, Turkey & Africa at Extreme, during the company's Extreme Cloud Now event at The Address Fountain Views, Downtown Dubai.

> l-Shakarchi has enjoyed a distinguished career in the IT industry in the Middle East, since beginning his journey with telecommunications manufacturer Nortel in 2002. He moved to Extreme from Avaya in October 2019.

The US networking behemoth has decided to significantly increase its investment in the META region, and Al-Shakarchi has been tasked with the responsibility of spearheading the campaign for Extreme to establish itself as the catalyst for cloud networking transformation in the region.

Extreme has undergone its own internal restructuring following the acquisitions of

The sheer volume of Big Data that administrators are supposed to be able to work with and react to is just becoming way beyond human capabilities." Zebra, Motorola Wireless and Avaya's networking business in recent years. However, according to Al-Shakarchi the acquisition of Aerohive was a 'gamechanger'.

"We've made some key acquisitions over the last few years, but the most significant acquisition has been with Aerohive, which happened last year. Aerohive is the leader in cloud networking, and what that gave Extreme was a thirdgeneration cloud platform that enabled us to take the entire endto-end enterprise portfolio to the cloud," said Al-Shakarchi.

According to Al-Shakarchi, the third-generation platform offers customers the ability to monitor, manage and apply new technology like Machine Learning and AI to get more business value out of their networking infrastructure.

"A lot of the other components of the IT industry have moved to the cloud much earlier than networking. We've had a lot of applications, servers and storage, but it is now time for networking to be part of that transformation. It's also the right time for Extreme, because we've got a portfolio that is fit for purpose, and that is very focused around delivering a clear vertical value in the market that we work in," said Al-Shakarchi.

Al-Shakarchi stressed the importance of cloud and highlighted how it is a keyenabler in allowing businesses to adopt new technologies to move their IT infrastructure at the pace of their business requirements. In the past businesses didn't have the ability to this, as they didn't have the cloud technologies we have today.

"Cloud gives you the scalability, speed and elasticity to stretch your business. For example, in the retail sector there will be periods when businesses are going to have a surge in traffic, and they need their infrastructure to be able to cope with those spikes in demand. I think that the effectiveness of the cloud in delivering those business values to our customers is really key for us," said Al-Shakarchi.

In January, Extreme customised its retail select solution which has been



specifically designed to provide two perspectives, one for an IT person to examine the technical complexities of the solution, and the other is to allow the store manager to have visibility on their data.

"The solution enables an IT expert to look at interference, channels, frequencies and all the technical components in terms of management, and we've got a similar portal in relation to business requirements. A store manager can see how many visitors they currently have in their store, how many of them are returning visitors, how much time are they spending in the store, and which departments are the most popular. They're then able to customise their customer experience across this infrastructure through those business analytics, which adds huge value," said Al-Shakarchi.

As more and more devices become 'connected' the proliferation of data is growing exponentially – according to Al– Shakarchi, autonomous networks will be an important concept for Extreme moving forward.

"The sheer volume of Big Data that administrators are supposed to be able to work with and react to is just becoming way beyond human capabilities. You really need AI to help you manage all this data and make business decisions that are impacting your bottom line without having human intervention. The concept of AI co-pilots is to not replace administrators and network engineers, but instead augment them through AI which gives them greater visibility on the data at their disposal," said Al-Shakarchi.

The newly appointed Regional Director of META at Extreme, was also keen to highlight the capabilities of its Cloud IQ solution. The Extreme Cloud IQ provides a third-generation cloud platform, which Al-Shakarchi describes as the 'next level' in terms of allowing end users to receive constant updates.

"Business is moving very quickly, so it's critical for our

Roy Verboeket, Sr Director of Systems Engineering, EMEA and Maan Al-Shakarchi, Regional Director, Middle East, Turkey & Africa, ExtremeCommunications, Middle East

> customers to have access to that information instantaneously. The existing IT infrastructure within many enterprises simply cannot live with the old legacy and traditional model of upgrading your infrastructure once a year. It's obsolete. The new architecture is built on containers, allowing our customers to have a platform that adapts with their business requirements on a daily basis," said Al-Shakarchi.

> Roy Verboeket, Sr Director of Systems Engineering, EMEA, at Extreme echoed the sentiments expressed by his colleague in relation to the Cloud IQ solution, and said it was fostering an environment that ultimately empowered its customers.

"We're at an inflexion point right now where both our customers and partners want the ability to be able to respond very quickly to a changing situation. Extreme Cloud IQ has the capabilities to be layered on top of your existing network, and it doesn't matter if it's Extreme branded products or not, we can also work with information coming from third-party organisations. We can create this ecosystem in which a customer, or a partner can utilise the Cloud IQ to make the environment smart in a bid to can gain insights into what is happening. This is an empowering experience for them and gives them autonomy and control over their operations," said Verboekt. Come

INVENIO

TRANSFORMING TAXES

Deputy Editor Giorgia Guantario sat down with **Chandan Vashista**, SVP & BU Leader – Public Sector at Invenio, to understand how the UK-headquartered organisation has established itself as the global leader in SAP Tax and Revenue Management (TRM) for Public Sector implementations.

nvenio, a global leader in SAP tax and revenue management implementation, has been working with the public sector and tax authorities across the world for over ten years. The organisation has been recognised for its in-depth level of tax expertise and its dedication to the public sector's digital transformation journey.

The GCC has been on a strenuous journey to reduce dependence on oil-based revenue for the past decade. The large decline in oil prices has led to deteriorating fiscal balances and called for various tax reforms to take place within the region. In 2016, the GCC adopted VAT in efforts to broaden taxbased revenues – since then, three member states have implemented online systems for filing and paying VAT.

In a compelling interview, Chandan Vashista, SVP & BU

The Middle East is a very important region for us as we are working in three of the key countries to help tax authorities with their tax transformation." Leader – Public Sector at Invenio, discussed how the organisation has been working with GCC countries to transform their tax processes, and has become the first SAP partner to implement SAP S/4HANA® core tax administration solution in two countries (one of which is in the GCC region) and a third already in the flight.

Chandan, who enjoys extensive experience in Europe and Middle East region, explained that Invenio's journey in the tax and revenue management landscape began in 2009, when the organisation enabled tax authorities in Mauritius and subsequently the Republic of Maldives to manage and administer their taxes through SAP's TRM solution.

"We have implemented the SAP solution at tax authorities right from the earlier ECC version to the latest SAP S/4HANA based on in-memory platform HANA. The implementation of tax systems is especially fraught with risks due to the unique nature of the processes and legislations – Invenio considers itself privileged to have been part of the digital transformation journey at multiple tax authorities in the world," said Chandan. Chandan credits Invenio's success to its strategic focus on SAP's TRM solution, becoming the leading global partner in this vertical. Invenio's worldleading experience specifically with tax functions, and its large pool of consultants and experts in the region have established the company as the go-to player for tax solutions in the GCC.

"Having the general indepth tax experience that we do, the knowledge of business processes and tax regulations which are unique to the GCC region, we understand the importance of what the member nations are trying to achieve with the VAT agreement," continued Chandan.

"The Middle East is a very important region for us as we are working in three of the key countries to help the tax authorities with their tax transformation. We have nearly 100 consultants working onsite in the GCC region and more than 200 in our delivery centres in India, UK and Mauritius, within our public sector vertical."

Invenio's understanding of GCC countries has allowed the business to successfully work with one of the largest countries in the Council for over five years, while also developing

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unique features for this region, including the Arabisation of the SAP solution.

VAT and tax regimes are new in GCC, and tax authorities in the region are learning and evolving as the process goes on. The region's tax process maturity is at a very early stage – an aspect which increases the need for flexible and scalable solutions to accommodate changing tax authority's requirements.

Invenio leverage SAP's TRM platform based on S/4HANA, which is the tier-1 Commercial-Of-The-Shelf (COTS) solution for tax authorities. The platform is designed to activate and modernise tax systems, offering a suite of solutions which meet tax-specific laws, regulations and business rules, while also providing single taxpayer views and supporting the integration of multiple tax types.

"Our solution ultimately helps administrations to maximise voluntary compliance and increase collections as a result, while effectively managing a highly configurable and flexible solution. We help replace many manual processes with workflow driven operations and automated functions. Importantly, we also integrate the system with ministries, banks and other third parties.

"These substantial changes allow internal employees and tax officers to create consolidated taxpayer views across regimes, levies, duties and charges; thereby gaining greater visibility, saving time and helping to reduce the national tax gap," explained Chandan.

Invenio has also been making strides with the implementation



Chandan Vashista, SVP & BU Leader – Public Sector, Invenio

of emerging technologies, the likes of Artificial Intelligence(AI), Machine learning(ML) and Robotic Process Automation(RPA), within SAP solutions. Emerging technologies have taken centre stage in the GCC over the past few years and Chandan understands tax authorities have high expectations when it comes to new solutions.

"Tax authorities in the GCC are going through an extensive tax modernisation process right now and they are hoping to do so very quickly. The expectations are very high, with each country demanding a unique set of features which can include aspects such as AI, ML or RPA integration; availability on different platforms; incorporation of different tax types; and a user centric system which fulfils the needs of taxpayers, tax officers and tax agents," continued Chandan.

"SAP S/4HANA allows us to implement all these features. I strongly believe that the first step tax authorities need to take is having a core platform in place and then build a roadmap for innovations."

Chandan concluded by expressing Invenio's commitment to continue enhancing the tax platforms of their existing customers by exploring new capabilities enabled by emerging technologies, while also hoping to integrate other agencies for a connected view of data.

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DIGITAL OKTA

THE 'GO-TO' PARTNER FOR CLOUD TRANSFORMATION

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Feras Al Jabi**, Senior Vice President at Digital OKTA, ITQAN Global for Cloud & Digital Computing Systems, who discussed the company's expertise and success as a leading cloud services provider in the region.



loud adoption is soaring in the Middle East, and that trend is likely to accelerate following the decision by US IT behemoth Microsoft to establish datacentres in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Al Jabi is one of the region's leading technology thought leaders and has enjoyed a decorated career in the IT industry.

He has been architect of Digital OKTA's prolonged success spanning two decades, and credits the extensive knowledge and expertise of his team as the primary reason why so many enterprises are choosing Digital OKTA as its partner, as they attempt to undergo their transition to the cloud in a seamless and efficient manner.

"We've amassed incredible knowledge and expertise over 20 years in the enterprise business. We understand how computing is designed, consumed and managed in the digital world. When the cloud emerged and disrupted everything, one of the initiatives we had to drive was to try and understand the scale of the transformation in terms of how computing was consumed by moving from onprem to on-cloud in order to make the transition as seamless as possible for the clients we serve," said Al Jabi.

Al Jabi pointed out that there was a significant volume of resistance from some businesses initially when transitioning to the cloud, and that enterprises were seeking a reputable and trusted provider like Digital OKTA to help them on their journey. "In the enterprise business there was a lot of resistance to the cloud as many of them simply found it very difficult to relinquish some of the computing manageability to the outside. It was a journey into the unknown, so for them to be able to undergo this transformation they turned to a reliable and trustworthy market leader like us to be their partner to help them make that transition," said Al Jabi.

In addition to the trust factor required to be selected as a partner to help businesses on their digital transformation journey, Al Jabi emphasised how its in-depth understanding of the nature of their customers business also gave them a huge competitive advantage in contrast to other cloud providers.

"We're acutely aware that some customers have concerns relating to confidentiality, but we've got decades of experience in this environment which has equipped us with the tools to effectively advise them as to how they can execute this requirement for their business," said Al Jabi.

Digital OKTA boasts a diverse range of products and services including Microsoft Dynamics 365 Enterprise, Hybrid Transformation and Azure Managed Services, to name a few. However, when asked which one of its products have resonated best with the market, Al Jabi responded by once again highlighting how its expertise and consulting are a key differentiating factor for them.

"I think the migration and advisory services we offer has really resonated with prospective clients who want to transition to the cloud. The advisory element in this journey is critical. We've got to design the correct path for them to achieve cloud transformation. We provide a holistic and very hands-on approach to make sure everything is up and running for them, and it reiterates my initial point regarding trust. Clients want to undergo this transformation being safe in the knowledge that

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Clients want to undergo this transformation being safe in the knowledge that we're with them every step of the way, and this is what we provide."

we're with them every step of the way, and this is what we provide," said Al Jabi.

The SVP of Digital OKTA, believes the decision by Microsoft to put down bricks and mortar in the form of data centres in the Abu Dhabi and Dubai, has accelerated the movement towards cloud adoption across the UAE, and he explained why it was such a major announcement for the cloud industry in the Middle East.

"I believe that the decision taken by Microsoft to establish data centres here in the UAE is very significant for the cloud ecosystem. It has resolved a major problem for many enterprises which of course

was the issue surrounding data residency. Data sovereignty is important for companies and the establishment of these data centres now ensures that. In addition to this, the price list for Microsoft Azure also gives companies the opportunity to have autonomy in terms of where the virtual machines you want resides. Businesses are now expressing a clear desire to now move to the cloud because fears over the confidentiality of their data have now been put to the bed with these new Microsoft data centres," said Al Jabi.

We're now living in an era that has been labelled Industry 4.0 and disrupting technologies such as AI continue to dominate the discussion in the IT industry. AI Jabi stressed that in order to unlock the potential of these emerging technologies enterprises can't look beyond the cloud.

"Cloud isn't an option anymore - it's a necessity. There is a growing demand across the region for AI initiatives and programs. However, not everybody is aware that for AI to be effective and serve their business objectives it requires unidentified computing resources. You can't find these computing resources in any data centre owned by a single client. It needs to be utilised in the power of the cloud. There is no way that enterprises seeking to embark upon Big Data & Analytics, Blockchain or AI initiatives can overlook the cloud. The importance of the cloud can't be underestimated and the future is bright for both the industry and Digital OKTA," concluded Al Jabi.

OMA EMIRATES GROUP

RESHAPING PAYMENT SOLUTIONS

Niranj Sangal, Group CEO at OMA Emirates Group told CNME how the UAEbased organisation has leveraged emerging technologies to become the market incumbent in the payment solutions sector.



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echnology has caused a shift in the relationship between brands and customers. With a plethora of products and solutions to choose from, customer loyalty is now driven by experience, flexibility and functionality. Gartner's 2019 Customer Experience Management Survey revealed that more than two-thirds of CX leaders expect budget increases in 2020 to drive customer satisfaction.

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation and robotics are raising customer expectations and pushing organisations to find new ways of pleasing their customers.

As a leading payment solutions provider, OMA Emirates Group is well aware of this change and has been driving innovation in the market by leveraging these new technologies. The organisation's charismatic Group CEO, Niranj Sangal said, "At OMA Emirates Group, AI and RPA have been on the books for the past three years. We have been focusing on chatbots specifically to further enhance user experience. Our idea of chatbots is a virtual assistant that will collect data and perform whichever function it has been set up to do – this could be paying bills on a specific date or setting up appointment reminders."

Sangal further explained that RPA is the perfect asset to automate repetitive tasks and allow people to concentrate on other responsibilities, increase productivity and enhance time management.

He continued, "We have incorporated both technologies into our solutions, especially in the area of card personalisation. Generally, the average time to receive a new card from a bank would be anywhere between three days to a week. With our solution, customers can predefine their card; submit a request over the phone or mobile application; set a location and time for pickup and do so in a much shorter period of time. We've also worked on a similar concept on the POS side with a solution called

NanoPay, a middleware which works on RPA technology."

OMA Emirates Group has also been focusing on offering its solutions as a service to meet the growing demands of customer for flexibility and cost-efficiency.

Sangal added, "We operate on a service base model - for example, a customer could pay 50 fils per month to have their own virtual assistant doing everything for them. This also helps us to leverage our solutions across multiple industries, from banking, to telco or retail. Today we are present in 16 countries and our customers can leverage our solutions as a service from wherever they are based, without having to worry about investments since we manage everything ourselves."

Sangal also discussed the challenges the retail sector is facing and how OMA Emirates Group is delivering new solutions to solve them. He further explained that 20 percent of the market relies on overbuying, a practice that is familiar to most consumers who tend to buy more goods than necessary. The payment solution provider is hoping to capitalise on this section of the market, while also improving retailers' margins and customer experience with its closed loop payment scheme to connect consumers, retailers and banks.

Mobile payments also play a big part in OMA Emirates Group strategy to deliver a seamless digital experience to customers, said Sangal. Mobile payments transactions are in fact expected to reach 1.31 billion worldwide in the next three years, according to Statista – delivering a unified



mobile payment experience has become a must to move forward in today's digital economy.

"Mobile payments are on the rise because of the convenience and flexibility they offer to consumers. At OMA Emirates Group, we continuously invest in this growing market by building multiple applications on our platform, while also white labelling them," said Sangal.

"We offer any type of payment service currently available, like Samsung Pay or Google Pay, as well as a 'wallet' that allows customers to access these solutions on a single platform. Since we run the same technology at our end, we are able to deliver these solutions within six weeks, drastically reducing time to market and ensuring perfect functionality."

Sangal also explained OMA Emirates group has moved away from a CapEx-based model to an OpEx-based one, eliminating

At OMA Emirates Group, Al and RPA have been on the

on the books for the past three years." expensive capital expenditures costs for its customers.

Discussing the organisations' plans for the next year, the Group CEO is confident that 2020 will be another successful year for OMA Emirates Group.

Sangal said, "2019 was a better year than the previous one, and we anticipate this year to be even better. We have opened new offices in Pakistan, Malaysia and more recently Tanzania, and we hope to reach a total of 20 operations by the end of this year. We are also looking at expanding in Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia, which is a huge market especially for fintech and crypto."

Sangal also explained the organisations will continue to invest 18 percent of their revenue on R&D in order to continue driving innovation and delivering new solutions that will help customers move forward in their digital transformation journey.

COMPUTER NETWORK SYSTEMS

A TITAN IN THE MIDDLE EAST IT ECOSYSTEM

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Hatem Hariri**, Managing Director, at Computer Network Systems, to better understand how the tech-centric company has managed to sustain its remarkable success over three decades in the ultra-competitive IT industry in the Middle East.



a distinguished career in the ICT sector, and has held executive positions at Nortel, Avaya and Juniper Networks before joining CNS in 2018.

He has been part of the IT fabric in the Middle East since 2008, and during that time has positioned himself as a real visionary in the IT ecosystem in the region.

According to Hariri, the rocksolid market reputation of CNS made the move a 'no-brainer' for him.

"CNS is a real legend in the IT industry and has a long rich history in terms of championing and pioneering new technologies. CNS was formed 32 years ago, but its ability to adapt and evolve has ensured it has remained a market incumbent in the region. I was really excited to join them and become part of their journey." said Hariri.

CNS is present in the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Kuwait, but the company has expressed aspirations to expand its operations to Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Hariri highlighted how CNS is part of a fabled local group which provides them with a strong foundation to grow.

"CNS is part of a large trading and investment corporation called Ghobash Group. They work across a range of different industry verticals such as healthcare, retail and real estate to name a few - CNS ultimately serves as the technology arm of its operations. Ghobash Group is a very ethical company that operates in a conservative manner, we don't exaggerate margins, we're in a healthy position financially, and our reputation with financial institutions across the region is very strong," said Hariri.

CNS has traditionally operated in the government and banking sectors, but following his appointment, the new Managing Director was keen to restructure the company and created three new business units that would help it gain market share in other industry verticals.

"Following my arrival, I immediately set about in establishing three new business units. The first business unit was focused on IT solutions and we called this our innovation and technology partner. The second unit was specifically designed for banking and focused primarily on helping banks achieve their digital transformation objectives. The third unit was IT outsourcing and managed services and we have two network operation centres that are based in Abu Dhabi and Dubai," said Hariri.

In addition to the new business units, the dynamic and innovative Hariri was keen to add more customer verticals to its overall business portfolio.

"I felt that there was a number of customer verticals that we could go after and we focused on penetrating the Oil & Gas and Healthcare sector. We secured some major contracts in the Oil & Gas industry with the likes of ENOC and ADNOC, and we're also going to be making a big announcement with the Ministry of Health following the completion of a recent project," said Hariri.

Hariri added that CNS is refocusing its attention on the defense sector, which historically was an important market for CNS. However, a different direction under previous management meant they rather inevitably neglected the vertical, but they are now developing a strategy to repenetrate the market.

Hariri also highlighted how its motto at CNS is 'Together we create new solutions', which reinforces their mission statement which is to serve its customers with the bestin-breed technologies that are specifically customised to their business needs. He attributes this customer-centric model as a huge factor in its sustained success over the last 30 years. "In this current digital era customer satisfaction is the number one priority for businesses. We have customers that have been with us for 20 years, which shows that we're dedicated to ensuring we deliver the best results and outcomes for our clients. Customercentricity is at the core of what we do. However, we're not just customer-focused in the sense that we're trying to satisfy them through providing good support,

I'd say that 60 or 70% of our work involves consulting clients on the benefits of embracing digital transformation."

we want to be their partner, we want to be active with them on every step of their journey to help them overcome challenges and achieve their goals," said Hariri.

Digital transformation has been the dominant buzzword in the IT industry for the last few years, and this is another area in which CNS excels in terms of helping its customers achieve their transformation objectives.

"I'd say that 60 or 70 percent of our job is consulting clients on the benefits of embracing digital transformation. We dispense our knowledge and expertise to educate our customers on the new technologies that have emerged within the IT ecosystem. It's not a difficult task, as they all know that they need to transform. Technology is moving so fast and delivering customer experience is becoming more and more tricky, so you need to ensure customer excellence, or it will seriously impact the financial performance of your business. Businesses are aware that they need to invest in technologies to stay relevant and competitive, and that is where we come in to guide them on this journey," said Hariri.

One other area CNS has been able to exploit to gain market share is in the vertical of cybersecurity. Hariri has cleverly identified some niche problems within the sector and has helped position CNS as a major market player in the process.

"We have been doing cybersecurity for years, but it was mainly in relation to the networking and infrastructure layer, but lately we've added consultancy around cybersecurity as part of our efforts to create a greater awareness surrounding the risks that are at play as we see an increase in the sophistication of cyberattacks. 70 percent of cyberattacks as we know are borne from social engineering. Security awareness is critically important for us, and we're differentiating ourselves by focusing on forensic security and ERP security which are real niche areas for many businesses, and we're able to help companies better attack themselves from these very real and imminent threats. This is another string to our bow and the combination of our entire portfolio is going to ensure we continue to be a huge success in the IT industry in the region," said Hariri.

KASPERSKY

KASPERSKY OS: THE PLATFORM TO A 'CONNECTED WORLD'

CNME Editor Mark Forker, spoke to **Amir Kanaan**, Managing Director, Middle East, Turkey & Africa, at Kaspersky, to find out how the cybersecurity leader has established itself as one of the most reliable security vendors in the IT ecosystem.

aspersky is the market incumbent in terms of cybersecurity software vendors globally and has been succeeding in the MENA region for more than 10 years.

The dynamic Managing Director of the global cybersecurity company has been tasked with the responsibility of growing the Kaspersky brand across the region.

In a deeply engaging discussion, he expressed his firm belief that its 'securitycentric' operating system can provide the foundation required to accelerate the development of emerging verticals such as smart cities and connected cars.

According to Kanaan, Kaspersky has identified a gap in the market and is perfectly positioned to capitalise following the development if its robust operating system (OS).

"When you examine the current IT infrastructure there is an abundance of security products available on the market. However, in relation to smart cities and IoT, there is no specific security solution that is dedicated to these infrastructures. Our operating system has been created with security at its core, and we've designed it in a way that makes it unhackable," said Kanaan.

The momentum towards the adoption of connected cars continues to gather speed, but for autonomous driving to move from concept to reality, then the key factor that needs to be addressed isn't in relation to connectivity, but instead on security.

"In the current ICT ecosystem, the emphasis on the security and protection of data and information has become paramount, and rightly so. The consequences of a high-profile breach are extremely damaging both from a financial and reputational perspective. But in the context of connected cars, if the system is hacked then it will result in the loss of lives, so security has to be the most important element when talking about autonomous driving," said Kanaan.

The Kaspersky executive said the same principles apply when it comes to smart cities. The UAE government is pursuing an agenda which is designed to accelerate the development of smart cities and has made no secret of its aspirations for Dubai to become the 'smartest' city in the world.

Our operating system has been created with security at its core, and we've designed it in a way that makes it unhackable." However, just like in the context of autonomous transportation, security is yet again a huge factor that is restricting the progress of smart cities.

"There are millions and millions of connected devices out there, but none of them has been designed with security in mind. When you talk about enabling smart cities, you think of the deployment of sensors, smart traffic lights and smart parking, but similarly like connected cars, the security is not where it needs to be. However, our operating system can allow companies to start building security around their IoT products," said Kanaan.

2020 has been heralded as the year we will begin to see significant developments in the commercial deployment of 5G technologies. Expo 2020 has been tipped to be the most 'connected' place on earth. The rollout of 5G is going to lead to an exponential proliferation in the number of devices connected to the internet, so once again security needs to be the central focus.

"The advent of 5G technologies is going to lead to a huge proliferation in the number of devices that is connected to the internet. Security again needs to be of fundamental importance when it comes to next-generation networks. If you examine telecom infrastructure it's built in a way that allows it to



overcome a hack on millions of devices, but I don't think it'll be able to respond or overcome a hack on billions of devices, so it's absolutely critical that 5G networks prioritise security," said Kanaan.

A recurring theme, which is a source of ongoing frustration for those in the cybersecurity industry, is the lack of awareness enterprises have when it comes to the potential impact a high-profile attack can have on their organisation.

Kanaan believes more education is needed and highlighted how a change in culture from the top down is required in order to effectively respond to a cyberattack. The Kaspersky executive believes the mindset they need to adopt regarding an attack is not a case of 'if', but 'when'.

"Organisations are still far too reactive when it comes to security. You're not being proactive by simply purchasing a security product. Businesses fall victim to the idea that if they buy a security product then they are protected. The entire mindset simply needs to change, you need to ask yourself how can I protect my environment in case of an attack? What am I going to do? What are the processes and procedures? You have got to be able to minimise the damage of a security breach. You can't be of the belief that you're 100% secure. You need to be ready for an attack and have the correct set of procedures and processes established in order for you to be able to mitigate and effectively respond to the attack," said Kanaan.



Kaspersky's Threat Management and Defense platform has resonated with many in the cybersecurity market and has made a big impact. Kanaan highlighted the key features of the product that ultimately differentiates it from rival vendors.

"When we talk about the Kaspersky Threat Management and Defense platform we're talking about a combination of products and human-guided services. The unique element of the product is the holistic nature of it. It's a product that we can put on the endpoint, gateway and network. We're covering the whole infrastructure of the enterprise, but at the same time the data we're receiving from the product can help us limit the damage of the attack and provide us with additional

There are millions and millions of connected devices out there, but none of them has been designed with security in mind."

information to carry out an effective investigation to avoid a future attack," said Kanaan.

Kaspersky has been an advocate for companies becoming what they've termed as 'cyber-immune'. The Managing Director of META at the cybersecurity vendor explains what the term 'cyberimmune' entails.

"Our operating system has been designed so we can help companies become 'cyberimmune'. The sophistication of attacks is on the increase, and so there is an obvious desire from businesses to pursue 'cyber-immunity'. But what does this mean? Cyberimmunity is calculated in the context of cost. If it's going to cost them more than it's worth, then this will inevitably deter them. We want to make it so complicated and complex that cybercriminals need to spend millions to try and hack into a system, only to come to the realisation that it's not worth it. This is our definition of cyberimmunity," said Kanaan.

Kaspersky, as aforementioned, is the market incumbent when it comes to cybersecurity vendors. It has been in the META region for more than 10 years after recognising the potential of the market, and under the innovative direction of Kanaan has thus far enjoyed remarkable success. The Kaspersky executive has attributed its success to its continued investment in R&D.

"Kaspersky is performing superbly in the META region and in 2018 we grew by 27%. The need for cybersecurity is increasing and therefore we're investing significantly in a bid to grow our brand in the region. The META region is a very important market for Kaspersky, and year-onyear we're enjoying growth and that is largely down to our investment strategy. One of the main reasons for our success is the fact that onethird of our employees are in R&D. We have a huge amount of experience in cybersecurity, and this experience is essential when you examine the current complexities in the cybersecurity landscape. We believe that enterprises want to work with us because we have so much experience in this space and are continuing to invest heavily in our R&D operations," said Kanaan.

TEKSALAH

"INNOVATION IS IN OUR DNA": TEKSALAH CEO

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Murali Konasani**, CEO of TekSalah, to find out how the company's commitment to simplicity and innovation, and its expertise and independence have underpinned its success in the UAE's ICT industry.



ekSalah was formed in 2007 and has enjoyed phenomenal success over the last

12 years completing over 1400+ projects successfully.

In a compelling discussion, Konasani outlined the core values that ultimately defines the company and explains how the combination of its consulting expertise and desire to innovate has 'fueled' their growth and success in the ICT market over the last decade.

TekSalah's area of expertise exclusively focuses on cybersecurity, cloud, digital infrastructure and software solutions.

According to Konasani what underpins the success of TekSalah is their four key pillars which are simplicity, innovation, expertise and independence.

"In everything we do we try to make it as simple as possible. In terms of innovation it is in our DNA. Our teams consistently pose the question as to how we are relevant to the customer. It's our responsibility to determine what is the purpose, and end objective for the customer, and then proceed to help them integrate a solution that ultimately enhances their business," said Konasani.

He added, "Businesses need to be more agile than ever before. Businesses are very keen in investing in the power of change – into people, processes and technology. In a way our solutions are all about empowering business to do more, move faster, drive innovation and to ultimately achieve tangible business outcomes."

The charismatic CEO of TekSalah said that its customercentricity is also a key ingredient in how it has amassed almost 500+ clients, 95 percent of which engage in repeat custom with the ICT leader.

"We de-risk the customer by taking ownership of the entire engagement life cycle. We try to be very innovative as part of our efforts to differentiate ourselves. We exercise our expertise and perform due diligence to ensure that we provide the best solution that is required to address the need and future proofing of a specific customer, and that is ultimately beneficial for them. We listen to them, and we deliver for them and that is why our customer satisfaction results are so high. Customer-centricity is at the heart of everything we do," said Konasani.

He also highlighted the importance of its other key value, which is independence, citing that it was critically

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important to approach discussions with an open mindset, and not be driven by a specific vendor.

"We have close collaboration and specialisations with major technology vendors. However, when we engage with a customer, we don't speak in a vendor language with them. If we come with that vendor mindset, then how can we be relevant to them? Our team is conscious of not employing a vendor agenda when they engage with our customers. We listen to them, then outline to them the pros and cons of a particular solution, give them the options and advise them on the solution that fits best with them," said Konasani.

Under the direction and leadership of Konasani, the ICT firm has gone from strengthto-strength and has also positioned itself as an 'agent for change' in terms of helping businesses overcome challenges they face in executing their digital transformation objectives.

More and more enterprises are migrating to the cloud, and for some this is a daunting proposition, but the CEO of TekSalah pointed out how the decision by Microsoft to establish data centres in the UAE has triggered an acceleration of enterprises towards the cloud, although he stressed that there still was a significant portion of businesses reluctant to embrace cloud.

"There has been resistance to change, especially in relation to cloud migration, but now that fears over data residency has been largely addressed,

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we're beginning to see higher adoptions to the cloud, although it's important to point out that many remain reluctant to moving to the cloud especially with certain types of workloads. The resistance comes from the fact that many businesses feel that by moving to the cloud they will lose control, flexibility over their data and sometimes the cloud readiness of their core applications. However, we can use our expertise to consult them on the benefits of migrating to the cloud and this presents us with a big opportunity," said Konasani. As more and more emerging

technologies continue to disrupt

We de-risk the customer by taking ownership of the entire engagement life cycle."

major industries, the emphasis to implement robust security architecture has become an urgent necessity. This vertical is another area in which TekSalah can flourish.

"When it comes to cybersecurity you simply can't ignore it. Every organisation whether you're running on cloud or not has to prioritise it. The threats are becoming more and more sophisticated and are constantly evolving. The consequences of your organisation being subjected to a cyberattack can have devastating implications for your business. Enterprise or the SME, adopting the right technologies and the training of people, practices can't be ignored. Again, this is a space in which we can utilise our expertise and our solutions to gain market share. The message we convey is that the relevance of cybersecurity is for everyone," said Konasani.

The dynamic CEO has said that his wonderful team and the 'culture' that has been created within the organisation has cultivated an environment in which it can thrive and deliver success for its customers. He used the example of his sales team to illustrate this point.

"The team that we deploy on the ground that are reaching out to prospective customers are not called salespeople, and they don't identify themselves as sales. They are consultants. They are effectively selling, but the mindset is completely different to that of a traditional salesperson as they're approaching the customer from a consulting perspective," said Konasani.

The ambitious CEO is hungry for success and having surveyed the Indian, African enterprise sectors believes the opportune time has now come for TekSalah to expand its business.

"We have had back offices in India for the last number of years, but there only purpose was to support our existing operations in the UAE. We're proactively taking steps to penetrate the Indian, African enterprise markets. We're very confident we can replicate the success we've enjoyed in the UAE in both India and Africa, and this will be a major focus for us over the next 12 months," concluded Konasani.

RAQMIYAT

BEST-IN-CLASS BANKING SOLUTIONS

CNME secured an exclusive interview with **Melvin D'Souza**, Vice President – BFS Business Unit Head, at Raqmiyat to discuss how the UAE-based IT leader has been supporting the banking and financial services industry with its best-in-class solutions.

We are a big believer that IT is not only an enabler to business, but a driver to it, amplifying where innovation and excellence really matter."

blockchain technology will have the same impact on transactions that the internet had on information. In your expert opinion, do you think it will fundamentally reshape the banking and financial services sector, or is the projected impact of blockchain being overhyped? The world of banking is in a transformational process triggered by new technologies. The most important is blockchain technology, as it brings plethora of benefits to banking and financial services sector be it security, trust, verification, transparency, fraud prevention and many others. The data structure in blockchain can only be appended and not altered and with protected cryptography data ledgers are more secured. The technology allows for verification without being dependent on third-parties. Fraud or duplicate entry risk is removed by numerous consensus protocols used to validate entry. Banks which are keen to invest in blockchain technology need to perform a strategic evolution and feasibility study on use-cases to

t has been suggested by

many IT leaders that

determine which application can be enhanced with it. Many banks may not see a return on their investments in the initial years, but over a longer time frame adopting blockchain technology will transform the BFS sector.

You joined Raqmiyat in 2000, and have subsequently established yourself as one of the most experienced technology thought leaders in the IT ecosystem during that timeframe. What have been the most seismic changes that Raqmiyat has had to overcome in the last two decades, and what has been the key factor in its sustained success?

Over a period of 20 years, the banking and financial services industry landscape has changed significantly brought in by the ever-changing business challenges posed by market dynamism and technological disruption. Raqmiyat as a company has evolved throughout this period by continuously upgrading and providing the best-in-class solutions, service and consultancy offerings along with best practices followed in the industry. We have partnered with customers to enhance their operational efficiencies, minimise their business risk and optimise their investments, resulting in sustained cost advantage, differentiation and strategic leadership over the competition. Raqmiyat has contributed remarkably through implementation of large turnkey projects in the financial sector. Strong understanding of the banking business coupled with experienced personnel, availability of extensive support infrastructure has helped Raqmiyat fulfil its uncompromising commitment to provide quality service, and special care to our valued clients.

What are your primary roles and responsibilities as VP – Banking and Financial Services at Raqmiyat?

In the last 20 years in Raqmiyat, I have assumed various roles and responsibilities including various leadership positions and currently heading the Banking and Financial Service Strategic Business Unit reporting to the CEO. As a Business Unit head, I am completely responsible for driving the P&L of the BFS



Vice President – BFS Business Unit Head, Raqmiyat

SBU, maximising the company's operating performance and helping to achieve the company's financial goals. This includes assisting in managing the unit's finances, identifying ways to increase revenue and cost optimisation, analysing financial reports, and preparing operating budgets.

One of the key roles is helping to build strong customer relationships. Having worked extensively with CIOs, department head across banks and financial institutions on their payments, digitisation and automation agenda, has played a key role in helping them become more competitive in the marketplace.

Additional responsibilities include leading, guiding, directing, and evaluating the work of other employees, such as senior directors and managers, and ensuring a healthy working environment. Contributing to sales innovations, strategic

business development, and the profitability of the company as determined by the company's strategic goals.

Being a strong follower of balanced scorecard has helped me to achieve the above goals and responsibilities.

Can you outline to us which of your products and services you think will have the biggest impact on the banking market? Raqmiyat brings along with our esteemed technology partners the latest enterprise solutions throughout the entire business life cycle. These include an endto-end IT consultancy services, as well as, business solutions that touch core business, digital banking initiatives, payments, AI platform and automation services. We are a big believer that IT is not only an enabler to business, but a driver to it, amplifying where innovation and excellence really matter.

Our Image Cheque Clearing System (ICCS) suite of solutions in collaboration with payment systems from Digital Cheque, MconGlobal and Aperta helps banks work with speed and agility.

The Upgrade version ICCS Connect.Net is a functional and technical re-engineering of Raqmiyat's existing ICCS Connect application. Helping banks streamline and address growing customer demand and achieve significant savings in IT support costs, this solution leverages our extensive experience from working with over 40 leading banks in the region. Our state-ofthe-art web-based solution ICCS Corporate extends ICCS Connect capabilities like cheque image capture and data correction to Corporates. Our other payment products WPS Connect, FTS Connect & DDS-Mubasher, AECB Tagreer are built by following best practices and features and offers host of benefits and overall efficiency to the bank.

Emerging technologies are continuing to disrupt major industries on a global scale. What technologies do you think will redefine the IT landscape in 2020?

AI, machine learning technologies and automation are poised to transform the overall IT landscape. AI is being adopted by many high end financial business applications to improve predictability and visibility and resulting in transformation of workplace and business ondemand through enterprise mobility. Moreover, IoT will also witness a big leap, as more things get smarter at work, at home and across our communities.

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HUAWEI

TURNING ON THE SMART GRID

Alaa Elshimy, MD & Senior Vice President, Huawei Enterprise Business Group, Middle East gives his take on the future of the power utility industry and how technology is impacting it.



he development of human civilization is closely linked with energy evolution. Always connected and always on, the world's appetite for power shows little sign of abating. Indeed, it will inevitably grow.

As nations in the Middle East diversify their economies and tap into the potential of digital transformation in this new decade, the power utility industry faces its own dynamic requirements. Many utility providers are now under pressure to streamline costs, operations, and regulations in meeting national safety, security, and environmental goals in-line with international standards and best practices. It is not just a matter of powering national development, but doing that in a way that prioritises energy conservation and resource diversity.

Managing this scenario will be complex: the solution cannot only rely on sustainable power generation — renewables, like solar and wind — but will also require methods of distribution and ways of consumption that are much, much smarter. Many countries in the region are now investing in smart grid projects. One of the largest smart-meter projects ever in the GCC was recently confirmed by Saudi Electricity Co. to spend \$2.5 billion to install 10 million smart meters as part of a broader plan to improve power distribution in the country.

At the same time, we are moving from centralised power generation to distributed renewable generation. The focus of power grid companies is shifting from safe power supply to supply reliability, and the electricity industry has been undergoing a process of market-oriented reform.

Those of us within the ICT ecosystem now play a fundamental role in helping the region's utility providers to deliver high impact and more connected smart grids. The large-scale usage of electric power marked the beginning of the second industrial revolution, while ICT advancements such as 4G and now 5G have helped usher in the fourth industrial revolution.

In last year's World Energy Congress, we were able to interact with many of the region's foremost energy ministers, energy CEOs, and related ecosystem partners. Huawei along with entities like Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) have agreed to increase cooperation in disruptive technologies, smart grids, automation, cloud platforms, and artificial intelligence.

In particular, we found that technologies such as 5G, AI,

and cloud computing would be fundamental to the energy industry's digital transformation in the Middle East.

Underlying it all, 5G will provide the high speed, low latency, and large capacity needed for managing IoT devices across utility grids. There's already a sprawling market for low-power and low-complexity sensors in the grid, allowing utilities to monitor and control devices more easily while dealing with

Those of us within the ICT ecosystem now play a fundamental role in helping the region's utility providers to deliver high impact and more connected smart grids.

emergency issues quickly and remotely. The reliability and low latency offered by 5G will optimise missioncritical communications and remote monitoring of critical infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the integration of AI into utility services will improve productivity and enhance the major operations of the grid by enabling connected devices to communicate with each other with a greater degree of autonomy. Importantly, AI will also support the utility provider's workforce to more easily respond to end-user



needs through centralised service applications processing millions of real-time data inputs.

Moreover, the transition to cloud computing resources supports the scalability of utility grids while ensuring that there is extensive sharing across a city system. Today's hybrid cloud platforms will more centrally manage IT resources—including facilities, data, services, and applications—so that utility providers can provide higher levels of service integration as well as faster application rollouts across the grid.

Innovative ICT thus empowers a better connected smart grid. Making products more energyefficient is an ICT industry key target, and an ecosystem approach is key to achieving this target. A badly performing, unreliable power grid directly impacts the economy and, with that, quality of life. While Distribution Automation (DA) — smart control over a grid — is an effective tool to intelligently match supply with demand by closely monitoring grid devices, DA's functioning can be problematic on legacy grids comprised of aging devices and lines with unbalanced distribution, high line loss, and low overall power quality.

The design of a smart grid can be a highly-complex project, no doubt. But by leveraging a full-stack digital platform that brings together connectivity, cloud, and device technologies, utility providers in the Middle East can better position themselves to improve public services and promote sustainable development. 35



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Kausar Syed Group Sales Director kausar.syed@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9130 / +971 50 758 6672 For sponsorship enquiries

Youssef Hariz Business Development Manager youssef.Hariz@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9111 / +971 56 665 8683 Sabita Miranda Senior Sales Manager sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.com +971 4 440 9128 / +971 50 778 2771

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MORO HUB

MORO HUB EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF DIGITAL SERVICES

In the latest of our series of interviews for GovTech, **Mohammad Bin Sulaiman,** CEO of Moro Hub, outlines how the entity is digitally transforming clients' experiences through its partnership with Avaya and the launch of UCaaS and CCaaS solutions.

> an MoU with Avaya at GITEX last year as part of their efforts to digitally transform DEWA's contact center. Moro Hub is officially launching its CCaaS platform later this month. Can you outline to us in detail what impact the introduction of a Contact Center platform is going to have for

> customers? At GITEX last year, we signed an MoU with Avaya to drive a full digital transformation project for DEWA's contact center, which is built to the Dubai Model Standard and hosted in Moro Hub's Dubai datacenter. Equipped with new technologies that provide next-generation capabilities such as dynamic self-service, speech analytics and advanced knowledge management, DEWA's new contact center

is benchmarked against the highest global standards of customer experience.

With technologies that augment the use of artificial intelligence and self-service, DEWA's contact center enables employees to deliver higher levels of performance and enjoy greater job happiness, and the citizens of Dubai get the freedom to choose their best customer journeys.

Through our partnership with Avaya, Moro Hub will be introducing groundbreaking unified communication solutions such as Unified Communications-as-a-Service (UCaaS) and Call Center-as-a- service (CCaaS) to our customers in the UAE. These solutions will allow our customers to experience improved and streamlined access to their data through a consolidated process of IT systems, making it effortless

Mohammad Bin Sulaiman CEO, Moro Hub to achieve their business outcomes through high levels of services delivery.

Moro Hub will host Avaya's innovative Unified Communications and Contact Center solutions and make them available to enterprises in a cloud services model, enabling organisations to purchase the capacity and services they require, as and when needed, without large upfront costs.

Moro Hub has established itself as a leader in delivering digital transformation for its partners, but it has undergone its own transformation towards cloud services with the launch of its UCaaS platform, which again has been done in partnership with Avaya. Can you tell us a little bit more about how Moro Hub is helping the UAE market in their migration journey to the cloud?

Moro Hub has earned the reputation of being a trusted partner to many UAE organisations in accelerating their digital transformation journeys. Together with our technology partners, we have built a solid portfolio of innovative solutions, technologies and services to help our customers scale up their businesses with greater Avaya, being a global leader in business communications software, systems and services, is an important partner for Moro Hub." agility and gear up for future growth opportunities.

Avaya solutions, hosted by Moro Hub, give regional businesses the flexibility and agility they require to benefit from the latest technology trends and prepare for digital transformation. Enterprises will be able to get access to Avaya's innovative technology solutions at prices that suit their needs, while benefiting from the reliability and expertise that industry leaders such as Avaya and Moro Hub bring to the market place.

Through our cloud offerings, businesses in the UAE benefit from greater flexibility,



enabling them to respond quickly to changing business demands, improve customer experience, and manage costs more effectively. This allows organisations the flexibility to scale their unified communication services deployment up and down as per their requirements, add new features and functionalities. and benefit from efficient customer service experience. Our new UCaaS offering will enable businesses deliver services to their customers faster at significantly reduced total cost of ownership (TCO) and with better return on investments (ROI).

Your business model sees you engage in a lot of collaboration and partnerships to achieve the business objectives that you want. However, can you outline to us how important your partnership with Avaya is? Avaya, being a global leader in business communications software, systems and services, is an important partner for Moro Hub. They are pioneers in the communications industry and a preferred brand with government organisations and large enterprises in the region. Avaya's innovative solutions are available in a cloud services model, enabling our customers to purchase the capacity and services they require, as and when needed, without large upfront costs.

The number of enterprises that claim they deliver 'digital transformation' has reached saturation point. As a leader

in this space, what ultimately differentiates Moro Hub from its rivals?

Moro Hub understands and values the power of data. We are not just a datacenter but a data hub that offers the next generation of digital services to businesses and governments, playing an integral role in supporting their digital transformation journeys. We bring together the best of both worlds with deep local expertise and rich cultural understanding along with in-house experts that bring best practices from around the world backed by an international consortium of partners.

We have

formation

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suit the re-

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We have digital transformation solutions to suit the requirements of enterprises across the private and public sectors in the UAE. Our diversified portfolio includes Colocation services, Digital services, and Cloud Services, Next-Generation Cyber security solutions, Smart Cities solutions, Artificial Intelligence and Big Data Analytics clubbed with other Managed and Professional services. In addition, we are also building our IoT Command Center and Security Operations Center to support the digital transformation initiatives of our clients while ensuring end-toend cyber security.

Moro Hub aspires to become a global leader in the digital space by delivering data-centric services and solutions of the highest quality with exceptional customer experience. The key differentiators that set us apart from competitors are:

- State-of-the art facility encompassing innovative solutions in the UAE
- Customer-centric focus with comprehensive offerings
- Data Protection and Regulatory Compliance: Our cloud solutions are hosted in the UAE thus ensuring compliance with government regulations on data residency. Customers can expect high levels of data security, availability, integrity with low latency from Moro Hub
- Scalability: We offer pay as you grow options
- Customised solutions: We offer tailor-made solutions to meet our customers' requirements
- Seamless transition: we migrate our customers to our cloud solutions with minimum disruption and ensure business continuity.

2020 is going to be a historic year with EXPO coming to the region for the very first time. What impact is this going to have for the UAE's reputation globally as being a hub of technological innovation? With the theme 'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future', Dubai Expo 2020 is going to be a spectacular global event bringing together the world's greatest minds and the best technology innovations to make a positive impact in shaping the future. It will boost Dubai and the UAE's position as a global investment hub, increase tourism and create tremendous opportunities for

businesses during the event

and in the future. **Come**

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Ahmed Helmy Vice President – CTO Avaya International

erving brands large and small, our company has developed a reputation for innovation, quality, and growth over the years. Avaya's success is dependent on the happiness and continued support of our incredible community of partners and customers. That's why we're always updating our roadmap to respond to the feedback that our people give.

President - CTO, Avaya International.

AVAYA

The latest step on our transformative journey comes in the form of Avaya IX-CC.

Created as a crucial component of our cloud-based CX transformation roadmap, Avaya IX-CC provides our customers with the right SaaS model to adopt a CX transformation journey with Avaya. It provides the deployment option to build on what you have today, with a hybrid model enabling the consumption of next-generation services as you move to cloud at your own pace.

IX-CC is an outcome of a transformation that started 18 months ago, and one that takes Avaya forward as the leader in the CX market.

Introducing Avava IX-CC

Avaya IX-CC positions Avaya as a leader in the cloud-based CX industry. This cloud-native CX application will evolve and adapt to the needs of an everchanging landscape. Almost half of our R&D budget for 2020 will be dedicated to improving the IX-CC business model.

Built using SaaS characteristics, the Avaya CX platform offers exceptional flexibility. Not only do you pay for only what you use, but you can enjoy versatility in customisation and integration, too. There's scalability built-in for every kind of business with luxurious packages of APIs to explore.

Creating a CX platform that matched the Avaya brand required a lot of customer research. We were dedicated to maintaining the features our customers love, while creating something more accessible and customisable too.

With this new business model and platform, we can easily help companies move beyond the challenges and complexities of infrastructure expenses as they proceed in their journey on the cloud. This is bringing a new business model and technology capability to our customers, enabling them to adopt new technologies much more quickly while at the same time doing business much more easily.

has been a leading player in the CCaaS industry, forging alliances with trusted partners to ensure that cutting-edge contact centre solutions can be delivered on an as-a-service basis. The company's recent partnership with Moro Hub brings that leadership to a new level, enabling UAE organisations to deliver outstanding CX at a significa lower TCO.

Avaya IX-CC

provides our

customers with

the right SaaS

journey with

Avaya."

model to adopt a

CX transformation

For years, Avaya

What Can You Expect from Avaya IX CC?

Current customers can expect a massively increased ability to innovate on top of what they already have. New customers will get a better-adapted CX platform that will simplify migration from any solution on the market to a much more flexible, feature-rich platform.

Avaya's CCaaS solution converges employee and customer experience (EX and CX) into a fully bespoke solution that adjusts to the needs of your company. Our commitment to growth and innovation means that we can easily deliver the forwardthinking contact centres that enterprises need.

Since Avaya has always stood out for its exceptional ability to customise products to the needs of individual customers, we're sticking with that strategy in IX -CC. Unlike other CCaaS products that are designed for mass scalability over customisation, we're going to give you the best of both worlds. That means out-of-the-box functionality, combined with a rich API layer where you can add all the integrations that you need. **cnme**

HOW AVAYA PARTNERS DELIVER VALUE TO PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATIONS WORLDWIDE

In the UK, a project with HM Courts & Tribunals Service demonstrates the power of delivering secure and scalable communications through a trusted partner cloud.

> he partnership between Avaya and Moro Hub is built on a solid track record of relationships following the same model in delivering secure, scalable and flexible contact centre and unified communication solutions to public sector organisations worldwide.

The partnership will see Moro Hub hosting Avaya's innovative Unified Communications and Contact Centre solutions and making them available to enterprises through a cloud based subscription model, enabling organisations to purchase the capacity and services they require, as and when needed, without large upfront costs.

It's a tried-and-tested model that is set to bring immense value to UAE organisations.

An example of this successful model can be found in Avaya's recent work with United Kingdombased 4net Technologies.

Founded in 2005, 4net Technologies, an Avaya Diamond Partner and Avaya Innovation Partner award winner, has a powerful combination of service excellence and technical expertise gained from ten years' experience on the delivery of Avaya solutions and complementary technologies.

In 2016, 4net launched ANTENNA, a secure, cloud-based communications service built on Avaya technologies, delivered in partnership with the Prime Minister's Office, and hosted in UK Government data centres.

In November 2019, 4net signed a £16.3 million contract to bring HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, onto the ANTENNA platform.

HMCTS is responsible for supporting the independent judiciary in the administration of criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales, and for non-devolved tribunals in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The new contract will deliver transformational technology to the newly created Courts & Tribunals Service Centres (CTSCs) over the next three years, supporting HMCTS in its £1bn Reform programme as it builds a modern system for administering justice.

The CTSC project and focuses on centralising the administrative processing of cases into dedicated Courts & Tribunals Service Centres, thereby freeing up courts and tribunals staff to concentrate on trials and hearings, while providing value for money for taxpayers.

These service centres will deal with cases at most stages in the process, acting as the first port of call for the public wanting information on their cases as well as ensuring they progress through the administrative stages efficiently.

Under this project, 4net Technologies will provide an integrated service centre solution delivered via ANTENNA. It provides voice, contact centre, video, messaging and collaboration services to UK Government Departments across a managed and secure private network. With over 20,000 users currently, the service is supported by a dedicated, security-cleared 4net Managed Services team based in the 4net Operations Centre in Westminster.

4net's ANTENNA service provides multiple communication features and options which will enable members of the public to get in touch easily using the channels most suitable to them. This feature was critical to the success of the project.

Manchester-based 4net's solution is based on technologies from bestof-breed providers Avaya and Verint, and provides a single view for case workers. The system automatically 'tags' and directs queries to case workers with the correct specialism; provides HMCTS staff with an instant history of case engagement and relevant documentation; reduces employee time wasted switching between multiple screens and systems when providing advice and support; and helps manage and forecast service centre resource.

An integrated Knowledge Management system will deliver relevant guidance and articles to case workers while they are engaged with citizens. Automation and an array of communications channels are integral to the solution, with the option of additional capabilities such as speech recognition, natural language processing and voice biometrics, which could further streamline the user's engagement with HMCTS in future.

based 4net's solution is based on technologies from bestof-breed providers Avaya and Verint, and provides a single view for case workers."

Manchester-



ccording to the Global CX Happiness Index, the latest research ommissioned by Avaya, UAE utilities customers are among the happiest in the world with an index score of 69.5 (out of 100), against a global average of 57.8.

But when it comes to providing utilities, what actually drives that happiness? Does customer happiness stem from simply providing a reliable electricity service, or does it come from something else? And how can utilities providers ensure that they are meeting their customers' ideas of happiness?

These are some of the questions that Avaya's Global CX Happiness Index seeks to answer. The research involved interviewing 16,200 consumers in 16 countries to gauge happiness across seven industry verticals – including utilities. Avaya and its researchers tested the importance of 19 factors contributing to happiness, and mathematically modelled the data to provide an insight into the happiest customers in the world, and what drove their happiness.

Unsurprisingly, the UAE was at the gold standard (top five) of overall CX happiness, alongside

AVAYA

WHAT DRIVES HAPPINESS AMONG UTILITIES CUSTOMERS

Avaya's latest research paints UAE utilities customers as among the happiest in the world, but what drives this happiness, and can it be improved upon?

Bahrain, India, Kuwait and USA. And the UAE's happiest customers were from the Utilities segment, with hotel guests following closely behind. Clearly, the UAE's utilities companies are offering just as much of a sevenstar experience as the country's hotels are known to provide.

And the similarities between these two industries don't stop there, with both sharing the same top driving factors behind customer happiness – keeping personal data 100% secure and the quality of products and services.

From there, though, UAE utilities customers rank other factors as the key drivers to their happiness. An eco-friendly brand reputation (or lack of one) sees a 43% difference between happy and unhappy customers.

The UAE's

companies

utilities

offering

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seven-star

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Unsurprisingly, the various aspects of customer service are key drivers for happiness, too. The report noted that having knowledgeable, informed staff sees a 42% difference between happy and unhappy customers, and keeping promises to build trust and providing a consistent level of service also rank highly. Respondents also placed high stock in saving time and using new, digital technology to complete tasks more efficiently. Interestingly, price was the second-lowest consideration, suggesting that UAE utilities customers value high levels of service over cheap prices.

As to what would drive even greater levels of happiness, the Avaya Global CX Happiness Index has some answers. When asked what would make them a happier utilities customer, 84% of respondents said proactive notifications around energy disruptions and emergencies would either be "amazing" or "good", and 81% said the same thing about receiving an ecofriendly energy supply.

Finally, the report also confirmed what many organisations already know – that there's a link between employee happiness and customer happiness. Eightysix percent of respondents said that their productivity at work improves when they're happy, and 84% said their happiness at work improves when their customers are happy.

Utilities firms in the UAE have clearly got a handle on this trend – when people working in this sector were asked, 86% of respondents said that, overall, their employers' customers are happy.

عملية موحدة لأنظمة تكنولوجيا العلومات، مما يجعل من السهل إسعاد عمالائهم و تحقيق أفضل النتائج في أعمالهم من خلال تقديم أعلى مستويات الخدمات .

ستستضيف " منصة مورو " حلول الاتصالات الوحدة ومركز الاتصالات البتكر من أڤايا، لتوفرها للمؤسسات ضمن مما يمكن الؤسسات من شراء السعة والخدمات التي تحتاج إليها عند الحاجة، دون تكاليف إضافية كبيرة.

تمكنت " منصة مورو " من ترسيخ مكانتها الرائدة في تقديم التحول الرقمي لشركائها ، ولكنها شهدت تحولًا خاصًا بها نحو الخدمات السحابية من خلال إطلاق منصة OCaaS، والتي تم تنفيذها بالشراكة مع أقايا. هل يمكن أن تخبرنا أكثر قليلاً عن كيف تساعد " منصة مورو " السوق الإماراتية في رحلة الانتقال إلى البنية السحابية؟

اكتسبت " منصة مورو " سمعة متميزة نظرًا لكونها شريكًا موثوقًا به للعديد من مؤسسات الإمارات في تسريع رحلتها للتحول الرقمي. جنبا إلى جنب مع شركائنا من الموزعين

وأصحاب منافذ البيع، قمنا ببناء مجموعة متميزة من الحلول والتقنيات والخدمات البتكرة لساعدة عملائنا على زيادة انتاج أعمالهم بفعالية أكبر والاستعداد لفرص النمو الستقبلية.

تعد أڤايا

ل(منصة

مورو)،

شريكا مهما

كونها شركة

عالمىة رائدة

في برامج

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الأعمال."

توفر حلول أقايا التي تستضيفها " منصة مورو " للشركات الإقليمية الرونة والسلاسة التي تحتاجها للاستفادة من أحدث اتجاهات التكنولوجيا والاستعداد للتحول الرقمي. حيث ستكون الشركات قادرة على الوصول إلى حلول التكنولوجيا البتكرة من أقايا بأسعار تناسب احتياجاتهم، مع





تعـاون صنـاع المستقبــل

كشف محمد بن سليمان، الرئيس التنفيذي لشركة "مركز البيانات للحلول المتكاملة" (منصة مورو) في أحدث سلسلة من القابلات التي أجرتها مجلة GovTech، عن الخطط القادمة للمنصة مسلطاً الضوء على احدث الخدمات التي سيقدمونها في مجال التواصل والاتصال بالشراكة مع شركة أقايا.

للحلول المتكاملة" (منصة مورو) مذكرة تفاهم مع شركة " أڤايا " خلال فعاليات جيتكس العام الماضي كجزء من الجهود الرامية لتنفيذ التحول الرقمي لمركز في الوقت الذي تطلق فيه "منصة فوت لاحق من هذا الشهر، هلا بينت لنا بالتفصيل ما هو التأثير الذي سيحدثه إدخال منصة مركز الاتصال على العملاء؟

وقعنا خلال فعاليات جيتكس العام الماضي مذكرة تفاهم مع أقايا لقيادة مشروع التحول لهيئة كهرباء ومياه دبي ، والذي يقوم على معيار دبي النموذجي واستضافته في منصة مورو " في إمكانيات الجيل التالي - مثل الخدمة الذاتية الديناميكية

وتحليل الكلام وإدارة العرفة المتقدمة، حيث تم بناء مركز الاتصال الجديد لهيئة كهرباء ومياه دبي وفقًا لأعلى العايير العالية لخدمة العملاء.

وبفضل التقنيات التي تعزز من استخدام الذكاء الاصطناعي والخدمة الذاتية، يتيح مركز الاتصال التابع لهيئة كهرباء ومياه دبي للموظفين إمكانية تقديم مستويات أعلى من الأداء وإسعاد المتعاملين أثناء ساعات العمل، فيما يحظى القيمون في دبي بحرية اختيار أفضل تجربة للمتعاملين.

من خلال شراكتنا مع أقايا ، ستقدم " منصة مورو " حلول الاتصالات الوحدة الرائدة مثل (UCaaS) ومركز الاتصال كحلول (CCaaS) لعملائنا في دولة الإمارات. ستسمح هذه الحلول لعملائنا بتجربة تمكنهم من الوصول الى بياناتهم من خلال

محمد بن سليمان، الرئيس التنفيذي لـ(منصة مورو)

الاستفادة من الوثوقية والخبرة التي يحظى بها ويجلبها رواد هذه الصناعة مثل أقايا و " منصة مورو " إلى السوق.

ومن خلال عروضنا السحابية، ستتمتع الشركات في الإمارات بقدر أكبر من المرونة، مما يتيح لها الاستجابة بسرعة لمتطلبات الأعمال المتغيرة، وتحسين تجربة العملاء، وإدارة التكاليف بشكل أكثر فعالية. يتيح ذلك للمؤسسات الحرية فى توسيع نطاق نشر خدمات الاتصالات الموحدة وفقًا لمتطلباتها، وإضافة ميزات ووظائف جديدة، والاستفادة من تجربة خدمة العملاء الفعالة. وسيتيح عرض UCaaS الجديد للشركات إمكانية تقديم الخدمات لعملائها بشكل أسرع وبتخفيض التكلفة الإجمالية للملكية (TCO) وارتفاع العائد على الاستثمارات (ROI).

نرى من خلال طريقة عملكم أن هناك الكثير من التعاون والشراكات لتحقيق أهداف العمل التي تريدونها. مع ذلك، هل يمكنك أن تحدد لنا مدى أهمية شراكتك مع أڤايا؟

تعد أقايا، الشركة الرائدة عاليًا في برامج وأنظمة وخدمات الاتصالات التجارية، وهي شريكٌ مهمُ لمنصة مورو ". إنهم رواد في صناعة الاتصالات وعلامة تجارية مفضلة لدى الؤسسات الحكومية والؤسسات الكبيرة في المطقة. كما تتوفر حلول أقايا المتكرة في نموذج الخدمات السحابية، مما يتيح لعملائنا شراء السعة والخدمات التي يحتاجون إليها، عند الحاجة، دون تكاليف كبيرة.

وصل عدد الشركات التي تدعي تقديم "التحول الرقمي" إلى حد

التخمة. كرائد في هذا الجال، في النهاية ما الذي يميز " منصة مورو " عن منافسيها؟

ما يميز "منصة مورو" أنها تقدر قوة البيانات، فنحن لسنا مجرد مركز بيانات، بل مركز بيانات يوفر الجيل الجديد من الخدمات الرقمية للشركات والحكومات، ويلعب دورًا أساسيًا في تمكينهم برحلة التحول الرقمي، كما نجمع بين الخبرة الحلية العميقة وفهم ين الخبرة الحلية العميقة وفهم ونعمل جنبا إلى جنب مع الخبراء أفضل المارسات من جميع أنحاء العالم.

نوفر

الخدمات

ونقدم

للتحول

الرقمي

متطلبات

الشركات

القطاعين

في

العام

والخاص

الإمارات

العربية

المتحدة."

في دولة

تتناسب مع

حلول

لدينا حلول للتحول الرقمي تناسب مع متطلبات الشركات في القطاعين العام والخاص في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. تشمل الحلول والخدمات المتنوعة التي نقدمها خدمات " خدمات استضافة البيانات والخدمات الرقمية، والخدمات السحابية، وحلول الأمن السيبراني، وحلول الدن الذكية، والذكاء الاصطناعي، وتحليلات البيانات الضخمة". بالإضافة إلى ذلك، نقوم أيضًا ببناء مركز قيادة عمليات إنترنت الأشياء ومركز عمليات الأمن السيبراني لدعم مبادرات التحول الرقمى لعملائنا مع ضمان الأمن السيبراني الشامل.

تطمح "منصة مورو" إلى أن تصبح رائدة عاليًا في المجال الرقمي من خلال تقديم خدمات وحلول تتمحور حول البيانات بأعلى مستويات الجودة مع تجربة عملاء استثنائية، وأكثر ما يميزنا عن المنافسين هو:

• منشأة حديثة تشمل حلولاً

مبتكرة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

- التركيز على العملاء مع تقديم
 حلول متكاملة
- حماية البيانات والامتثال
 للهيئات التنظيمية: يتم
 استضافة حلولنا السحابية في
 دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
 لضمان الامتثال للقوانين
 الحكومية المتعلقة باستضافة
 البيانات. مع توفر اعلى
 مستويات أمان البيانات
 - قابلية التوسع: نوفر عدة خيارات للتوسع لعملائنا
- حلول مخصصة: نقدم حلول مصممة خصيصًا لتلبية متطلبات عملائنا
- انتقال سلس: نقوم بنقل عملائنا إلى حلولنا السحابية بأقل قدر من التعطيل وضمان استمرارية العمل

سيكون عام 2020 عامًا تاريخيًا، حيث سينطلق معرض "إكسبو" في المنطقة للمرة الأولى. ما هو تأثير ذلك على سمعة دولة الإمارات على الصعيد العالي باعتبارها مركزًا للابتكار التكنولوجي؟

تحت عنوان "توصيل العقول، وخلق الستقبل"، سيكون معرض دبي إكسبو 2020 حدثًا عالمًا رائعًا يجمع أعظم العقول في العالم وأفضل الابتكارات التكنولوجية، وسيقوم بالتأثير إيجابًا على تشكيل الستقبل. وسوف يعزز مكانة دبي والإمارات العربية المتحدة كمركز عالي للاستثمار، ويزيد من السياحة ويخلق فرصاً هائلة للشركات خلال الحدث وفي المستقبل.

أڤايا

حل تجربة العميل "CX" uilail

بصفتها شركة رائدة عالميًا في سوق مراكز الاتصال، ولديها سنوات من الخبرة في إنتاج أحدث التقنيات، تعتبر أڤايا الشريك الأساسي في تطوير تطبيقات تجربة العميل CX، كما يوضح أحمد حلمي ، نائب الرئيس – ورئيس قسم التكنولوجيا والتطوير لدى أڤايا الدولية

أحمد حلمي ، نائب الرئيس – ورئيس قسم التكنولوجيا والتطوير لدى أڤايا الدولية

> تمكنت الشركة من خلال تقديم خدماتها للشركات الكبيرة والصغيرة، من بناء سمعة طيبة في الابتكار والجودة والنمو على مر السنين. يعتمد نجاح Avaya على رفع مستوى السعادة وتقديم الدعم المستمر لمجتمعنا الرائع من الشركاء والعملاء. لهذا السبب نقوم دائمًا بتحديث خارطة الطريق الخاصة بنا للرد على الملاحظات التى يقدمها موظفونا.

أحدث خطوة في رحلتنا التحويلية تأتى على شكل أقَّايا IX-CC.

تم تصميم منصة أڤايا IX-CC كمكون أساسي في خريطة التحول إلى تطبيقات CX الستندة على السحابة، والتي توفر لعملائنا نموذج SaaS المناسب لتبنى رحلة التحول إلى تطبيق CX من Avaya. يوفر التطبيق خيار النشر للتخطيط بناءا على نتائج اليوم نفسه، مع نموذج هجين يمكن من استهلاك خدمات الجيل الجديد أثناء الانتقال إلى السحابة بالسرعة التي تريدها.

تطبيق IX-CC هو نتيجة للتحول الذي بدأ منذ 18 شهرًا، وهو ما دفع شركة Avaya إلى الأمام كشركة رائدة في سوق تطبيقات CX.

تعرف على منصة أڤايا IX-CC

يصنف حل أڤايا IX-CC الشركة كرائدة في صناعة تطبيقات CX الستندة على السحابة. حيث يتطور تطبيق CX السحابي الأصلي ويتكيف

مع احتياجات العمل المتغيرة باستمرار. وسيتم تخصيص ما يقرب من نصف ميزانية البحث والتطوير لعام 2020 لتحسين نموذج أعمال IX-CC. وبالإضافة إلى كل ذلك، من المتوقع أن ينمو سوق تطبيقات CX المستندة على السحابة بمقدار 26.8 مليار دولار بحلول عام 2025.

توفر منصة Avaya CX المحمة باستخدام خصائص SaaS مرونة استثنائية. حيث لا يقتصر الأمر على الدفع بحسب الاستخدام، ولكن يمكنك أيضًا الاستمتاع بالتنوع في التخصيص والتكامل أيضًا. وذلك مع قابلية تطوير مدمجة لكل أنواع الأعمال مع حزم فاخرة من واجهات برمجة التطبيقات لاستكشافها.

يتطلب إنشاء منصة CX تتطابق مع ما تقدمه علامة Avaya الكثير من أبحاث العملاء. لقد كرسنا جهودنا للحفاظ على الميزات التى يحبها عملاؤنا عند تطورينا لحل يمكن الوصول إليه وتخصيصه أيضًا.

من خلال نموذج العمل والمنصة التى قمنا بتطويرها، يمكننا بسهولة مساعدة الشركات على تجاوز التحديات والتعقيدات المتعلقة بنفقات البنية التحتية عند الشروع فى رحلتها نحو السحابة، وهذا يجلب لعملائنا نموذجًا جديدًا وقدرة تكنولوجية جديدة، تمكنهم من تبنى التقنيات الجديدة بسرعة وسهولة آکبر.

كانت أقابا لسنوات طويلة لاعيًا رائداً في صناعة CCaaS، حيث أقامت تحالفات مع شرکاء موثوقين لضمان تقديم حلول مراكز الاتصال المتطورة كخدمة. ترفع الشراكة الأخيرة مع Moro Hub <u>هذه القيادة</u> إلى مستوى جديد، مما يمكن المؤسسات الإماراتية من تقديم تجربة عملاء مميزة بسعر أقل مَن التكلفة الإجمالية.

یمکن "یوفر تطبيق أڤايا X-CCا، لعملائنا نموذج SaaS "برنامج كخدمة" المناسب لتبنى رحلة التحول إلى CX من أڤايا."

هذا ما يقدمه أڤايا IX CC

يمكن للعملاء الحاليين توقع زيادة كبيرة في القدرة على الابتكار بالإضافة إلى ما لديهم بالفعل من خلال استخدام خدماتنا وتقنياتنا في التحول إلى تطبيق CX في رحلتهم إلى السحابة. سيحصل العملاء الجدد على منصة CX قادرة على التكيف بشكل افضل والتى ستعمل على تبسيط عملية الانتقال من أي حل في السوق إلى نظام أكثر مرونة وغنى بالميزات، حيث تم بناؤه من قبل الشركة التي اخترعت عمليا صناعة تطبيقات CX وقادت هذه الصناعة منذ ذلك الحين.

يحول حل CCaaS من Avaya تجربة الموظف والعميل (EX و CX) إلى حل مفصل بالكامل يتكيف مع احتياجات شركتك. إن التزامنا بالنمو والابتكار يعنى أنه يمكننا بسهولة تقديم مراكز الاتصال ذات الحلول المتقدمة التي تحتاجها الشركات.

نظرًا لأن أڤايا تميزت دائمًا بقدراتها الاستثنائية على تخصيص المنتجات حسب احتياجات العملاء الفرديين، نحن ملتزمون بالاستراتيجية التى استخدمناها مع حل IX-CC. على عكس منتجات CCaaS الأخرى المصممة للتوسع الشامل على حساب التخصيص، سوف نقدم لك أفضل ما العالمين. ما يعنى فعالية غير مسبوقة، مقترنة بطبقة API غنية تمكنك من إضافة جميع عمليات الدمج التي تحتاج إليها.



"تقدم

شرکات

المرافق

في دولة

الإمارات

العربية

المتحدة

من فئة

سيعة

نجوم

بنفس

مستوى

الفنادق

المتعارف

عليها

الدولة."

ഫ

تجربة

Global لمؤشر Global CX Happiness ، وهو أحدث الأبحاث التي أجرتها أقايا، فإن عملاء الرافق في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة هم من الأسعد في العالم برصيد مؤشر 59.5 (من أصل 100)، مقابل متوسط عالي قدره 57.8

ولكن عندما يتعلق الأمر بتوفير المرافق، ما الذي يدفع بهذه السعادة فعلاً؟ هل تنبع سعادة العملاء من مجرد توفير خدمة كهرباء موثوقة، أم أنها تأتي من شيء آخر؟ وكيف يمكن لمقدمي الرافق التأكد من أنهم يواكبون أفكار عملائهم عن السعادة؟

هذه بعض الأسئلة التي يسعى مؤشر Avaya's Global CX Happiness Index إلى الإجابة عليها. وقد تضمن البحث إجراء مقابلات مع 16.200 مستهلك في 16 دولة لقياس السعادة عبر سبعة قطاعات صناعية - بما في ذلك الرافق. اختبرت أقايا وباحثوها أهمية 19 عاملاً في الساهمة في رفع مستوى للسعادة ، وصمموا البيانات الرياضية في العالم ، وما الذي دفع سعادتهم.

مما لا يثير الدهشة، كانت دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة في العيار الذهبي (الخمسة الأوائل) لؤشر سعادة تجربة العميل CX الإجمالية، إلى جانب البحرين والهند والكويت والولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. وكان

أڤايا

ما الذي يرفع مستوى السعادة لدى عملاء المرافق

كشفت أحدث الأبحاث التي أجرتها أڤايا، عن أن عملاء المرافق في الإمارات العربية المتحدة من بين الأسعد في العالم، ولكن ما الذي يدفع مستوى السعادة نحو الامام لدى هؤلاء العملاء، وهل يمكن تحسين الطرق والأساليب المتبعة؟

> أسعد عملاء دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة هم من قطاع الرافق، يأتي في الرتبة الثانية مباشرة نزلاء الفنادق. فمن الواضح أن شركات الرافق في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة تقدم تجربة من فئة سبعة نجوم بقدر ما يُعرف عن الفنادق في الدولة من مستوى عال من

وتتوقف أوجه التشابه بين هذين القطاعين عند هذا الحد، حيث يتقاسم كلاهما نفس العوامل الدافعة وراء سعادة العملاء - وهو الحفاظ على البيانات الشخصية آمنة بنسبة 100 ٪ وجودة النتجات والخدمات.

فعلى الرغم من أن عملاء للرافق في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة يصنفون العوامل الأخرى باعتبارها الحركات الرئيسية لسعادتهم. ترى سمعة العلامة التجارية الصديقة للبيئة (أو عدم وجود واحدة) فرقًا بنسبة ./43 بين العملاء السعداء وغير السعداء.

مما لا يثير الدهشة ، أن الجوانب الختلفة لخدمة العملاء هي الحركات الرئيسية لتحقيق السعادة أيضًا. أشار دراية ومعرفة يشهد اختلافًا بنسبة بر24 بين العملاء السعداء وغير وتوفير مستوى ثابت من الخدمة أيضًا. مما يضمن توفير الوقت من خلال استخدام التكنولوجيا الرقمية الجديدة لإنجاز الهام بشكل أكثر كفاءة.

والثير للاهتمام أن السعر كان هو من الأشياء التي لا تشغل بال العميل، مما يشير إلى أن عملاء للرافق في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة يقدرون مستويات الخدمة العالية بأسعار رخيصة.

بالنسبة لما قد يدفع مستويات أكبر من السعادة ، فإن مؤشر Avaya Global CX Happiness Index لديه بعض الإجابات. عندما سئل ما الذي سيجعل عملاء الرافق أكثر سعادة، قال ٪84 من الشاركين أن الإخطارات الاستباقية حول انقطاع الطاقة وحالات الطوارئ ستكون إما الطاقة وحالات الطوارئ ستكون إما ففس الشيء عن تلقي إمدادات طاقة صديقة للبيئة.

أخيرًا، أكد التقرير أيضًا ما تعرفه العديد من الؤسسات بالفعل - وهو وجود صلة بين سعادة للوظفين مسعادة العملاء. قال 86 في المائة من الجيبين أن إنتاجيتهم في العمل تتحسن عندما يكونون سعداء، وقال ×84 إن سعادتهم في العمل تتحسن عندما يكون عملائهم سعداء.

من الواضح أن شركات الرافق في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة قد تعاملت مع هذا الاتجاه بشكل واضح -عندما تم سؤال الأشخاص العاملين في هذا القطاع ، قال ٪86 من المشاركين أن عملاء أصحاب عملهم سعداء بشكل عام.

جوف تك



الشراكة بين "أڤايا" و سجل حافل من العلاقات التي تتبع نفس النموذج في توفير مراكز اتصال آمنة ومرنة قابلة للتطوير وحلول اتصالات موحدة لمؤسسات القطاع العام في جميع أنحاء العالم.

ستشهد الشراكة استضافة Moro Hub للحلول للوحدة البتكرة للاتصالات الوحدة ومركز الاتصال لشركة Host Avaya وإتاحتها للمؤسسات من خلال نموذج الاشتراك الستند إلى السحابة، مما يمكن الؤسسات من شراء السعة والخدمات التي تحتاجها، عند اللزوم، وبدون تكاليف مقدمة كبيرة.

قامت الشركة بتجربة النموذج واختباره وتعيينه لتحقيق قيمة هائلة للمنظمات الإماراتية.

يمكن العثور على مثال لهذا النموذج الناجح في مشروع Avaya الجديد مع "4 نت تكنولوجيز" ومقرها الملكة المتحدة.

لدى شركة "4 نت تكنولوجيز" والتي تأسسات عام 2005، والحاصلة على جائزة شريك أڤايا للاسي وشريك أڤايا في الابتكار، مزيج قوي من التميز في الخدمة والخبرة التقنية الكتسبة من خلال عشر سنوات من الخبرة في تقديم حلول Avaya والتقنيات التكميلية.

وفي عام 2016 ، أطلقت "4 نت" خدمة ANTENNA، وهي خدمة اتصالات آمنة قائمة على السحابة

مبنية على تقنيات Avaya، تم تقديمها بالشراكة مع مكتب رئيس الوزراء، وتمت استضافتها في مراكز بيانات حكومة الملكة المحدة.

أما في نوفمبر 2019، وقعت 4net عقدًا بقيمة 16.3 مليون جنيه إسترليني HM Courts & HM Courts منمة Tribunals Service HMCTS وكالة تنفيذية تابعة لوزارة العدل، إلى منصة ANTENNA.

خدمة HMCTS مسؤولة عن دعم القضاء الستقل في إدارة الحاكم الجنائية والدنية والعائلية في إنجلترا وويلز، والحاكم غير النقولة في اسكتلندا وأيرلندا الشمالية. بين عامي 2018 و 2019، استعانت HMCTS بحوالي 16.100 موظفًا، وتدير 341 محكمة ودار قضاء ونظرت في 4.4 مليون قضية، إسترليني.

سيوفر العقد الجديد تقنية تحويلية إلى مراكز خدمة الحاكم والحاكمات التي تم إنشاؤها حديثًا على مدار السنوات الثلاث القبلة، حيث ستدعم HMCTS في برنامج الإصلاح الذي تبلغ تكلفته مليار جنيه إسترليني بينما تبني نظامًا حديثًا لتنفيذ العدالة.

مشروع CTSC هو جزء من برنامج الإصلاح الأوسع، ويهدف إلى التركيز على المعالجة الإدارية للقضايا في مراكز خدمة دور القضاء والحاكم الخصصة، وبالتالي تحرير موظفي دور القضاء والحاكم للتركيز على الحاكمات وجلسات الاستماع، مع توفير القيمة

مقابل المال لدافعي الضرائب.

سوف تتعامل مراكز الخدمة هذه مع الحالات في معظم مراحل العملية ، حيث تعمل كأول منفذ للاتصال للجمهور الراغب في الحصول على معلومات حول قضاياهم وكذلك ضمان تقدمهم بكفاءة خلال الراحل الإدارية.

في إطار هذا الشروع، ستوفر "4 نت تكنولوجيز" حل مركز خدمة متكامل يتم تسليمه عبر ANTENNA. يوفر خدمات الصوت ومركز الاتصال والفيديو والرسائل والتعاون بين الدوائر الحكومية في الملكة التحدة عبر شبكة خاصة مُدارة وآمنة. مع وجود شبكة خاصة مدارة وآمنة. مع وجود أكثر من 20000 مستخدم حاليًا، يتم أكثر من 20000 مستخدم حاليًا، يتم الكثر من 20000 مستخدم ولاييًا. ومور نت" دعم الخدمة من قبل فريق "فور نت" العمليات لدى "4 نت" Operations

تم اختيار 4net كشريك تكنولوجي لأن خدمة ANTENNA توفر ميزات وخيارات اتصال متعددة ستمكن أعضاء الجمهور من الاتصال بسهولة باستخدام القنوات الأكثر ملاءمة لهم. هذه اليزة كانت حاسمة لنجاح الشروع.

يعتمد حل 4net الذي يستند إلى Manchester على تقنيات من أفضل مزودي خدمة Avaya و Verint ، ويوفر رؤية واحدة للعاملين على القضية. ويقوم النظام تلقائيًا بوضع علامات على الاستعلامات وتوجيهها إلى العاملين على القضايا باستخدام التخصص الصحيح ؛ ويزود موظفي والوثائق ذات الصلة ؛ حيث يقلل هذا من وقت الوظف في التبديل بين الشاشات والأنظمة التعددة عند تقديم وتوقع مورد مركز الخدمة.

سيوفرالحل نظام متكامل لإدارة العرفة الإرشادات والمقالات ذات الصلة للعاملين في القضية أثناء التعامل مع الواطنين. تعد الأتمتة ومجموعة من قنوات الاتصال جزءًا لا يتجزأ من الحل، مع خيار إمكانيات إضافية مثل التعرف على الكلام ومعالجة اللغة الطبيعية والقياسات الحيوية الصوتية ، والتي يمكن أن تزيد من تبسيط مشاركة المستخدم مع HMCTS في الستقبل. "يعتمد

"4 نت"

تقنيات

من أفضل

مزودي

الخدمة

g Avaya

Verint،

ويوفر

واحدة

للعاملين

القضىة."

رؤية

ملد

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حل شرکة



MARK FORKER

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

As the use of technology in elections continues to divide opinion, CNME Editor **Mark Forker** examines the pros and cons of its implementation in the democratic process and takes a closer look at Microsoft's new ElectionGuard software. echnology has brought incredible efficiency to our lives and has allowed us to perform daily tasks like shopping or ordering a taxi by simply clicking on an app. However, one area in which the implementation of technology is still met with skepticism is its use in democratic elections.

In less developed countries, many citizens often lack adequate and reliable identification documents, so the deployment of biometric technology can help identify voters, thus preventing fraud in the form of multiple voting.

The United States has long been an advocate of technology being involved in its elections and were the first country to dispense electronic voting machines, which tallies votes very quickly, and more importantly accurately.

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However, the intangible nature of this digital process is that it makes it extremely difficult to flag or detect tampering, hence why most European countries have continued to persist with the traditional pen and paper ballots.

There have been calls globally for citizens to be allowed to vote online, which many believe would significantly improve voter turnout which has continued to decline in most Western elections over the last 20 years – but the issue here is that the existing technology available does not protect internet voting systems from hackers.

It is quite clear that there are pros and cons to technology being dispensed in elections, but more and more citizens are becoming concerned at the damage technology has done to the democratic process, and the best example of this is in the United States.

Many US citizens feel that Russian interference played a crucial role in ensuring that Donald Trump was elected as President in 2016, and last month during the Iowa caucus, a technology mishap with an application called 'Shadow' threw all sorts of shade on the process and resulted in the caucus turning into a complete shambles, with democratic candidates all claiming victory.

However, US IT behemoth Microsoft has pledged to try and resolve the issues and fears over the misuse of technology in elections by launching a project called 'Defending Democracy'.

Part of that project seen them rollout a new voting software system called ElectionGuard in a

More and more citizens are becoming concerned at the damage technology has done to the democratic process, and the best example of this is in the United States."

local election in Fulton, Wisconsin.

ElectionGuard uses a relatively new form of encryption to secure votes and tally them in minutes. It's designed to make it harder for hackers to break into the system, but also to make it immediately obvious if the system is tampered with.

The deployment of the ElectionGuard pilot came just days after the public fallout with the digital voting system in operation at the Iowa caucus. Microsoft, keen to avoid another debacle piloted the technology in a much smaller election and had paper ballots available as backup.

The company conceded that it doesn't expect ElectionGuard to be used in the 2020 election. But after the technology proved successful in Fulton, Microsoft executives say they're optimistic it will be widely adopted by the 2024 presidential election.

The company has made the software's code free and publicly available.

Tom Burt, Microsoft's corporate vice president for consumer security and trust said it was vital that Microsoft played a role in restoring voter trust in elections.

"When we saw what happened in 2016, the efforts that were made by foreign adversaries to actually influence the voting process in the United States, we concluded we had a responsibility as a technology leader to see what Microsoft could contribute to improving the safety and security of our elections," said Burt.

Microsoft is also beefing up its security credentials and say that the way ElectionGuard has been designed and the encryption method used makes it easy for them to determine if it has been hacked.

"This is not a system that cannot be hacked by an adversary, it's a system that is pointless for an adversary to hack," said Burt.

His sentiments were echoed by Ann Johnson, CVP, of cybersecurity solutions at Microsoft, who was also quick to point out that the issues experienced by Shadow in the Iowa caucus were not as a result of cybersecurity flaws.

"Let me just say, don't test in production. That wasn't a cybersecurity issue. That was a dev issue," said Johnson.

Microsoft hopes that its software can solve an underlying problem facing democracy, which is a lack of public trust. Whether or not it can do that remains to be seen, but the fact it is championing technology designed to make elections safe and fair can only be considered as a good thing.

The only thing that is certain is that technology and elections now go hand-in-hand and whether that be in the context of casting your vote, or in terms of the information you receive regarding prospective candidates, the two are intrinsically linked.

GIORGIA GUANTARIO

TECH VS COVID-19

As coronavirus continues to raise concerns across the globe, Deputy Editor **Giorgia Guantario** looks at how technology can help mitigate the spread of the virus and prevent future epidemics.

> he 2019-nCoV outbreak has had severe impacts on the global tech industry. A few weeks ago, the GSMA decided to cancel Mobile World Congress (MWC), the world's largest mobile trade show, over coronavirus concerns.

Regional events, including the much-anticipated Ai Everything and Gartner IT Symposium/ Xpo, have also been cancelled or postponed.

A recent report by market intelligence provider, TrendForce, showed a projected decline of 12 percent year-onyear for smartphone production this quarter, as well as a possible slowdown of China's 5G rollout.

Technology stocks also took a dive at the end of February, with Reuters reporting that the S&P 500 information technology sector had fallen by over 9.3 percent in the last week of the month compared to a 7.3 percent drop across sectors.

Nonetheless, the same industry suffering the consequences of the virus could be the answer to stopping it.

In the past few months, technology leaders have come together to respond to the health crisis by employing their resources, scientific prowess and big data to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

DJI, a leading drone manufacturer, has adapted its Agras series of agricultural spraying drones to spray disinfectant in potentially affected areas to improve how China attempts to kill the virus in public areas. DJI has sprayed chlorine or ethyl alcohol-based disinfectant in over 3 million square meters in Shenzhen, while also helping other counties to adopt the same method.

Similarly, Terra Drone group company, Antwork, has transported medical samples and quarantine material in Xinchang county using drones, therefore drastically reducing the risk of new infections.

US-based Avaya has been leveraging its technology to help controlling the spread of the virus by donating remote visiting systems to Tongxiang Hospital at the Tongxiang Branch of Zhejiang Province People's Hospital.

These systems enable

patients and family members to communicate in and out of quarantine areas through video collaboration, greatly improving patients' quality of life while in quarantine, and avoiding crossinfection during the epidemic.

As more and more people are required to work remotely, Avaya has also been assisting Hainan Airlines to deploy a remote home agent solution in order to ensure the health of agents and contain the spread of the virus. Based on Avaya's IX Workplace and IX Contact Center technology, the airline migrated its original customer service system to employees' homes and mobile terminals to enable remote access and continue providing services to passengers.

Microsoft and Google are equally trying to facilitate working or studying from home by offering their advanced team streaming tools for free during the epidemic.

Other big tech firms are also pitching in by trying to minimise the spreading of fake news – for example, Facebook has introduced a box into users' news feed that redirects to the World Health Organisation (WHO) or a specific local authority for the latest information.

In a Facebook post, Mark Zuckerberg, CEO, explained, "Given the developing situation, we're working with national ministries of health and organisations like the WHO, CDC and UNICEF to help them get out timely, accurate information on the coronavirus. We're giving the WHO as many free ads as they need for their coronavirus response along with other in-kind support." Similarly, Twitter and Pinterest are redirecting all search results for "coronavirus" to authoritative international health organisations, such as the WHO.

UAE-based messaging app ToTok has also launched a new feature that provides its users with the latest developments on coronavirus. The updates include live statistics and global news, helping ToTok users keep up to date with accurate information.

Meanwhile, artificial intelligence (AI) has taken centre stage to help to mitigate the virus outbreak – Alibaba's research institute Damo Academy has developed a new AI-powered system that claims to detect new cases with up to 96 percent accuracy via computerized tomography scans. The new diagnostic tool has been trained with data from more than five thousand confirmed cases, and it's able to distinguish COVID-19 from ordinary viral pneumonia.

AI was also behind BlueDot, the Canadian health monitoring platform that issued the first warning of the Wuhan virus. BlueDot's algorithm checks global news reports and networks to track, contextualise and anticipate infectious

Technology leaders play one of the biggest roles in helping to overcome this new global challenge, and the ones to come." diseases' risks. On December 31, over a week before the official World Health Organisation's statement, BlueDot notified its customers of the outbreak. If similar technology were to be widely employed in the future, AI could be the answer to detecting and preventing the outbreak of ulterior epidemics.

Insilico Medicine, a US-based startup, is using deep learning for drug discovery and has recently published the molecule structures capable of fighting coronavirus. AI-powered drug discovery, Insilico Medicine explained, has the ability to synthesise and test molecules faster and more accurately than traditional methods.

Harvard Medical School is instead using AI to track the virus – the US faculty is using machine learning and natural language processing tools to search through online information, including social media and public health data, looking for signs of new cases. Similarly, John Hopkins University has created an online dashboard to track the spread of the virus by analysing data from multiple official sources.

Although the COVID-19 epidemic is well underway and technology can only mitigate its effects, a lot of these solutions might help us prevent the next global outbreak. Technology leaders play one of the biggest roles in helping to overcome this new global challenge, and the ones to come – it is thus imperative for the ICT sector to continue to invest in and leverage its technologies for the benefit of our planet, its citizens and their future.

THE WORLD BEE PROJECT X ORACLE

TO BEE OR NOT TO BEE

Deputy Editor **Giorgia Guantario** takes a look at how Oracle and The World Bee Project are trying to solve the worrying decline in bees' population by using technology.

> ext time you have avocado on toast at your favourite brunch spot, you might want to reconsider the importance of bees. These small and often annoying insects are crucial to pollination, the process behind plants fertilisation and production of seeds, and behind many of the crops in our food chain. According to the British Beekeeping Association, one in three mouthfuls of food depends on these pollinating insects.

Since the late 1990s, bees have started to mysteriously and suddenly disappear, with high rates of decline in honeybee colonies. A study by the University of Strathclyde showed that the number of honey bee colonies fell by 16 percent in the winter of 2017-18, with more than 89 thousand colonies out of over half a million disappearing due to a combination of circumstances, including various effects of weather conditions, unsolvable problems with a colony's queen, and natural disaster.

The decline in bees' population is a threat to the global food supply and to humanity in general.

In the face of this challenge, the tech community has come together to solve one of the world's most pressing threats – Oracle has been leading this important task by partnering with The World Bee Project CIC, the first private organisation to launch a global honey bee monitoring initiative to inform and implement actions to improve pollinator habitats, create more sustainable ecosystems, and improve food security and nutrition by establishing a globally-coordinated monitoring programme for honeybees and eventually for key pollinator groups.

Sabiha Malik, Founder and Executive President of The World Bee Project, explained the British social enterprise has been leveraging Oracle Cloud to analyse and create further insights from the beehive data using analytics tools including AI and data visualisation.

"The World Bee Project is using IoT big-data-driven, smart-hive technology to create the very first global hive network and we are the only organisation in the world that is monitoring bees, collecting data and analysing it to understand what's causing the decline in bees' population.

"It's an extremely serious situation – three quarters of the global food security depends on pollination and at this rate, by 2050 the world will begin running out of food. Moreover, the livelihood of hundreds of millions of farmers around the world depends on bees," Malik explained.

Oracle's technology has helped the British organisation to make the most of its data by leveraging emerging technologies such as AI. Amanda Jobbins, CMO & SVP Business Development – EMEA & JAPAC at Oracle, explained this is a rewarding project for the IT leader, showcasing the capabilities of its technology.

"Oracle's mission is to help customers see data in new ways in order to discover insights and open endless possibilities. The World Bee Project's sensors collect the data from the millions of data points coming from each beehive. These include temperature, weight, humidity and acoustics to name a few," explained Jobbins.

"Our technology then uses artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing and predictive intelligence to determine various factor, for example when a colony is about to swarm, or to check the general health of the beehive."

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The World Bee Project is using IoT big-datadriven, smart-hive technology to create the very first global hive network"



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