

WHY CHANNEL PARTNERS Should Leverage Cybersecurity Innovation in 2020

> FEATURE TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS

> > INTERVIEW LENOVO

THE JEXT BIG LEAP IN MIDMARKET INNOVATION

How Avaya's new IP Office Subscription solution is making it easier than ever for midmarket firms to consume innovation.

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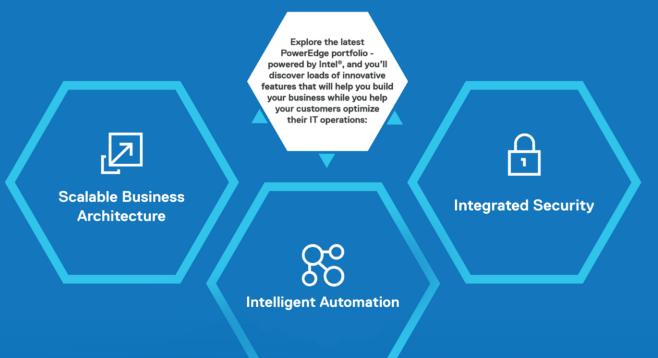




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EDITORIAL

Uncertain times

he timeline for companies to respond to the coronavirus has fallen drastically. We are all now seeking new ways of working to sustain and thrive in unpredictable times brought forward by this pandemic.

Today, the emphasis is on the need for corporate resilience and the ability to embrace virtual collaboration tools and practices.

This month's cover story features Avaya's Cloud & Midmarket Director Khalid Khan who explains how the vendor's new IP Office Subscription solution is helping Avaya partners who are looking to make the best of the strange times we currently live in.

He also addresses how the solution is making it easier than ever for midmarket firms to consume innovation. Further about this on page 24.

In this issue, we also highlight the top leaders across regional channel firms, who have stood out successfully despite challenging market circumstances and have managed to transform their businesses to the demands of the digital era. More on pages 28-42. I had also had

the pleasure of meeting Barco's

Ramzi Itani and FVC's K.S. Parag last month. In an exclusive interview the dynamic duo explores Barco's new ClickShare Conference and addresses how important a role does FVC plays in Barco's overall market strategy as a distributor. More on page 44.

On a separate note, I'd like to ask all of you to pause and take a breath literally. Giving yourself a moment to step back, take stock, anticipate, and prioritise may seem counter-intuitive, but it's essential now.

Stay calm, be positive and be safe!



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SPECTRAMI, CLOUDSEK **PARTNER TO ENHANCE DIGITAL RISK MONITORING**

egional value-added distributor Spectrami has announced a strategic distribution partnership with CloudSEK to provide its digital risk monitoring solutions across the Middle East, Europe and Africa.

Heading into the era of hyper-connectivity, organisations across the globe have the difficult task of fortifying their security posture against cyber threats. By combining CloudSEK's cybersecurity expertise and Spectrami's distribution prowess, companies can avail cybersecurity solutions that can efficiently monitor and secure their assets.

"CloudSEK's integration into Spectrami's wide range of information security offerings will allow us to accelerate CloudSEK XVigil's delivery and support capabilities," said Sourabh Issar, CEO, CloudSEK. "And working together will help us realise the full potential of XVigil and enable our customers to anticipate and mitigate the onslaught of ever-evolving cyber threats."

As part of the collaboration, CloudSEK's specialised solutions will add to Spectrami's digital



risk monitoring capabilities and Spectrami will increase CloudSEK's global footprint, enhance its delivery mechanism and ensure excellent customer experiences.

Anand Choudha, CEO, Spectrami, said, "We are excited to partner with CloudSEK to deliver **Digital Risk Monitoring** solutions to our customers and partners across the region. With few wins already recorded in the region, we are witnessing significant investments by organisations to secure their digital assets and brand reputation. Spectrami, with its skilled resources, along with its network of channel partners are committed to demonstrating the value proposition of CloudSEK's XVigil platform to its customers"

SECURELINK INKS DISTRIBUTION **PARTNERSHIP WITH CLOUD RANGE**



Reghu Mohandas, SecureLink

ecureLink, a risk advisory firm based in Dubai has announced a distribution agreement with Cloud Range, a global provider of cyber ranges and simulation-based virtual cyber defense training.

Cloud Range provides Security Operations Center (SOC) Analysts and incident response teams the opportunity to regularly practice detection, response and remediation of cyber-attacks. Regular simulated trainings give SOC's the ability and confidence to detect and defend against the most advanced malicious cyber-attacks before they occur.

The distribution agreement, according to the company, now allows SecureLink partners the ability to provide next generation cybersecurity innovative services directly to their customers.

"We are pleased to partner with SecureLink to bring their partners and customers the most

advanced solution in cyber security preparedness. Now, companies throughout the Middle East can be more prepared to defend against future cyber-attacks," says Debbie Gordon, CEO, Cloud Range. "Until now, traditional cybersecurity certifications and product training had been the only way for cybersecurity professionals to train. Cloud Range brings the necessary experiential training element, no different than a flight simulator is required to prepare pilots for flying."

"Our partnership with Cloud Range will ensure customers and partners of SecureLink gain regular 'live combat and readiness skills' by using simulation-based training, adds Reghu Mohandas, Director, SecureLink. "With real-time detection and remediation, they can be confident in responding to the rapidly evolving complex cyber threats increasingly targeting organisations in the Middle East."

HIPERDIST INKS DISTRIBUTION DEAL WITH FORCEPOINT

iperdist, a value-added distributor in the UAE, has announced a strategic deal with global cybersecurity vendor Forcepoint for distribution in Africa.

As one of the fastest-growing distributors in the region, Hiperdist is uniquely positioned to deliver to its partners top of the range security solutions from the company.

Forcepoint, which is spread across 150 countries and serves more than 20,000 enterprises worldwide, offers a comprehensive range of cybersecurity solutions, including Web, Mail, DLP, NGFW and CASB.

The company is committed to transforming the digital enterprise by adapting security capabilities to the dynamic risk posed by the current envi-

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ronment. This is a commitment shared

by Hiperdist, says its leadership. Santosh Sansare, General Manager, Hiperdist, said, "Forcepoint perfectly complements our vision, as well as our relentless dedication to innovation in the technology market. We plan to accelerate the Forcepoint advantage in the region, by leveraging our expertise, support and resources."

Govind Haridas, Business Head – Cyber Security, Hiperdist, said, "As a frontrunner in the security software market, Forcepoint has a proactive approach to addressing the security complexity of today. This is a crucial juncture for the cybersecurity business, as the traditional method of securing organisations is undergoing a rapid change. This is the best time for our partnership to help drive this transformation forward."

Hiperdist is now positioning strongly in the Middle East, especially the UAE market, in addition to its established base in Africa, collaborating with global vendors in the market such as Forcepoint.

STARLINK, IMPERVA INK DISTRIBUTION PARTNERSHIP

tarLink, a value-added distributor in the Middle East, Turkey and Africa (META), has announced its partnership with Imperva to distribute the Imperva security stack throughout the META region.

Imperva is an analyst-recognised, cybersecurity leader on a mission to protect customers' digital assets by accurately detecting and effectively blocking incoming threats, and empowering customers to manage critical risks.

Under this agreement, StarLink, with its extensive channel network, skilled on-ground sales and technical teams across META region will work closely with the vendor expert teams to explore new opportunities and generate more brand awareness for Imperva. The company will also aim to help organisations protect their data, comply with regulations and defend from cyberattacks.

"Security, compliance and reliability should encompass the general network health of any organisation." commented Bashar Bashaireh, CEO, StarLink. "Imperva cybersecurity portfolio seamlessly complements the StarLink solutions ecosystem dedicated to data security and compliance. We look forward to work together with Imperva



and help enterprises protect their business-critical data and applications in the cloud and on-prem."

"We are excited to partner with StarLink as they expand their cybersecurity offerings," said Morgan Jay, Assistant VP, EMEA South and Middle East, Imperva. "Together, with their extensive network of security-focused partners, we'll work to help enterprises navigate today's complex cybersecurity challenges."

VAD TECHNOLOGIES TO DISTRIBUTE PRIME COMPUTER PRODUCTS IN MIDDLE EAST

AD Technologies and the Swiss IT hardware manufacturer Prime Computer have announced a distribution partnership for the Middle East.

As part of the partnership, VAD Technologies will add Prime Computer's Mini-PCs and Servers to its product range and will position



and distribute the Swiss manufacturer's innovative hardware solutions in the region.

Sacha Ghiglione, CEO, Prime Computer, said, "Thanks to our Sales Director AMEA (based in Dubai) Nigel Ransom, Prime Computer is already an established brand in the UAE. The partnership with VAD Technologies will further strengthens our position in UAE and expands into the rest of the GCC."

Mario M. Veljovic, general manager, VAD Technologies, said, "Prime Computer's products are innovative, reliable and ensure lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO). Prime Computer Clients in the region are very satisfied, and we are excited to bring the same experience to new resellers, clients and industries within our distribution ecosystem."

All products are silent and protected against dirt and dust. This ultra-compact Mini-PCs and powerful servers can be used in areas where conventional hardware fails.

The outstanding quality of the Prime Computer's products enables a longer product life cycle and significantly reduces expensive downtime. In combination with the extremely low power consumption, low operating costs and CO2 impact is significantly improved.

All products are developed, assembled and individually tested in Switzerland before being shipped to customers. All Prime Computer products come with a standard five-year warranty.

RAQMIYAT, KORE.AI TO OFFER CONVERSATIONAL AI-POWERED VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS



egional systems integrator and provider of digital transformation solutions and services Raqmiyat has announced the partnership with Kore.ai, a globally recognised leading provider of conversational AI and digital UX virtual assistant platform and solutions

By leveraging this partnership, Raqmiyat will provide enterprise virtual assistant solutions and an end-to-end conversational AI and digital UX virtual assistant platform that can be deployed on-premises or on-cloud, enabling companies to rapidly and easily build and deploy advanced virtual assistants. This will enable customers to leverage the power of AI virtual assistants through a platform to connect with customers, have valuable conversations, and offer solutions to their problems.

Mahesh Vishwanath, senior manager – digital transformation, Raqmiyat, said "Our partnership with Kore.ai will empower our customers to create bots that enrich and humanise their website, mobile apps, and databases. The Kore. ai platform leverage a unique, intelligent architecture that mimics humans and allows our customers to unlock new levels of customer engagement. Enterprise virtual assistant solutions and an end-to-end conversational AI and Digital UX virtual assistant platform are amongst Kore.ai's leading technologies that will benefit our customers. We look forward to new gains with Kore. ai in the years ahead."

"This partnership will usher in exceptional capabilities: combining Raqmiyat's robust IT service delivery with Kore. ai's comprehensive, cutting-edge conversational AI and digital UX technology," said Raj Koneru, Founder and CEO, Kore.ai. "Raqmiyat's track-record in enabling large enterprises realise the fruits of digital transformation through increased customer satisfaction and enhanced efficiency, is aligned to our own philosophy of creating intelligent and efficient enterprises through conversational AI."







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BASF TAPS SEIDOR MENA FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

Regional systems integrator and digital transformation company, Seidor, has announced that it has joined forces with BASF to support the global chemicals producer in a sweeping corporate-restructuring project in their construction chemicals business unit.

The project will extend to 22 countries — across Asia Pacific, the Middle East and South America — and affect some 280 users. Given the tight timeline to complete the implementation, and the need for optimal efficiency, BASF's stakeholders identified Seidor — and specifically its Dubai based entity, Seidor MENA — as an ideal partner, given its technology credentials and global reach.

"It was vital for us to move our small and medium sized operations within the construction chemicals division to a robust system that offers high flexibility," said Jose Vizoso Capiali, regional IT Manager - Middle East, West Asia, CIS, Africa, BASF. "The fact that Seidor MENA was also able to offer us technology advices and fast deployment, with the added benefit of having a global presence, were key deciding factors. We were very keen to adopt a solution that was easy to maintain. In the digital age, IT decision makers are, I think, always looking for ways to reduce in-house workload, so the



AWS cloud model suggested by Seidor MENA was a great match. And Seidor MENA's own expertise in the domain of ERP in general and SAP, will also be invaluable to us throughout the business transformation project."

"Successful digital transformation is about much more than technology migration," said Ignacio Ruiz de Eguilaz, Managing Director, Seidor MENA. "At Seidor, we recognise that business transformation requires organisations to evolve and make changes to company culture. Our global reach and technology expertise now complement a deep, nuanced knowledge of business-process standardisation. BASF faced a daunting transformation challenge with their construction chemicals division but recognised that Seidor was their ideal partner because we take a business-first approach to everything we do."

HUAWEI ENTERPRISE BG REVEALS NEW PARTNER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

R amping up its global technology ecosystem, Huawei's Enterprise Business Group (BG) has announced a new partner development strategy named "Profitability, Simplicity, Enablement, and Ecosystem" under which it will cooperate with global partners in supporting digital transformation programs. By the end of 2019, Huawei had more than 22,000 Sales Partners, 1200 Solution Partners, 4200 Service Partners, 1000 Talent Alliance Partners, and 80 Investment & Operation and Financing partners.

Frank Shen Surong, Vice President of Partners & Alliances, detailed how in 2020 the company's new enterprise partner ecosystem will increase support in several areas.

In terms of partner profitability, in 2020 Huawei Enterprise BG will maintain the channel partner incentive framework's stability, and expand the scope of partner incentivised products to include standalone software as well. Diversified special incentives, such as capability rebates and Business Incentive Program (BIP) will be introduced to motivate partners to pursue more ambitious goals.

For enablement, Huawei will launch Huawei Certified Pre-sales Professional (HCPP) certification for IP and storage products to help partners gain in-depth knowledge about relevant products and acquire practical skills. Huawei Enterprise BG has also extended the availability of Marketing Development Fund (MDF) and Joint Marketing Fund (JMF) to support global partners, solution partners, and carrier partners in their business development.

Hank Stokbroekx, Vice President of Enterprise Service at Huawei Enterprise BG, also announced the Huawei ICT Academy Program 2.0 to develop two million ICT professionals and popularise digital skills over the next five years by collaborating with universities. This is



part of Huawei's digital inclusion initiative, TECH4ALL. Huawei will set up the Huawei ICT Academy Development Incentive Fund (ADIF), with a total investment of at least US\$50 million over the next five years.

Huawei's new partner and ecosystem programs will be supported by continued technology innovations. The company announced that it will build a new wireless communications product factory in France, for example, to specialise in 4G and 5G equipment.

OKI EUROPE LAUNCHES NEW SMART MFP WITH ADVANCED AUTHENTICATION

KI Europe has launched the MC883, a user-friendly A3 colour smart multifunction printer (MFP) for the professional services sector where fast, accurate and secure document management is essential to meeting client needs.

Ideally suited to organisations where handling sensitive documents requires high levels of security, the MC883 offers PIN and ID authentication, so confidential documents, such as legal files, contracts, financial records and invoices are kept secure at all times with full traceability. Documents can also be securely scanned, stored or sent to required destinations for simple document management. And thanks to easy maintenance, the MC883 can always be relied on even in the most high-pressure environments, without the need for specialist engineers.

To improve productivity, efficiency and security, the MC883 features OKI exclusive software, SENDYS Explorer, a complete software solution that helps ensure GDPR compliance by using pull-printing, secure logins and PIN codes. Documents are stored, transferred and printed securely, reducing the waste and cost of unnecessary printing.

SENDYS Explorer can be accessed via a web browser, enabling users to scan and manage documents from mobile devices. This includes optical character recognition (OCR), email-to-fax, forwarding, conversion and uploading capabilities. SENDYS Explorer also allows users to privately access files and search text strings within a document's content and track the status of all scanned jobs via the document repository.

Consumables can be proactively managed using SENDYS Explorer Fleet Manager, so the right levels of consumables are always available on-site.

The MC883's combination of smart software and rapid scan speed of up to 50ipm contributes to efficient document capture and management and can help maintain secure archives for mandatory record-keeping, making it ideal for managing invoices, financial records, legal documents and contracts. Designed to complement essential document processes, OKI's sXP open architecture enables the device to be used with third-party software solutions and integrate with most existing business workflows.

"For busy professional services

businesses, the requirement to manage often complex document workflows securely under the pressure of looming deadlines can be challenging, especially when information needs to be protected for compliance and client confidentiality," said Javier Lopez, general manager, Vertical Solutions, OKI Europe Ltd.

"The MC883 is designed for easy self-maintenance. It is equipped with powerful solutions that deliver efficient and secure document capture, storage, management and output – leading to smarter, more secure processes and maximum device availability for time-pressed organisations."



CYBERKNIGHT TAKES PART AT E-CRIME AND CYBERSECURITY CONGRESS IN DUBAI

uring the 12th annual e-Crime & Cybersecurity Congress in Dubai, CyberKnight will showcase its ZTX Framework, originally developed by Forrester, while participating along with six strategic cybersecurity vendors.

CyberKnight's focus on Zero Trust Security supports enterprise and government organisations in the Middle East attain a state of security resilience by simplifying incident response while achieving compliance.

According to a recent forecast by Gartner Middle East and North Africa (MENA) enterprise information security and risk management spending will total \$1.7 billion in 2020, an increase of 10.7 percent from 2019. An ever-evolving threat landscape and the advent of digital transformation is forcing security and risk leaders in the region to re-evaluate their spending priorities.

"Considering the limitations of the perimeter centric security approach,

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customers are advised to implement a Zero Trust security model, a data centric and identity driven model to secure their environments. The technologies we will be showcasing at the e-Crime Congress enable security teams to accelerate their incident response and compliance journey," said Avinash Advani, Founder and CEO at CyberKnight.

"Since the Zero Trust model is an augmentation of organisations' existing architecture, it does not require a complete technology overhaul. Together with our technology partners, we strive to help our customers in the region deploy and maintain a Zero Trust architecture.", added Vivek Gupta, Co-Founder and COO at CyberKnight.

The technologies that will be represented by CyberKnight at the event include:

- Deep and Dark Web Threat Intelligence (Flashpoint)
- **Remote Browser Threat Isolation** (Cyberinc)



(LtoR) Avinash Advani and Vivek Gupta, CyberKnight

- Data Access Governance & Active Directory Security (Stealthbits)
- Security Training, Awareness and Anti-Phishing Platform (PhishRod)
- Mobile Threat Defense and Mobile App Security (Zimperium)
- Data Centric Security Digital **Rights Management and Data** Classification (Seclore)

FORTINET'S NEW PARTNER PROGRAM ADDRESSES **EVOLVING SECURITY LANDSCAPE AND BUSINESS NEEDS**

lobal cybersecurity solutions provider Fortinet has introduced its new Fortinet Engage partner program. The program provides partners with specialisations focused on growing markets, including SD-WAN and cloud, customised support and engagement flexibility to accelerate their business growth and expansion.

John Maddison, EVP of products and CMO, Fortinet, said, "With today's digital innovations being a catalyst for organisations to evolve their networks and security strategies, we have transformed our partner program so partners can untap new opportunities and rising markets, including SD-WAN. Building on our investment in our partners, the

new program offers specialisations, updated enablement initiatives and tailored support for unique business models to further partner success."

As organisations transform their networks, security plays a critical role and also needs to evolve to keep up with new business demands.

Recognising this, Fortinet designed new enablement initiatives and specialisations, allowing partners to take advantage of digital innovations and this changing landscape. Fortinet's Engage partner program provides greater flexibility on partner engagement, offers customised support to partners' business models and allows partners to specialise in emerging areas through tailored training and certifications.

Fortinet's Engage partner program addresses the required technology and sales skills needed from new network ecosystems, such as next-gen branch offices and dynamic cloud environments comprised of multi-cloud and hybrid cloud.





XTOUCH TAPS NATIONAL STORE AS AN AUTHORISED DISTRIBUTOR FOR UAE

ubai- headquartered leading mobile phone brand, XTOUCH has announced that it has signed a partnership agreement with National Store to enhance the retail presence of XTOUCH brand in the United Arab Emirates.

Farhad Khan, Vice President, XTOUCH, said, "In the past 10 years, XTOUCH as a brand, has grown up phenomenally well, and we are committed to provide the best in class products, backed by latest technology innovations to offer the most cost effective products ensuring happiness and satisfaction to our customers."

"We are confident that this partnership with National Store will help us further strengthen our retail presence in the UAE and enable us to reach out to a wider customer base across the country," he added.

Salah Khoory, General Manager, National Store, said, "We are glad to be associated with XTOUCH, a brand well known for its quality and affordability. With our specialist distribution model and an exciting range of XTOUCH product portfolio creates a compelling value proposition for retailers."

"WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THIS PARTNERSHIP WITH NATIONAL STORE WILL HELP US FURTHER STRENGTHEN OUR RETAIL PRES-ENCE IN THE UAE AND ENABLE US TO REACH OUT TO A WIDER CUSTOMER BASE ACROSS THE COUNTRY."



(L2R) Farhad Khan, VP, XTOUCH and Salah Khoory, GM, National Store

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The latest of who has moved where in the IT channel business.



SENTINELONE APPOINTS EMEA CHANNEL CHIEF

entinelOne has announced the appointment of cyber industry veteran Roland Stritt as senior director of channel for EMEA. Stritt will be responsible for driving channel engagement across the EMEA region to deliver hyper growth and value for SentinelOne's growing community of committed partners.

"As we step up our presence in EMEA with a bigger team and an even sharper focus on the quality and support of our partner base, we wanted the skills and experience of a proven channel operator like Roland," said Daniel Kollberg, VP EMEA, SentinelOne. "There is an increasing uncertainty around other vendors in the endpoint security market, and with Roland's channel leadership, we will help partners benefit from our latest AI-driven product innovations. We are building a lot of momentum and our new multi-tier partner programme is designed to help partners achieve more, realise greater margins, and enable their customers to defend against every attack at every stage."

With two decades' experience in senior sales and partner management roles at cyber and infrastructure vendors including Palo Alto Networks, Roland Stritt joins SentinelOne from Rubrik where he was formerly Director of EMEA Channels.

"Being closely aligned to the cybersecurity market for over 20 years, you understand when a truly disruptive, unique and original technology comes along – this is exactly what SentinelOne represents



and the opportunities are very exciting," said Stritt. "The SentinelOne sales growth through 2019 and into 2020 has been remarkable, particularly in EMEA, and the timing is right to introduce a focused partner programme that recognises the expertise and commitment that existing and new partners bring to the table, and gives them all the support they need to be successful."



NUTANIX APPOINTS SYSTEMS ENGINEERING VP FOR EMEA

nterprise cloud computing firm Nutanix has announced the appointment of Sylvain Siou as Vice President, Systems Engineering, for the Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA) region.

The appointment, according to the company, will take a more strategic role in supporting Nutanix's expansion in EMEA, whilst continuing to have overall responsibility for the company's growing team of systems engineers in the region.

"In the seven years I have been working with Nutanix, I've never ceased to be amazed at our company's capacity for demonstrating constant innovation and ability to turn complexity into simplicity," said Siou. "Nutanix has grown at lightning speed in Europe over the last few years, and I am more than ready to step up to the challenge that my new role brings. It's exciting to see how far we have come and think that the best is yet to come."

With almost 30 years of experience in the technology and media sectors, Siou joined Nutanix as Manager, Southern EMEA, Systems Engineering, in 2013, being promoted to Senior Director EMEA, Systems Engineering, three years later.

Prior to joining Nutanix, Siou held various senior technology roles, including Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at Global Data Excellence. He was formerly Senior Manager, France & Africa, Systems Engineering, at



VMWare, joining the company as its first systems engineer and second employee in the region.

Sammy Zoghlami, SVP, Sales, EMEA, Nutanix, said, "Over the past three years Sylvain has played a strategic role in helping Nutanix significantly expand in the region. He is an extremely talented leader, one of the most technical experts we have and is well respected by his team, as well as customers and partners. His appointment to VP, Systems Engineering, EMEA is the next logical next step."

GEOMETRY NAMES NICK WALSH AS CEO FOR MENA

eometry has promoted Nick Walsh to first-ever CEO of Middle East and North Africa. Elevated from his previous post as Managing Director, MENA, Nick will be responsible for establishing Geometry's proposition of re-imagining the space of commerce as

a canvas for creativity as it accelerates growth across the Middle East and North Africa region.

"This is a really proud moment for Geometry. Nick has proven his exceptional talent year after year. His efforts have led to both agency and client expansion as we penetrated new markets within MENA with new service offerings and embedding technology deeper within the agency. Under his leadership, MENA has won over 150 awards by finding new opportunities with the commerce space to deliver growth for clients. With his fantastic team in place, I am sure that we will see greater impact and even more success from the region," said Claus Adams, Regional CEO – EMEA, Geometry.

Having spent the past decade in MENA, Nick has established the agency's reputation amongst stakeholders of various industries – from governmental entities and FMCG Businesses, to digital platforms, experiential and luxury services, said the company.

"It's a massive honour for me to be made the first CEO of Geometry in the region and another positive step in our ambition to be a world-class creative commerce agency. I am incredibly proud of the huge accomplishments and thankful to the diverse team of talent that has driven us to this position of growth. Our core expertise of commerce and experience holds massive potential



for this region, and as we expand into new areas and capabilities, with new tools and systems, we are committed to helping our clients continue to remain at the forefront of creativity. With a strong global network behind us, I only see positive progress," said Nick.



LEVERAGE CYBERSECURITY INNOVATION

Cloud, managed security services, threat intelligence, visual representation of assets, are all poised to move to the next level of engagement and channel partners must be ready, says Maher Jadallah, Regional Director – Middle East, Tenable.

doption of cloud services has exploded in recent years, and the trend looks set to continue, as organisations seek flexibility and functionality to accommodate day-to-day working practices.

With pressure to maintain a high level of integrity, coupled with lack of internal skills, there is an opportunity for managed security service providers to step up and ensure organisations can make this migration securely.

The relationship between



cybersecurity and business operations, and between cybersecurity and the business leadership, continues to be an area of evolution.

With security teams stretched, organisations are looking for innovative technology from providers who can offer support, experience and knowledge to keep systems running and data secure.

Channel partners need to be on the lookout for technologies that will help them align with these relationships and deliver on the cybersecurity promise - secure by design.

TECHNOLOGY IS STEPPING-UP

Cybersecurity solutions are evolving to help boost the visual representation of an organisation's attack surface, making it easier for top executives to appreciate the type of vulnerabilities that are distributed across the whole environment. This visual representation includes all forms of assets - whether they are digital or industrial. Another area that continues to see an overhaul is data intelligence, particularly for the security team. As an illustration, the number of vulnerabilities, threat reports, new malware variants, and more that are being identified daily produce detailed log reports and dashboards that most security teams do not have time to digest. Historically, the vital information about the organisation's risk posture is captured, but the team is blinded by false positives and theoretical rather than true risk.

Timely then is the final element of this complex puzzle - solutions that offer intelligence to focus the business on what it is doing, and where, for technology adoption is finally being realised.

Alluded to for years, solutions powered by AI and machine learning algorithms are coming to market that can instantaneously digest feeds from thousands of sources. These tools connect all the dots to build a picture of the enterprise to focus in on the business' critical assets and the actual threat they face, rather than the theoretical risks that may be present.

The final stroke of innovation is the ability to see assets represented, not just by criticality of vulnerability, but also by their possible impact on business as security technologies ingest data feeds from a multitude of solutions. This holistic picture does not just focus on asset types, or where they reside in the enterprise, but considers the criticality of the asset to the business and the actual risks faced.

This intelligence finally allows the business to make informed decisions based on actual data that can demonstrate how effective effort and investment will be aligned to business objectives.

Organisations are looking for guidance and support to capitalise on these cybersecurity innovations.

ARE YOU READY?

To be successful, the channel must work hard to develop, foster and maintain strong relationships - both with customers and the vendors within their portfolio.

As a vendor, we look for partners that do more than just sell products.



WITH SECURITY TEAMS STRETCHED, ORGANISATIONS ARE LOOKING FOR INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY FROM PROVIDERS WHO CAN OFFER SUPPORT, EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO KEEP SYSTEMS RUNNING AND DATA SECURE."

We expect to see commitment from channel partners since this is what customers demand. Channel partners need to be ready to invest and leverage cybersecurity innovation, whilst building services and value around complementary technologies, to move to the next level of engagement expected by their customers.

The truth remains - people buy from people and those that forget to put the customer's needs first will find 2020 challenging.



Get yours today! Call: 04-3880848

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OPINION // RAMIYAT

SECURING CONNECTIVITY FROM UNMANAGED DESKTOPS

Marcus Whittington, co-founder and COO, Sentrybay and Abhijit Mahadik, director – Cybersecurity Solutions, Ragmiyat, discuss the risks of enabling remote access from unmanaged devices and how Sentrybay's solutions can help enterprises stay secure.

'ith the outbreak of COVID-19, there are widespread extended requirements for staff to work from home. The phrase "work-from-home" brings-in fears on data security and data-pilferage risks from unmanaged end-user owned remote desktops, PCs and laptops that would be used as endpoints by staff and external vendors, partners and contractors.

Remote access from unmanaged devices introduces elevated risks. Often these devices have a lower security posture, possibly out-of-date anti-virus or internet security software; they offer a higher risk of compromise because they might be running counterfeit or unlicensed solutions, or they are on untrusted networks. The enterprises have little or no control over what software is running or has previously been executed on the devices.

These unmanaged devices pose a higher risk of sensitive data being stolen (including corporate credentials) from attacks involving keylogging, which along with spyware is ranked the highest global malware, according to the NTT Security Threat Intelligence report. Other attacks to be wary of include screen-capture, screen-grabbing, man-in-the-browser, saved account detail harvesting, screen-mirroring, man-in-the-middle, DLL injection and RDP double-hop. During the coronavirus crisis, the risk is exponentially much higher.

VPN is the commonly utilised form of connectivity to ensure that remote devices can connect to corporate networks. However, VPN does not protect the user from malware that records the keystrokes entered or



Marcus Whittington, Sentrybay

takes pictures or videos of the user's endpoint in order to steal data. They scrape up passwords, credit card and banking information, personal details, and more, to use in identity theft and other malicious deeds. Every piece of data entered into applications such as Word, Excel, Outlook, other Office apps, corporate apps, browser, webmail and SaaS applications by the home-based employee, contractor or supplier such as, can be lifted from the endpoint itself by malware. This can then be sent out to the command and control server of the cybercriminal. In summary, all this data can be stolen by cybercriminals even before it enters the VPN tunnel.

Ideally, with virtually no time for preparation, customers should look for products that can be deployed quickly (i.e. within 24 hours) and which do not involve specially configured software or hardware - a simple download and install from pre-configured software is the preferred option. This means selecting proven anti-keylogging software that can protect every keystroke into any application and prevent screen-scraping malware from stealing credentials and sensitive corporate data.

Raqmiyat, an authorised reseller of Sentrybay, provides secured work-from-home solutions. "During this challenging time, organizations struggle to provide a secured workfrom-home solution. By partnering with Sentrybay, we are offering this secured solution to help our customers without sacrificing their security posture," says Abhijit Mahadik, director - Cybersecurity Solutions, Raqmiyat.

Unlike other cybersecurity vendors who only worry about cleaning and protecting endpoints, SentryBay cares about data security and uses patented technology of anti-keyloggers and antiscreen captures to achieve this.

Armoured Browser from SentryBay provides a browser on Mac & Windows, which offers a very unique secured browser that provides anti-key logging, anti-screen capture and anti-screen scrap features, thus, enabling a secured browsing environment for sensitive work to be done irrespective these malwares on the PCs.

The best part of this offering is that it creates separate user and desktop sessions and leaves no-trace upon closing. With the latest enhancements, it can be installed as a pseudo-remote access solution to lock down use of, say, Office365, SaaS apps, web browsing and more. It can also be deployed for Citrix, Vmware or any other remote access solution deployed.

"We have experienced a huge surge in demand worldwide, especially in the UAE for this niche solution from Sentrybay. Some of our largest banking clients have added licenses in the past week, specifically to enable more employees to work from home," says Marcus Whittington, co-founder and COO, Sentrybay. 📟



TRANSFORMING PRODUCTIVITY

Dr. Chris Cooper, Director, Data Center Group (DCG), Lenovo META, shares insights into the IT-giant's business continuity strategy in times of remote working and how the firm is helping people work smarter with innovative emerging technologies.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE COMPANY'S BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENTS LAST YEAR?

We haven't released our final quarter earnings yet, but if we look back at Q3, we delivered a record-setting performance with geographical balance, operational excellence, and solid strategy execution. Both group revenue and pre-tax income reached all-time highs. These core competencies not only enable us to seize the opportunities of technology transformation and drive sustainable growth, but also help us address the challenges we face today. We saw server shipments grow by 18 percent year-on-year. While Data Center group revenue remained flat yearon-year due to sharp component price reductions that decreased average system prices, profitability continued to improve. Nonhyperscale had its highest revenue in four years and grew nearly 16 percent, with the revenue from the China market alone up 46 percent year-on-year. Software Defined Infrastructure (SDI) and Storage have both seen year-on-year revenue growth of more than 40 percent.

In addition to this, our major focus is around stuff that defines infrastructure and storage. We've had very successful wins locally in some strategic industries. Moreover, we have also performed very well in the Telco space, and have also recently secured a deal to support EXPO2021.

Our HPC business is rising from strength to strength, so is our software and services group. This is because we have a strong emphasis on increasing diversity, and we are seeking to expand our indirect channels. Lenovo Data Centre group is quite uniquely positioned as an organisation. In this region, we've got a lot more feet on the ground by using the strength of our reach to market and our channel. For us it's about making sure we're bringing the best of breed and best in class technologies through our routes to market because were 100 percent channel driven.

THE INNOVATIONS TAKING SHAPE IN THE UAE IS QUICKLY BECOMING A PREDOMINANT COMPONENT OF OUR MODERN ECONOMY. HOW IS LENOVO DCG ENABLING BUSINESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Today, everyone's going through their own digital transformation journey. We at Lenovo, are helping to transform productivity and collaboration by setting the scene for helping people work smarter with innovative emerging technologies. This year we announced a series of new products, partnerships and solutions, designed to help our customers achieve the ongoing challenges around both intelligent and digital transformation strategies. These strategies reflect Lenovo's unique business perspective on how to build end-toend solutions with smart features that transform businesses and improve the user experience.

TODAY'S UNCERTAIN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT HAS MADE IT AN IMPERATIVE FOR COMPANIES TO ENABLE REMOTE ACCESS TO BUSINESS-CRITICAL APPLICATIONS. HOW IS LENOVO ENABLING BUSINESS CONTINUITY?

We're in a time of uncertainty and we are leveraging the full strength of our global manufacturing and distribution networks to minimise any potential impact on customers. Given our global footprint we are confident that we are better positioned than most to handle the situation.

We are also lending ourselves to work very closely with our customers and partners to help our end users continue business. We have been driving our VDI Solutions, a virtual desktop solution, which is very important because all of us, including myself, are now operating remotely. Our VDI solutions offer a complete end-to-end client virtualisation solution from the desktop to the data center, providing simplified desktop administration, enhanced security and compliance management, and flexibility for users to work anytime and anywhere regardless of device.

It's about putting the power of the infrastructure in the hands of the end user, so they see this seamless integration of being able to carry out their tasks while doing so remotely rather than their usual place of work.

WHEN YOU TALK TO YOUR PARTNERS, WHAT ARE SOME OF THEIR COMMON CHALLENGES AND HOW CAN THEY BEST SELL YOUR SOLUTIONS EFFECTIVELY IN THE DIGITAL ERA?

We have recently launched a campaign to work closely with our VDI software vendors, and we are collaborating with Nutanix and VMware. We want to engage with our partners to understand what business challenges they're facing today and help them sell our solutions effectively. In that space, they're all looking at digital transformation, and at the realms of edge computing and IOT to stay competitive.

On the other hand, we are also helping the Telco's create new solutions around the evolution of 5G. As they are being mandated to roll out the 5G, we at Lenovo are collaborating with them to support them in identifying new revenue streams and opportunities in ventures that would captilise on having that technology available to the public. Then, through our partners, we are providing seamless end-to-end solutions for end user customers.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR 2020 TO KEEP ON INNOVATING AND TRANSFORMING YOUR CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE?

Our strategy is to continue to evolve and transform ourselves, and share that knowledge and best practice with both our partners and their customers. In today's business



WE'RE IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY AND WE ARE LEVERAGING THE FULL STRENGTH OF OUR GLOBAL MANUFACTURING AND DISTRIBUTION NETWORKS TO MINIMISE ANY POTENTIAL IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS."

environment, everything is evolving and transforming in a different way from what everyone could have anticipated. It's important that even in the time of remote working, we're all using new technologies.

At Lenovo, we use Microsoft Teams a lot more with our partners and our customers, because we're used to agile environments where you're meeting customers face to face, and we can gauge reactions and gauge what's important to them. We're trying to use the tools that are out there to keep very close to our customers, and then helping them with the new technologies that evolve and making sure that they're prepared, best skilled up, and they've got those technologies to hand. It's about maintaining that close community with our partners and customers and helping them through these difficult times. 🥯

COVER STORY // AVAYA

THE NEXT BIG LEAP IN MID-MARKET INNOVATION

AS GLOBAL DEMAND FOR EASY-TO-DEPLOY COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS SKYROCKETS, WE SPEAK WITH AVAYA'S KHALID KHAN TO FIND OUT HOW THE VENDOR'S NEW IP OFFICE SUBSCRIPTION SOLUTION IS MAKING IT EASIER THAN EVER FOR MIDMARKET FIRMS TO CONSUME INNOVATION.

he shift to remote working happened almost overnight. Before the COVID-19 crisis hit, the remote working model was only pursued by those who truly believed in it. Within weeks, though, almost every organisation had adopted work-from-home as a matter of course.

This has presented something of an opportunity for VARs and VADs. This quick shift has seen demand for easy-todeploy and robust communications solutions solutions skyrocket. Nowhere has this been more obvious than in the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) segment – which makes up 90 percent of registered businesses in the Middle East and Africa. Such businesses have been among the quickest to move to the work-fromhome model, and they've been some of the tech industries best customers over the last month.

There are two main challenges that SMEs face, though: Firstly, they need their communications solutions to be forward-thinking and innovative enough to not only maintain customer and employee experiences from anywhere, but also to enhance it. Secondly, they need more attractive payment terms than those provided by traditional, onpremise solutions.

Khalid Khan, Director – Cloud & Midmarket, Avava International, believes that Avava has the answer to this in the form of Avaya IP Office Subscription. Just launched, he says that the solution creates a new, subscription-based way of consuming the leading all-inone communications platform for companies up to 3,000 users, and which currently serves over 26 million users worldwide. When combined with Avava's cloud-based video conferencing and collaboration solution along with subscription based devices, it enables customers leapfrog to the highest levels of

communications and collaboration capabilities with virtually no upfront costs.

The move is the latest step in Avaya IP Office's evolutionary journey since it was first launched in 2002, solving the challenges of staying up to date with the latest technologies faced by SMEs. Avaya IP Office Subscription answers the problems currently faced by SMEs with easy and flexible deployment options, and a technically advanced solution that can be consumed on a per-user, per-month basis.

We caught up with Khan to find out how exactly Avaya IP Office Subscription could be the next big leap in midmarket innovation, and how it'll help Avaya partners looking to make the best of the strange times we currently live in.

AVAYA'S FLAGSHIP SOLUTION IP OFFICE HAS ENABLED CUSTOMERS TO CREATE SEAMLESS ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES CUTTING THROUGH LIMITATIONS CREATED BY GEOGRAPHICAL AND TYPES OF DEVICES. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE EVOLUTION AND THE NEXT STEP OF THE SOLUTION?

Since the launch of IP Office in 2002, we've maintained a steady investment in the unified communications and contact center capabilities that the solution brings. It has grown over the years in its addressable market, as well as in its functionalities, bringing tremendous value not only to our partners, but also to the SME space, which were

COVER STORY // AVAYA

TAKE OUTS

Avaya IP Office Subscription delivers on new business needs for your on-premises communications infrastructure.

- Pay only for what you use
- Streamline and optimize the purchasing process
- Obtain more flexibility to add new services and users
- Receive exclusive
 discounts and benefits



THE PRIMARY ATTRIBUTE OF AVAYA IP OFFICE SUBSCRIPTION IS "FLEXIBILITY."

beginning to require enterprise-grace UC and CC solutions.

Over the last 10 years, we invested in ensuring IP Office would deliver speed to value to our customers and partners by making the solution ready for various deployment options, as well as enabling innovation on the solution by building industry vertical value propositions. Today, hundreds of our partners around the globe build commercial value in their business with IP Office by addressing vertical-specific needs like hospitality, healthcare, education and so on.

Our customers like Emirates Hospitals recognise this value through a number of added features to their UC and CC environments, including chatbots and integration into their social touchpoints. While Rashid Center for People of Determination would recognise the value of integrating fleet-tracking management into IP Office.

It's because of features like these that, according to latest research, Avaya IP Office has the highest market



Khalid Khan, Director – Cloud & Midmarket, Avaya International

share in the MEA region – and it's a similar story across many markets in Europe and APAC.

AVAYA IS LAUNCHING IP OFFICE SUBSCRIPTION TODAY. HOW WILL THIS ENHANCE THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE BETTER SOLUTIONS IN THE SMALL AND MEDIUM SEGMENT OF THE MARKET?

Avaya IP Office Subscription is a new buying option for on-premise Avaya unified communications and contact center software - as well as Avaya devices. The primary attribute of Avaya IP Office Subscription is "flexibility." Businesses with 3,000 employees or less will find that purchasing contract and management processes are significantly simplified since support and software upgrades are included in a single contract. The large upfront capital expenditure is replaced with smaller monthly payments. And since the entire cost of the subscription can usually be leveraged for tax purposes, the tax benefits never go away.

The one bill of software and services, the flexibility in the range of Opex options, and the local hosting of the solution makes Avaya IP Office Subscription an incredible value proposition to our existing customers and for organizations who want to quickly deploy remote working capabilities with a high level of security.

For our business partners, and as



Avaya continues to invest in speedto-value commercial models for the channel, ordering, quoting, and billing can now be done instantly through our newly launched Channel Market store. The shift from a onetime recurring model to subscription delivers greater predictability to our partners' business, enhances their offer flexibility and competitiveness to their customers, and delivers incremental commercial value through not only the sale of hardware but also associated services to their subscription contracts - all this with no start-up capital needed.

WHERE IS AVAYA IP OFFICE SUBSCRIPTION AVAILABLE?

We're launching Avaya IP Office Subscription in all markets except for the United States, Canada, UK, Ireland, Netherlands, France and Australia. In these markets, Avaya customers and partners



will benefit from our Avaya Cloud Office by RingCentral offering. Avaya Cloud Office is a new Unified Communications-as-a-Service (UCaaS) product offering video conferencing, messaging, voice and video calls, file sharing, and most importantly, enabling collaboration across different devices, regardless of their locations.

WHEN YOU TALK TO YOUR PARTNERS, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE COMMON CHALLENGES THEY ARE FACING IN THE CHANNEL INDUSTRY?

The paradigm shift to cloud is now the new norm. For business partners, not only ours but the industry in general, this presents challenges and it's up to vendors to enable the channel community to navigate through them with ease while building the knowhow and what they require to make that shift to cloud.

Channel partners take certifications and trainings seriously and successful ones ensure that their teams are always up to date with the latest. When we bring new solutions to the channel, we take into account the ease of use not only to our customers, but our partners too, alleviating the need for additional training investment whether on provisioning and maintaining the solution, or on the service provisioning. That's why we have brought our channel community speed to value through our Channel Market service. The other challenge is that of relevance.

Businesses today want to differentiate themselves through the experiences they deliver, regardless of their size. Smaller organisations know that they have access to technologies and solutions that enable them to move faster and in a more agile way then their large competitors. So solutions that deliver greater

PARTNER'S TAKE:

"We have made it our business to deliver innovations based on the Avaya IP Office platform to enable our joint customers to create exceptional experiences. Avaya IP Office Subscription will provide us with another exciting avenue through which we can offer Avaya's UC and CC solutions in the way that best meets our customers' needs."

Manikandan Karunakaran,

Founder and Managing Director of Imperium Software Technologies, a leading regional ICT solutions provider and Avaya DevConnect partner.

FOR OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS, AND AS AVAYA CONTINUES TO INVEST IN SPEED-TO-VALUE COMMERCIAL MODELS FOR THE CHANNEL, ORDERING, QUOTING, AND BILLING CAN NOW BE DONE INSTANTLY THROUGH OUR NEWLY LAUNCHED CHANNEL MARKET STORE."

automation, artificial intelligence capabilities and a use case-based approach to customers become key and a source of commercial growth to our partners. That's why, and throughout the evolution of IP Office, especially in the last three years, we make sure that the solution is open enough to address the needs of various sectors while giving our channel partners tremendous opportunities to innovate.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS

Reseller ME profiles the top leaders from across regional channel firms who have stood out successfully despite challenging market circumstances and have managed to transform their businesses to the demands of the digital era. We salute these stalwarts of the IT channel, for their resilience and passion for their business.



EHAB HALABLAB Regional Channel Manager, A10 Networks Name: Ehab Halablab Designation and company: Regional

Channel Manager, A10 Networks Years in the company: One Years in the IT channel business: 13 plus

Company focus in 2020: Helping our customers, service providers and enterprises solve their operational challenges.

Key distributors: Ingram Micro, Redington Gulf and SAT.

Key investments made over 2019: Through the Affinity partner program, A10 Networks invests heavily in the development and training of our partners in order to ensure high levels of expertise both from a technical and sales perspective. We also signed Redington Gulf as a new distributor for the region.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: Digital transformation has been shaping the industry for several years now, and we see that macro trend continuing into 2020 and beyond. Enterprises and service providers will take advantage of emerging technologies such as the use of multicloud and edge cloud infrastructures and IoT to help drive supply chain efficiencies and new consumer services. In addition to that, 5G will open up a whole new set of use cases for businesses and consumers.

Your biggest achievement till date: Bringing A10 Networks back on the channel map as a potential vendor to work with in the region. I was also involved in a deal which saw several security solutions get implemented within the largest data centre in the UAE.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is the process of turning an idea or an invention into a product or service, which creates value that customers will pay for.



FADI MOUBARAK Vice President – Channels, Avaya International

Name: Fadi Moubarak Designation and company: Vice President – Channels, Avaya International Years in the company: Six

Company focus in 2020: Empowering our channel to accelerate

growth, break into new markets, and help customers chart a path towards next-generation customer experience and employee collaboration solutions through cloud and subscription models.

Key distributors: Westcon, Reddington, Aptec, Mantrac, FVC. Key investments made over 2019:

The launch of Avaya ReadyNow, which gives enterprise customers access to our Unified Communications (UC) and Contact Centre (CC) solutions in secure private cloud environments that are hosted in data centers operated by Avaya or our partners. Similarly, with Avaya IX Subscription, we have enabled our partners to offer a flexible new consumption-based alternative to traditional perpetual pricing models. **Next phase for the IT industry will be:** As the current crisis has highlighted, there is a dire need for technologies that can securely and reliably support radical changes in workforce dynamics and customer experience philosophies, and the need to maintain business continuity even in the face of challenges. With their ability to be rapidly deployed and scaled. cost-effective cloud solutions will be the new norm and we are certainly seeing this in the communications and collaboration space. Cloud-based communications platforms also address the pressing need to support the increasingly mobile workforce as they can enable employees to collaborate from anywhere and on any device

Your biggest achievement so

far: Transforming our channel programmes so that they're very modular and agile, smoothening the transition from a Capex to Opex model. What does innovation mean to you? Avaya's approach to innovation aligns with two guiding principles – our customers remain firmly fixed at the center of our strategy, and innovation without purpose is meaningless.



AMANULLA KHAN Managing Director – META, Belkin International

Name: Amanulla Khan

Designation and company: Managing Director – META, Belkin International Years in the company: 11

Years in the IT channel business: 27 Company focus in 2020: Belkin International (Belkin, Linksys, Wemo, Phyn) and our channel partners will continue to lead in connecting people with technologies at home, at work and on the go.

Key investments made over 2019: Linksys – Velop Whole Home Mesh WiFi, Linksys Cloud Manager, and Linksys Shield. Wemo – Home automation and IoT brand is set to launch in the Middle East in 2020, to control everyday tasks, such as lights and appliances, from anywhere via the Wemo app. Phyn – We have installed numerous pilot projects across UAE homes, and customising the Phyn Plus Smart Water Assistant to fit the local market.

Next phase for the IT industry will

be: Enabling smart connectivity and leveraging 5G and WiFi 6 to help deliver digitised transportation, healthcare, manufacturing and more.

Your biggest achievement till date: I have led the Middle East business growth, and expanded our global footprint into Africa and additional countries where Linksys did not have a strong distribution setup. I've also contributed to growing the SMB business in offering managed Wi-Fi as a solution to top vendors in the region.

What does innovation mean to you? The Linksys brand has pioneered wireless connectivity since its inception in 1988 with its leading innovation and engineering strategies, best-in-class technology, design and customer service.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



NANDAJ BHARGAV Channel Manager and GSI Lead Middle East & India, BeyondTrust

Name: Nandaj Bhargav

Designation and company: Channel Manager and GSI Lead – Middle East & India, BeyondTrust Years in the company: One

Years in the IT channel business: 14 Company focus in 2020: Our guide to a new Universal Privilege Management approach to PAM addresses the entire universe of privileges across organisations. Our goal for 2020 is to get our partners to leverage this model to help enterprises improve their security posture.

Key distributors: First Video Communications FZ LLC (FVC), Gulf IT Distributions, Crestan

Key investments made over 2019:

In regard to our PAM approach, we have made considerable regional investments in commercial and operation support with the introduction of localised project management and onboarding of several professional service engineers.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: Cloud adoption and consequently, adoption of SaaS models, driven in large part by several providers opening regional data centres. Data management, AI and machine learning will gain significant traction, and we'll also see a strong adoption of OT and IoT security solutions.

Your biggest achievement till

date: I have built some extremely strong relationships and strategic alliances with security focussed partners, enterprise alliance partners in the Middle East and global system integrators. In recognition of my work, at our 2020 sales kick-off, I was awarded Sales Master and Best Channel Manager.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is all about first understanding the challenges and then coming up with a creative solution that can be well executed but, most importantly, addressing the need it was specifically designed for.



EYAD AL SHAMI Senior Manager Channels, Distribution & Alliances, Citrix

Name: Eyad Al Shami Designation and company: Senior Manager – Channels, Distribution & Alliances, Citrix

Years in the company: Six Years in the IT channel business: 18 Company focus in 2020: We

have recently presented intelligent workspace that will revolutionise how people work. In order to make it happen we need an ecosystem of capable, innovative partners to drive this message jointly with Citrix teams to customers.

Key vendors: Mindware, Starlink, and MCS

Key investments made over 2019:

We built our channel enablement programme which focused on Citrix workspace with intelligence. Summit Bootcamp, which allowed the partners who couldn't join us for the live Partner Summit held in the US to have a compact agenda of the same materials delivered locally by Citrix or Citrix Distributors. We also launched the Run Rate program in H2 for partners to grow such business in the region, and incentivised the distribution arm with extra percentage on cloud bookings.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: User Experience (UX), Employee Experience (EX) and the increase in Microapps adoption within the organisations to facilitate better and more agile technology adoption with less hassle in compatibility.

Your biggest achievement till date: The success I've shared with my colleagues in building and enabling our channel ecosystem, creating the upscaling momentum for more partner sellers to join the Citrix sales and technical force while setting up the stage for continuous and sustainable growth through 2020.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is the ability to mold vision, science and resources together in order to introduce new outcomes.



VANGELIS LAGOUSAKOS General Manager - Channel Sales MERAT, Dell Technologies



PAUL POTGIETER Managing Director Middle East, Dimension Data Name: Vangelis Lagousakos Designation and company: General Manager - Channel Sales, Middle East, Russia, Africa and Turkey (MERAT), Dell Technologies

Years in the company: 18 Years in the IT channel business: 30 plus

Company focus in 2020: I'm excited about three things - the momentum we're driving together with our partners, the direction of our business and partner programme and the investments we're making in our partner ecosystem. This year is about increased simplicity and ease of use in combination with new innovations for customers to grow.

Key investments made over 2019: Our commitment to R&D continued into 2019, and globally, we invested \$4.5 billion on the same last year. Another highlight of 2019 would be the rebranding of our partner programme as the Dell Technologies Partner Programme, which has been designed to drive growth and profitability for the whole channel ecosystem.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: From our perspective, we're continuing to drive investments in the core of our Infrastructure Solutions

Name: Paul Potgieter Designation and company: Managing Director, Dimension Data Middle East Years in the company: 20 Key vendors: Our portfolio of 35 plus industry-leading vendors includes Avaya, Cisco, Dell EMC, F5-Networks, Fortinet, Juniper, Microsoft, NetApp, Palo Alto Networks, SAP, and VMware, Key investments made over 2019: 2019 was a significant year for the NTT Group, Dimension Data's parent company, as it successfully executed on its strategy to merge the capabilities of 28 companies into one US \$11 billion business.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: While companies have had digital transformation initiatives underway for over half a decade now, we're beginning to see a change in dynamics – from a desire to implement the latest technologies, to instead focusing on the business outcomes that ICT enables.

Your biggest achievement till date: Dimension Data as a global

Group (ISG) and Consumer Solutions Group (CSG) lines of business – driving innovation that enables customers to simplify IT, unlock data and drive workforce modernization. There will also be more innovation in the PC segment as the best, most powerful hardware, striking designs, advanced features and experiences will make work and play more seamless, intelligent and enjoyable.

Your biggest achievement till

date: About a year ago our company embarked on a journey to roll-out a strategic initiative to develop "Channel Partners of the Future". The aim was to develop an enabled partner ecosystem by providing best-in-class account management and sales and technical enablement that would drive customer preference for Dell Technologies and prepare our partners to be well qualified for the rapid changes in our industry.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation has to tie-in to the vision of the organisation. We live in an era of disruption – of sectors, of products, and of ways of life. How an organisation chooses to respond to disruption says a lot about how committed they are to achieve their vision.

brand and system Integrator is regularly recognised by its partners for its achievements in technology transformation. For me, on a personal level, being able to lead the way on these fundamental factors has been especially rewarding. The ability to have such a responsibility and be able to engage and collaborate with such a diverse set of people to bring forth new ideas, and accelerate the progression and in doing so being recognised as a top employer in the region – is an accolade that stands as validation that we are doing what is right for our people and making their creativity and ambitions are reality.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation continues to be the catalyst in an era of data. However, the organisations that are efficient in the innovation realm have strong culture and structures to amplify organisation's ability to collect what matters and analyse what matters in order to react to and predict what matters.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



SAKKEER HUSSAIN Director, Sales and Marketing D-Link MEA

Name: Sakkeer Hussain Designation and company: Director, Sales and Marketing, D-Link MEA Years in the company: 12 Years in the IT channel business: 21 Company focus in 2020: To work even more closely with our partners and grow our channel community to explore all possible growth avenues. We are also focusing on product innovation and development.

Key investments made over 2019: D-Link Middle East grew exponentially last year with several new product innovations, especially in our mesh networks portfolio. We also significantly invested in our regional channel collaborations and conducted in-depth training sessions to assist partners to capitalise on the opportunities that emerging technologies offered.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: The development of emerging technologies will tremendously accelerate the growth of the regional market. The advent of cloud, AI, 5G and other connectivity solutions are allowing regional firms to drive their revenue goals faster and more efficiently. The increased and intelligent use of data and analytics will further help companies to scale.

Your biggest achievement till date:

I am excited to have played a role in aiding D-Link expand its partner base through dedicated partner programmes and in-depth sales and marketing support. D-Link is considered to be a leading player in the regional IT networking space, and this would not have been possible without my talented team and dedicated channel partnerships of many years. **What does innovation mean to you?** Innovation is about having the courage to stand up to the status quo and create novel ways of living.



NASSER EL ABDOULI Director, Channel Sales META, F5 Networks

Name: Nasser El Abdouli Designation and company: Director, Channel Sales – META, F5 Networks Years in the company: Nine Years in the IT channel business: 19 Company focus in 2020: To help customers break down silos and realise the operational efficiencies and business acceleration of digital transformation.

Key distributors: Exclusive Networks and Westcon (for META region), Prolink in Turkey, and Networks Unlimited in Africa.

Key investments made over 2019: In May 2019, we completed the acquisition of NGINX, an open source leader in application delivery. The combined company enables multicloud application services across all environments, providing the easeof-use and flexibility developers require. On the channel front, we launched the Unity+ Channel Partner Programme, which enhances partner opportunities and incentives, captures new revenue streams, and drives tighter collaboration to help customers through technology transformation. **Next phase for the IT industry will be:** We're starting to see EMEA organisations moving beyond the first phase of digital transformation —business process automation — and scaling their digital footprint with cloud, automation, and containers. New ecosystems are being created and API call volumes are skyrocketing.

Your biggest achievement till date: I am proud of my team's relentless customer obsession. By being obsessed with customer needs, we understand all their nuances, intricacies and idiosyncrasies. By being intimately aligned with their goals, aspirations and existing abilities, we can optimise their operations with power and precision.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is all about empowerment, enabling organisations and individuals.



ZACKY VAZ Senior Regional Channel & Distribution Manager Middle East & Pakistan, Fortinet

Name: Zacky Vaz

Designation and company: Senior Regional Channel & Distribution Manager, Middle East & Pakistan, Fortinet

Years in the company: Five

Years in the IT channel business: 20 plus Key Distributors: Exclusive Networks, Redington for Middle East and Pakistan, Oxygen for KSA, Online Computer Technologies and Aptec Distribution for Pakistan, PC DealNet for Iraq.

Key investments made over 2019: To help our partners and customers address evolving and sophisticated threats and secure their entire attack surface by leveraging cutting edge insights, tools, and services. We also worked towards revamping our partner programme to be rolled out in 2020.

Next phase for the IT industry will be:

From a network security vendor perspective, I believe the emphasis will be on cloud security and securing cloud environments. In addition, digital transformation will continue to drive investments in security solutions, as will the adoption of 5G by telco's in the region. Your biggest achievement till date: Building a strong distribution and partner relationship while driving the channel business at Fortinet. What does innovation mean to you: True innovation is when technology and creativity come together and manifest into a solution that not only improves the way we work today, but also ensures that the technology stays relevant for the future generation.



WISAM YAGHMOUR Director of Sales Middle East, Africa, Pakistan, HID Global

Name: Wisam Yaghmour

Designation and company: Director of Sales – Middle East, Africa, Pakistan, HID Global Years in the company: Five Years in the IT channel business: 20 Company focus in 2020: The enhanced security with OSDP/Mobility in our new SIGNO line, and Origo - The cloud-based platform - provides seamless and consistent service while improving how access control solutions are delivered. Customers will enjoy high performance, seamless upgrades, 24/7 monitoring and operations.

Key distributors: ADI Global and Genetec **Key investments made over 2019:** We've deployed extensive trainings and webinars to educate our customers and take them through the adoption journey to our latest solutions and technology for higher reliability, cloud connected devices platform with the insights of data utilisation to provide operational efficiency and make decisions to guide the business forward. Next phase for the IT industry will be: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Advanced mobility and IoT solutions will continue to be the most transformative technology in 2020 onward. With the one ECOS system platform, HID Origo was built to accelerate the trend of helping organisations become more secure, efficient and datadriven through cloud technologies.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is about reshaping challenges to opportunities, with a change in a positive direction to improve efficiency, productivity, and outcome.



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GOVIND HARIDAS Business Head Cyber Security, Hiperdist Name: Govind Haridas Designation and company: Business Head – Cyber Security, Hiperdist Years in the company: Five months Years in the IT channel business: 14 Company focus in 2020: Cybersecurity, cloud and emerging technologies. Key vendors: Palo Alto, Forcepoint, Bullguard, Avaya, Pelco Key investments made over 2019: Established cybersecurity and cloud divisions. Next phase for the IT industry will be: Al led automation and cybersecurity. Your biggest achievement till date:

Although these are established brands now, back in the day myself and my team played a significant role in establishing a robust channel ecosystem in MENA for brands like IBM Security, NetApp, Symantec etc. I was part of a team that launched one of the first video banking solutions in this region, which will soon be the future of banking.

What does innovation mean to you? Simplifying human life, solving real world problems, connecting people, making it much easier for us, and also helping us increase our productivity so that we may cross more frontiers as a race.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



RIFAI WAHID Director Channel Sales Middle East and South Asia, IFS

Name: Rifai Wahid

Designation and company: Director Channel Sales – Middle East and South Asia, IFS

Years in the company: 15 Years in the IT channel business: One

Company focus in 2020: IFS' key focus will be on five industry verticals: Aerospace and Defense, Telecommunications, Energy, Utilities & Resources, Engineering, Construction & Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Service Industries. We will focus on certifying 100 percent of partner consultants in the region and increasing the channel revenue contribution to 40 percent.

Key distributors: Azdan Business Analytics, Labs Cloud IT Solutions, Excellence Delivered, ProV International, Dar Middle East, Zerone Technologies, Macrosoft and Oman ICT Group.

Key investments made over 2019:

Moved into a new office, more than doubled the head count and opened a new office in Oman with a focus on growing the business through our partners. We also launched a partner summit in the Middle East for the first time.

Next phase for the IT industry will

be: Companies will apply intelligent technologies in conjunction with cloud, IoT, analytics, machine learning, and AI to change the way they operate and innovate the way their customers interact with them and vice versa.

Your biggest achievement till date:

We have grown significantly in the last few quarters. Some of the biggest global deals at IFS have been from the Middle East, and I am proud to have been a part of this.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is adding new ideas in product or services that create value to our clients.



SAMER MALAK Head of Channel META, Kaspersky Name: Samer Malak

Designation and Company: Head of Channel – META, Kaspersky Number of years with company: One vear

Number of years in IT channel: 16 Company Focus in 2020: Innovation and quality will be at the forefront of our strategy as we focus on providing our customers more options and platforms to fit their technological and commercial preferences. Kaspersky will also focus on the human factor of security protection, whether it's by enabling our customers' security awareness strategy, or by leveraging our world-leading research and analysis teams to stay ahead of cyber criminals. On the channel front, we are planning to increase our footprint within our strategic partners, making doing business with Kaspersky more rewarding and profitable. Key distributors: Ingram Micro, Scope Information Systems, and Redington. **Key investments made over 2019:** Kaspersky continued to invest in our channel, from financially rewarding exceptional performers, to investing in marketing initiatives.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: IoT is leading the IT industry into its next evolution phase.

Your biggest achievement till date: Contributing to getting Kaspersky voted as the top IT Vendor in the Canalys EMEA Channel Leadership Matrix.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation means looking at a problem with a new perspective. Innovation is staying ahead of the game, allowing you to add constant value to your customers and partners.



BRUNO MANCUSO Senior Channel Sales Leader Middle East and Africa, Lenovo DCG

Name: Bruno Mancuso Designation and company: Senior Channel Sales Leader, Middle East and Africa. Lenovo DCG

Years in the company: Four Years in the IT channel business: 25 plus

- **Company focus in 2020:** Our vision is to be the most trusted data centre provider empowering our customers' intelligent transformation, whether on-premises, in the cloud or at the edge.
- Key distributors: GBM-Distribution, Ingram, Al Jammaz, Starlink Key investments made over 2019: In 2019, Lenovo DCG in MEA invested in a complete channel landscape modernisation, doubling the number of people in charge of the transformation and promoting partners providing compelling end to end solutions and exceeding

customers' expectations.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: Cloud computing and artificial intelligence will dominate the reviews and IT future predictions, but my guess is, in the current environment, 2020 will be the year of the edge computing with more and more locally processed data by IOT devices and of the expansion of remote work to support a greater number of employees with VDI solutions.

Your biggest achievement till date: To be able to completely modernise the DCG channel organisation in compliance with the DCG vision by helping Lenovo and the business partners achieve success in continuously changing market. What does innovation mean to you? Innovation to me means to finding for answers for the questions that have not been asked yet.



HUSNI HAMMOUD Managing Director, ESET ME, Barracuda Networks META & CEE, Ivanti ME

Name: Husni Hammoud Designation and company: Managing Director, ESET ME, Barracuda Networks META & CEE, Ivanti ME

Years in the field: 30 Years in the IT channel business: 20

Company focus in 2020: We will continue to deliver exceptional support to our existing customers and the society in this crucial time, to help the community to be ready and fully equipped, to secure and transform into this unprecedented situation. **Key vendors:** ESET ME, Ivanti ME,

Barracuda META & CEE Key investments made over 2019: 2019 was a very successful year owing to key marketing investments, which has helped us develop our brand equity and communicate our value proposition. We have also backed our channel network with continuous training and support to help us achieve exceptional performance and growth in the region. Next phase for the IT industry will be: Al-driven customised automation offerings to propel business operations especially for easy tasks that could replace human resources. Additionally, there are greater chances of unauthorised use of data with significant technological advances; hence, proliferation of data privacy laws and stringent compliance would become a global norm. Digital Transformation and operation is becoming a reality that we must adapt for mobility and remote operation that will change the world behavior to sustain and overcome the new challenges.

Your biggest achievement till date: Building the first security

operation centre in KSA and in the region, pushing security concept and awareness into enterprise for decades from technical consultant, solution integrators and finally solution provider and lately managing full suite of products in IT security, automation, asset and service management for several leading solution providers and international vendors across Middle East, Turkey, Africa and Eastern Europe.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is equivalent to creativity with efficiency and agility.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



NIRMAL KUMAR MANOHARAN Regional Sales Director ManageEngine



Name: Nirmal Kumar Manoharan Designation and company: Regional Sales Director, ManageEngine Years in the company: 19 Years in the IT channel business: 19 Company focus in 2020: In the Middle East, we are seeing a high level of interest in all our certification programmes, including the Product Expert Programme, Domain Expert Programme, and Solutions Expert Programme. We also look forward to increasing our branding and marketing initiatives in the region.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: This year, the IT industry will mainly streamline efforts to achieve complete digital transformation, and the demand for a better customer experience (CX) and user experience (UX) will be a significant driver in this journey. Though CX and UX go hand in hand, a better UX leads to more engaged, satisfied employees who are more

productive and who have more rewarding interactions with customers. Several issues will make digital transformation a challenge in 2020, including Al bias, concept drift, and new data privacy laws. However, a bigger challenge is unrealistic expectations. Digital transformations are not "Big Bang" processes; these transformations take time and should be broken into smaller projects with clear milestones to avoid discouragement.

Your biggest achievement till date: Building a lasting and mutually beneficial relationship with channel partners has been one of my key focus areas, which is why I proactively manage the partner onboarding process to increase performance.

What does innovation mean to you? I believe innovation is about using technology in a strategic manner to transform business operations and make them simpler and more productive.

MAYA ZAKHOUR NetApp

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Name: Maya Zakhour Designation and company: Channel Sales Director – MEA, NetApp Years in the company: Three Years in the IT channel business: 20 Company focus in 2020: Hybrid cloud data services and data management Key distributors: Ingram Micro and Logicom Key investments made over 2019: Building a stronger channel sales team, a robust community of loyal partners, and a strong valuable distribution model.



SAMER SEMAAN Channel & Alliance Manager Middle East, Pure Storage Name: Samer Semaan

Designation and company: Channel & Alliance Manager – Middle East, Pure Storage Years in the company: Less than one year Years in the IT channel business: 20 plus Company focus in 2020: From a technology perspective, the recent addition of Pure Storage FlashArray//C, the industry's first capacity-optimised all-flash array, will enable us to increasingly address the storage market for tier-2 and tier-3 workloads and applications. Analytics driven by Al will be another area of growth for us in 2020. Key distributors: VAD Technologies and StarLink

Key investments made over 2019: We launched a dedicated distributor programme across EMEA. Created in partnership with existing distributors, the new programme includes the critical elements necessary for distributors to build autonomous 'Pure Certified' practices. Next phase for the IT industry will be: Specific to storage, the emergence of Kubernetes and the endorsement of containers by VMware is rapidly expanding container usage towards mainstream applications. 2020 looks to be the year that most enterprises evolve their private and hybrid cloud platforms beyond VMs, deploying an enterprise-wide container strategy, including building the storage foundation that enables stateful, missioncritical applications to embrace containers. Your biggest achievement till date: I'm very proud of the credibility and the track record of success I've built in the channel community in the region.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is about creating technology and solutions that can delight our customers, at such a speed that we anticipate needs and wants before the end-user even encounters a problem that needs solving.



NABIL KHALIL Executive Vice President META, R&M

Name: Nabil Khalil

Designation and company: Executive Vice President – META, R&M Years in the company: Five plus Years in the IT channel business: 22 plus

Company focus in 2020: Bandwidth demands continue to grow unabated in the Middle East and high-speed broadband connectivity is fast spreading across the region. High-density cabling solutions are fundamental to achieving this and at R&M our focus is to deliver streamlined, reliable and costeffective high-density solutions such as our PRIME ODF, Polaris Family and Netscale systems. We are also focused on enhancing the automation and intelligence of the physical layer with our R&MinteliPhy Automated Infrastructure Management (AIM) solution

Key investments made over 2019: Following strong regional performance through 2019 and in anticipation of continued business momentum in the Middle East – fueled by growing connectivity requirements, mega projects and events – R&M has moved into a new regional headquarters in Dubai. We have also expanded into a new supply chain facility, a move which strategically consolidates our production and warehousing hubs and positions them closer to key facilities including Al Maktoum International Airport, Jebel Ali Port and the site of Expo 2020.

What does innovation mean to you?

We are actively involved in shaping a number of international standards and are extremely quick to identify trends thanks to our sophisticated technology radar and close relationships with our customers and partners, allowing us to develop innovative products that are tailored to meet their needs.



MENA MIGALLY Senior Director MENA, Riverbed

Name: Mena Migally Designation and company: Senior Director – MENA, Riverbed Years in the company: Six Years in the IT channel business: Two

Company focus in 2020: Enabling businesses to maximise performance and visibility across networks and applications. We are doing this by providing them with our marketleading network and application performance platform, WAN optimisation, application acceleration,

and SD-WAN solutions. Key distributors: Mindware, StarLink

and Crestan International

Key investments made over 2019: Last year, we hosted our inaugural Riverbed Partner Connect event, focused around the strengthening our ties with our partner community in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Next phase for the IT industry will be: The findings of a recent survey commissioned by Riverbed and unveiled in its 'Rethink **Possible:** Visibility and Network Performance – The Pillars of Business Success' report shows a direct correlation between effective technology and company health, a finding that is supported by the fact that 79 percent of IT leaders in the UAE state that digital performance is increasingly critical to business growth.

What does innovation mean to you? IT innovation should be centred around optimising the apps and digital services to be more reliable, fast and secure. For this reason, I see myself among the 85 percent of UAE business leaders who believe that business innovation is driven by improved visibility into network and application performance.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



MOHAMED KHAN MENA Channel Head Global Partner Organisation, SAP

Name: Mohamed Khan Designation and company: MENA Channel Head – Global Partner Organisation, SAP

Years in the company: 20 Years in the IT channel business: 20 Company focus in 2020: We are supporting our partners in digitally transforming customers with industryspecific solutions across government and public sector, education, healthcare, mega-events, oil and gas, retail, and utilities.

Key distributors: Al-Bilad Arabia, Alpha Data, GBM, MDSap Tech, Clariba, EY, ITelligence, Accenture, NTT Data, Seidor ME, Siemens Pakistan, Abacus, Tyconz, Edraky, ECS, Mannai Corp, Diyaar United.

Key investments made over 2019: In 2019, SAP underlined the importance of Middle East organisations running on the cloud. SAP is the first multinational enterprise applications provider to go live and on-board customers in the UAE and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: In the 2020s, the Middle East is embracing the experience economy, in which organisations can no longer deliver only products and solutions – they need to deliver enhanced customer and employee experiences.

Your biggest achievement till date: Besides, establishing SAP channel partner programmes for Sub-Saharan Africa in 2006 and MENA in 2007 for our SAP Global Alliance PartnerEdge Programme wherein MENA has been a fast-evolving region, with 130 plus channel partners training on our solutions.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is part of SAP's DNA in simplifying technology for companies that can help our customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders help the world run better and improve people's lives.



KAHINA ANSEUR Channel & Alliance Manager Middle East & Africa, ServiceNow Name: Kahina Anseur Designation and company: Channel & Alliance Manager – Middle East & Africa, ServiceNow Years in the company: One

Years in the IT channel business: 10 plus

Company focus in 2020: Supporting regional enterprises to implement digital workflows and transform their operations, with a significant emphasis on G2C and G2G service environments. **Key partners:** Global strategic alliance and system integrators, advisory partners, as well as local partners with specialised skills.

Key investments made over 2019:

We saw triple digit growth rates and added, on average, one new customer every month. Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the UAE have been strategic markets for us in the region and we've focused on expanding our value proposition to our customers in these territories. We also grew our channel ecosystem and have become a strategic partner for several global SIs and consulting firms that are now building their digital transformation practice on the ServiceNow Platform. **Next phase for the IT industry will be:** Digital transformation will continue to drive the IT industry. But more specifically, enterprises are looking for ways to adopt automation and innovation, in the form of digital workflows, to unlock employee productivity and raise employee satisfaction.

Your biggest achievement till date: I have built extremely strong channel ecosystems and helped several channel partners to thrive and grow their business.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is about translating an idea into a product or service that creates unique value for the customer.



TERRY GREER-KING Vice President EMEA, SonicWall

Name: Terry Greer-King Designation and company: Vice President – EMEA, SonicWall Years in the company: Eight months Years in the IT channel business: 25 plus

Company focus in 2020: Our boundless cybersecurity model ensures that organisations are defended across a range of attack vectors, including networks, email, mobile, Cloud, SaaS apps, endpoints, IoT devices and Wi-Fi.

Key distributors: Redington Gulf, Westcon Middle East

Key investments made over 2019: In November 2019, SonicWall led a round of funding into Perimeter 81, a leading zero trust network provider for enterprises and organisations, to create one of the strongest SASE offerings in the network security space. We strengthened our MSSP Security offering with SonicWall My Workspace to help MSSPs easily manage accounts, register products, control licensing and provide real-time, per-user threat analytics. In addition to a new line of firewalls designed to consolidate security, networking and performance, SonicWall introduced new cloud-managed Wi-Fi access points and wireless planning tools designed to ease the deployment of global wireless networks in addition to equipping organisations with advanced Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) capabilities.

Next phase for the IT industry will

be: With the latest restrictions and difficulties on face to face engagement, I expect virtual engagement to become the norm.

Your biggest achievement till date: Taking two disparate non-performing reseller acquisitions and forming one unified business that went on to become a top three partner of most leading security vendors.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation triggers words like possibility and excitement. If you don't constantly seek to disrupt and innovate, you die.



HARISH CHIB Vice President MEA, Sophos Name: Harish Chib

Designation and company: Vice President – MEA, Sophos Years in the company: 15 plus Years in the IT channel business: 15 plus

Company focus in 2020: To deliver the world's most effective nextgeneration cybersecurity technology. Key investments made over 2019: Sophos Intercept X Advanced with EDR automates much of the process of active threat investigation via some of the world's most advanced deep learning, neural network-based artificial intelligence. With the new Xstream architecture in XG Firewall, Sophos is providing critical visibility into an enormous blind spot while eliminating frustrating latency and compatibility issues with full support for the latest TLS 1.3 standard. Next phase for the IT industry will be: From a security point of view, one of the key challenges in stopping today's and future advanced attacks is the lack of the specialist cybersecurity skills to address them. Organisations will be increasingly looking for security solutions that will incorporate next-generation machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies, to combat constantly evolving cyber threats. Interestingly, Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) has become a tool for all, and we see almost equal demand from both smaller and larger organisations.

Your biggest achievement till date: Today, Sophos has over 3000 transacting partners and a customer base in over 50 countries with the help of a team of over 50 people across the MEA region.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation does not always mean invention. Our channel partners can bring innovation by serving their customers in the best possible way and making their customers' organisation secure.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



MAHER JADALLAH Regional Director Middle East, Tenable Name: Maher Jadallah

Designation and company: Regional Director - Middle East, Tenable Years in the company: Two plus Years in the IT channel business: 15 plus

Company focus in 2020: Tenable is laser focused on providing solutions that allow our customers to holistically assess their environment - both IT and OT.

Key distributors: Ingram Micro, Spectrami, Aljammaz, MCS, and e-data.

Key investments made over 2019:

Tenable announced several innovative capabilities that leverage machine learning (ML) to automatically correlate vulnerability and threat data together with asset criticality. We also announced new innovations within our Cyber Exposure analytic capabilities in Tenable Lumin.

Next phase for the IT industry will **be:** OT environments are different and

especially susceptible to cyberattacks. Vulnerabilities in OT come from several sources - such as lack of visibility to assets and configuration. If you don't know what devices you have in your network, how can you plan security? You have to know about every HMI, Historian server, switch, PLC or RTU.

Your biggest achievement till date: Tenable is leading the market with game-changing innovations, for example risk-based vulnerability management for IT and OT environments in a single unified platform; Tenable Lumin; Predictive Prioritisation: Asset Criticality Rating: Cyber Exposure Score and Remediation Guidance Workflow. What does innovation mean to **vou?** Innovation is about changing something for the better, or even creating something revolutionary - be it a new way of thinking, working or even fixing an old problem.



ANTHONY PERRIDGE VP of International ThreatQuotient Name: Anthony Perridge Designation and company: VP of International, ThreatQuotient Years in the company: Four Years in the IT channel business: 25 Company focus in 2020: To continue to grow at a very fast rate, and build strong long-term relationships with our customers and partners. We will also focus equally on 'customer success,' which means delivery of the solution and ongoing value for many years. Key Distributors: StarLink

Key investments made over 2019: Along with the continued product investment we have also invested in international markets including the Middle East.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: There is a huge opportunity for managed security service providers to fill the gap of skills shortage. I also see that the cybersecurity industry is full of organisations offering the customer the 'silver bullet' to their security challenges. End users then end up with a proliferation of technologies (over 40 in the typical enterprise) that may not integrate well together. This is a challenge for the entire eco-system including end users, channel and vendors.

Your biggest achievement till date: I joined ThreatQuotient when it was a true start up and the threat intelligence platform (TIP) market was nascent. Four years on and today, we are an established, recognised and successful 'player' in the SOAR segment of cybersecurity.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation is about staying relevant. What may have helped an organisation be successful in the past could potentially be the cause of their failure in the future. Companies need to adapt and evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of their customers.



AHMED ADLY Alliance & Channel Lead UiPath

Name: Ahmed Adly Designation and company: Alliance & Channel Lead, UiPath Years in the company: Two

Years in the Company. Two Years in the IT channel business: 17 Company focus in 2020: Democratising Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to support enterprises in accelerating their digital transformation.

Key vendors: Microsoft, SAP, Citrix, Oracle, Salesforce, K2, to name a few.

Key investments made over 2019: Massive efforts were made by our channel team across the MEA region to grow our regional partner ecosystem, and enable them with the tools and knowledge to take new technologies like RPA to the market.

Next phase for the IT industry will be:

Enterprise-wide adoption of RPA and AI, which will require investment in empowering the workforce of the future and enabling digital employees.

Your biggest achievement till date:

Enabling an ever-growing number of regional partners for the digital era which has resulted in tremendous impact on the demand for RPA and business growth of more than 300 percent YoY.

What does innovation mean to you?

Innovation is the creation, development and implementation of a new product, process or service, with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness or competitive advantage.



MARIO M. VELJOVIC General Manager VAD Technologies Name: Mario M. Veljovic Designation and company: General Manager, VAD Technologies Years in the company: Three Years in the IT channel business: 25 Company focus in 2020: Supporting our strong partner ecosystem in the region to execute even better by supporting them with lead and demand generation. Key vendors: Fujitsu, Pure Storage, ExaGrid,

Cloudian, Cirrus Data, CobaltIron, Data Dynamics, Overland, Tandberg, SEP, PRTG-Paessler, Zenoss, TeamViewer, Hystax, Mobotix, Cathexis, Digitus, Kimimo, AliBaba Cloud, Zoho, FreshWorks, BooleBox, STC Cloud, Awingo, InfraScale, Texas Instruments and more to come.

Key investments made over 2019: We have invested heavily in the cloudification

of our product and solutions portfolio, with many very innovative and disruptive vendors being onboarded. Furthermore, we have strengthened our lead and demand generation team.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: The IT Industry will undergo further specialisation and will increasingly focus on output-oriented IT solutions. It's all about ROI and not 'nice to have'.

Your biggest achievement till date: After 25 Years in the same Industry still being excited every day to get to work and always keen to explore new ideas.

What does innovation mean to you? Innovation for me means finding better solutions that meet new requirements and sometimes yet unspoken needs. It's about being ahead of others in your thinking.



AMIR AKHTAR Manager of Channels & Distribution Middle east, Veeam software

Name: Amir Akhtar

Designation and Company: Manager of Channels & Distribution – Middle east, Veeam software

Years in company: Five

Years in IT: 15

Company Focus in 2020: Further solidifying Veeam software as the number one trusted cloud data management provider. **Key distributors:** Ingram Micro and

Redington Key investments in 2019: Veeam has

and always will invest heavily into our channel enablement strategy and ensure our ProPartner programmes are evolving to support today's market demands.

Next Phase in the IT Industry: In the Middle East, I believe that the IT industry will take the next step into further leveraging cloud-based

capabilities, and we see an increasing number of technology companies focusing their core business on supporting the migration to cloud. This will mean businesses are now assessing how to migrate majority of their workloads into cloud environments rather than just noncritical applications which represent a small percentage of their workloads.

Your Biggest Achievement till date:

Spearheading three new business units within different companies from zero to multi-million-dollar territories and with highly aggressive growth rates within the first 24-36 months.

What does innovation mean to you:

Innovation is ensuring a company's product or service is constantly evolving and adapting to solve critical issues of today and tomorrow.

TOP CHANNEL CHIEFS



OSSAMA ELDEEB Director, Partner Organisation METNA, VMware Name: Ossama Eldeeb

Designation and company: Director, Partner Organisation, Middle East, Turkey and North Africa METNA, VMware

Years in the company: Six Years in the IT channel business: 24 Company focus in 2020: Helping organisations to manage applications and their ability to deliver personalised digital experiences to customers through these applications. We have recently launched VMware Partner Connect, a simplified and flexible program designed to enable partners to do business with VMware in a way that aligns to their business models and empowers them to work flexibly to meet customers' needs.

Key distributors: Ingram Micro, Redington, Armada, Tech Data, Metra, Interdist and Westcon.

Key investments made over 2019: VMware has signed numerous agreements with local government and private organisations in METNA, strengthening our in-country relationships with key partners and helping us to bring the power of cloudenabled applications to our customers.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: Further digital transformation, as organisations seek to increase efficiency while simultaneously boosting productivity and increasing their capability to launch exciting new products and services.

Your biggest achievement till

date: Leading the channel team's engagement with our partners across the region, to help the partners transform and move from their focus on traditional legacy IT to lead with transformational technologies that can help the customer leapfrog into the mobile cloud era.

What does innovation mean to you?

Innovation means using technology for the common good – To enhance the ability of all types of organisations to improve their operations and services, and to empower individuals to deliver their best though the intelligence application of technology.



KHWAJA SAIFUDDIN Senior Sales Director Middle East Western Digital Name: Khwaja Saifuddin Designation and company: Senior Sales Director, Middle East, Western Digital

Years in the company: 16 years Years in the IT channel business: 22 years

Company focus in 2020: To make digital data safe, shareable and accessible to a much wider audience. **Key distributors:** Redington, Logicom, FDC, National Store, Tech Mart

Key investments made over 2019: Our MyWD partners' programme continue to be a success since its inception in 2012. We have also introduced several exciting, new rewards programmes for our channel partners to help them grow, maximise profitability, and, most importantly, delight their customers.

Next phase for the IT industry will be: We are on the cusp of truly realising the potential of AI and it will transform almost every aspect of our industry. It will be a paradigm shift in the way technology interacts with users offering greater flexibility in how it is employed and opening a whole new spectrum of services and capabilities.

Your biggest achievement till date: My achievements are not possible

without the hardwork and dedication of everyone at Western Digital. We have a real spirit of innovation within the firm and that is why I firmly believe my biggest achievement much like for Western Digital, is yet to come.

What does innovation mean to you? We are continually identifying where innovation can make a real difference, whether that is to streamline Edge computing networks or to reduce latency in the Cloud, we are always striving to overcome bottlenecks that prevent technology from being as effective as possible.

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POWERING THROUGH

Reseller ME sat with the charismatic duo Ramzi Itani, Vice President – MEA, Barco and K.S. Parag, Managing Director, FVC, to find out more about Barco's new ClickShare conference and how important a role FVC plays in Barco's overall market strategy as a distributor.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THE CLICKSHARE CONFERENCING? HOW IS BARCO'S NEW CLICKSHARE CONFERENCE SOLUTION REVOLUTIONISING MEETINGS AND WIRELESS CONFERENCING?

Ramzi: ClickShare conference came as an outcome of listening to our customers, understanding their needs and expectations, tackling their challenges and most importantly, aiming towards the future. Over the past few years, we've realised that 'Bring Your Own Device' has changed a lot in the way IT operates, and today, particularly in the UAE and Saudi alone, we are seeing a huge explosion in meeting rooms technology. We launched the original ClickShare seven years ago, and constantly innovated to stay ahead and maintain our market leading position in the market. We wanted to come up with a product that is both technology agnostic and extremely easy to integrate at the same time.

The new ClickShare Conference range consists of three different models – the entry level CX-20 for small meeting rooms and with limited features, the CX-30 for standard meeting rooms and interactive features such as whiteboarding, annotations and collaboration, and lastly the highend CX-50 for large meeting rooms and premium AV collaboration experience with superior audio and video quality. **Parag:** Barco was the first to come up with ClickShare conference in the industry, and they did a brilliant job not just revolutionising the conference space, but also making it seamless, enabling users to kick-start a meeting. Every customer is looking to integrate video as part of their meeting in their digital transformation journey today. That is exactly what Barco did to transform the company's expedience of bringing complete collaboration, including integrated video and others features combined.

WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE VISUALISATION AND COLLABORATION SOLUTIONS MARKET IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA (MEA) AT THE MOMENT?

R: The UAE and Saudi are two large markets in the region with several upcoming projects including the EXPO 2020, Museum of the Future and Vision 2030 to name a few. Such projects have propelled the visualisation and collaboration solutions market and bolstered the opportunities for projection, LED and LCD technologies in the region. Barco has three divisions - enterprise, entertainment and healthcare. We are experiencing an increased demand in the healthcare sector for visual collaborative technologies and services. Hospitals today are looking to conduct effective operations and

deliver world-class healthcare services. For this purpose, the video and images must be of highest possible quality for the medical heads and their staff to make reliable medical decisions, especially with the rise of minimal invasive surgery. Barco has had the honor of being a part of this growth in the UAE contributing with its suite of world-class visualisation and laser projection solutions.

THE WORKPLACE IS UNDERGOING A FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR GO-TO MARKET STRATEGY FOR THESE SOLUTIONS?

R: Our strategy at Barco is tailored to suit every market need. We used to operate with very few partners, system integrators and distributors and today, through distributors like FVC, we are



OUR STRONG REGIONAL PRESENCE COUPLED WITH OUR WIDE CUSTOMER BASE WILL FURTHER BOOST BARCO'S PRODUCT REACH AND DRIVER CUSTOMERS' DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES." - K.S. PARAG, FVC targeting specialised resellers and SIs with a comprehensive solution and a widespread of customers. The objective is not to sell more but to offer a solution which will benefit the customer in the future. One such solution is the new ClickShare conference, Users can now bring their own device and conference wirelessly using any service in less than seven seconds - miniscule in comparison to the average setup P: When we talk about digital transformation, particularly in a meeting room, the two things that come to mind are simplicity and collaboration, and Barco's ClickShare conference addresses these needs. Geographically, we're looking to make sure that we have a larger footprint across region to expand the business in terms of how we collaborate and take Barco's ClickShare conference to the next level.

HOW IS BARCO WORKING WITH THE TRADITIONAL CHANNEL AND SYSTEMS INTEGRATIONS, AND WHAT ISSUES ARE IMPACTING THEIR BUSINESSES AT PRESENT IN MEA?

R: Our approach today is to partner with more focused resellers and system integrators who are able to understand the customer's requirements. At Barco, we started implementing this shift from a year and a half today, and our business has expanded almost 50 percent in the MEA region. Our reseller network has been developed through a strong partnership with leading technology solutions providers across the MEA region.

BARCO AND FVC HAVE BEEN TEAMING UP TO MAKE MEETING ROOMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST SMARTER SINCE 2013. HOW IMPORTANT DOES A ROLE FVC PLAY AS A DISTRIBUTOR IN BARCO'S OVERALL MARKET STRATEGY?

P: Barco is a pioneer in conference and collaboration solutions market, and FVC is excited to be the first to partner with Barco to introduce the ClickShare conference solution to this region. Together we have educated the marketplace in terms of creating demand for the solutions and technology. At the same time, we



are increasing our channel partner base, who will potentially be willing to help reach bigger verticals and larger markets for us. Our strong regional presence coupled with our wide customer base will further boost Barco's product reach and driver customers' digital transformation initiatives. **R:** As a market leader in technology solutions with a strong geographical reach. FVC has served as the perfect partner for Barco in the region. FVC approaches and stimulates various channels through training, incentives, promotion, seminars and promotional actions, offering complete solutions as new technologies come in. Additionally, FVC's AV expertise, which you don't find so easily in the market today, adds the security layer in the organisation, which again is a challenge into the evolving IT infrastructure.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR GROWING THIS PARTNERSHIP FURTHER?

P: This year marks the seventh year of FVC's partnership with Barco. Moving ahead, we want to increase the amount of training we offer our end customers and partners. We are also working with Barco to ensure more demo and POC kits to the partner community. And lastly, we're pursuing promotions including buybacks in the meeting room space. As the exclusive resellers for ClickShare Conference in the region, we're looking at enhancing the meeting room experience. OUR RESELLER NETWORK HAS BEEN DEVELOPED THROUGH A STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH LEADING TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS PROVIDERS ACROSS THE MEA REGION." – RAMZI ITANI, BARCO

CAN YOU BOTH SHARE YOUR REGIONAL PLANS FOR 2020?

R: At Barco, we intend to continue working towards building strong relationships with partners across the region. We also plan to implement several technologies across enterprises, healthcare and visualisation product offerings across the region, and be more integrated in FVC's AV industry solution. This year we are also investing more in resources as we have extremely high demands from end users. P: At FVC, we will certainly increase the channel breadth and work with them in a very vertical way. We're looking at enhancing partner training and partner workshops, for both the customers and partners across the region. We've seen a significant growth in our Middle East sector, and we will emphasis our focus on growing this market, particularly in Egypt and in the African region. 🥯



CHARTING A PATH To success

Israr Ashfaque, AVP – Smart Business Solutions, Raqmiyat, on how the system integrator will leave no stone unturned to ensure a good business.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT RAQMIYAT'S SMART BUSINESS SOLUTION?

You call it Raqmiyat's Smart Business Solution or Raqmiyat Digital; it is the future of IT and Business. We at Raqmiyat Digital today provide our customers with end-to-end IT and business transformation throughout the digital journey. We are offering services and solutions related to digital surfaces and facilities, enterprise business applications, cybersecurity and IT quality assurance.

Today, Raqmiyat' Smart Business Solutions is a customer-centric system integrator and not a software development house. We focus on industry and customer specific use cases, and align them with leading innovative technologies. It's no secret that the products we deliver accelerate the digital transformation journey such as lowcode platforms, digital transformation frameworks, conversational AI and enterprise chatbot platform and paperless office solutions.

As a digital enabler, we are charting a path throughout customers' digital transformation journey with the ultimate goal of achieving the highest level of customer satisfaction and growth.



WITH CUSTOMERS ADOPTING CLOUD TECHNOLOGIES, HOW HAS BEEN RAQMIYAT'S GROWTH IN THE REGION?

We have been educating our customers on cloud migration since the early inception of cloud migration to this region. We have seen a significant growth in the space of cloud migration though it has a better potential. Raqmiyat recently completed one of the largest semigovernment cloud-based application projects in Abu Dhabi by transforming the entire employee experience on a public cloud. Big cloud players opening local data centres in the region are promising factors for better growth of the entire ecosystem.

WHAT ARE YOUR GROWTH DRIVERS?

We examine and focus on the market we operate in, and time to time realign our go-to market strategy. We choose our customers and map our solutions to their requirements. People do business with people; I believe Raqmiyat's growth is directly driven by our people. People are the most powerful tool we have to bring success, and we do our best to have and retain the right set of people and equip them well to meet the unified objective. Technology and the IT world is changing energetically, and any system integrator needs to be ahead of the competition in the technology battle by having the right vision to adopt the right technologies. Today, Raqmiyat is digitally enabled and geared with few of the latest technologies like NLP enterprise chatbot platforms, no-code platforms, NoSQL databases and many more.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE NEW TRENDS IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION? HOW ARE YOU CAPITALISING ON OPPORTUNITIES WHICH HAVE COME UP WITH THIS CHANGING MARKET?

Today the enterprises are embarking digital transformation to operate their business more efficiently. While most of the enterprises today have automated their core business process in terms of ERP, BI or custom developed solutions. However, with the latest trend and technologies around mobile apps, RPAs and IoT, cybersecurity and paperless office solutions, there is a big need of each enterprise to re-look into the way they do the business more efficiently. Today, Raqmiyat has an end-to-end digital transformation solution offering right from digital infrastructure, digital experience, security solutions, and enterprise mobility solutions and paperless office solutions.

CAN YOU SHARE SOME MARKET PLANS AND INITIATIVES LINED UP FOR THIS YEAR?

Raqmiyat in partnership with regional top media houses has been consistently working together to bring awareness on digital transformation and cybersecurity to the market and spread the word. We are hosting a couple of events and webcasts every quarter in association with our technology partners for some of the very latest offerings and trends.



Israr Ashfaque, Raqmiyat



AS A DIGITAL ENABLER, WE ARE CHARTING A PATH THROUGHOUT CUSTOMERS' DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY WITH THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF ACHIEVING THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND GROWTH."

HOW DO YOU SEE THE SPACE YOU OPERATE IN EVOLVE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS?

IT operations and technologies will continue to evolve with a major focus in cloud migration, AI bots and rapid development technologies. Regional public sector will start adopting cloud migration and cloud applications in a hybrid model, taking noncritical data and applications on the cloud. Whereas in the private sector and BFSI, there will be an increasing need for DevOps to enhance and optimise the time to market and deployments. Business automation through AI and conversational chatbot platforms will help enterprise customers in enhancing both employee and customer experience. 📟

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Data security is not a one-off configuration but a constantly evolving strategy, says Sam Emmanuel, Business Unit Manager, Gulf IT.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON MISSTEPS ORGANISATIONS TAKE WHEN IT COMES TO DATA PRIVACY?

Data privacy is a multi-facetted approach that is taken to protect the data in our corporate environments. Majority of the enterprise lack awareness towards this because traditionally we are used to looking at data security as a solution rather than an approach. The primary reason being the change in way the data in our various datastores being accessed. The methods adopted have transformed to keep up with growing business needs and it dictates the transformation of the security approach as well. Unless we keep up with the trends, we will always be only catching up. Data security is not a one-off configuration but a constantly evolving strategy.

HOW CAN THEY IMPLEMENT STRONG DATA PROTECTION MEASURES WITHOUT SACRIFICING PRODUCTIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE?

Implementation of any security strategy includes involvement from all the stakeholders. Implementing data security in complex customer environments must have an active communication channel through which we ensure customer understands how they can yield maximum returns.

Workshops to understand the critical pain points for business and technical stakeholders go a long way in ensuring the productivity is not hampered in the process.

WHAT KINDS OF TECHNOLOGIES AND INITIATIVES SHOULD ORGANISATIONS INVEST IN TO BOLSTER DATA PRIVACY MEASURES WITHIN THEIR ORGANISATIONS?

The first step towards fixing a problem is identifying the existence of one. Human error is the biggest reason for breaches and exposure, and this points us in the direction of minimising that element from the chain. Steps have to be taken to ensure that there is a level of automation in the chain of command and to ensure there is compliance by the users. Solutions like information rights management, configuration management tools, vulnerability management, application security are some of the essentials required. They help in baselining the security strategies and maintaining uniformity in the security posture.



HOW HAS GDPR IMPACTED REGIONAL BUSINESSES AFTER IT WAS IMPLEMENTED IN MAY 2018? DO ORGANISATIONS IN THE REGION HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THIS REGULATION NOW?

GDPR was definitely a defining point in the information security world because of the global implications it came up with it. I feel even though we knew it coming, the preparations weren't ideal, people are still just catching up to it. Understanding close to 160 requirements in the GDPR has been a challenge for the business to keep up with, especially with the local market dynamics.

Since the enforcement of the GDPR actions is being delayed, people are still trying to get to the finer implications to ensure they meet the legal and technical requirements. We are trying to spread the awareness



among the customers to ensure that their data security polices include the GDPR regulations as well.

ARE THE EXISTING REGULATIONS AIMED AT DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY ENOUGH? IF NOT, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS LACKING THE REGULATORY SPACE?

The current frameworks and regulations are designed to address the major security gaps in in most of the organisations. But every organisation has data exposure based on business requirements, hence there has to be custom strategy. One size does not fit all. There is a need for the technical stakeholders to be on the same page as the business owners to define such strategies to safeguard their data.

Even though the regulations address most of security gaps there needs to be a shorter revision cycle for the regulations to keep up with the speed of changing cybersecurity space keeping in mind the trend of the breaches that have been taking place.

AS AN IT SECURITY DISTRIBUTOR, HOW IS GULF IT PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF DATA PRIVACY WITHIN ENTERPRISES? WHAT KINDS OF OFFERINGS DO YOU HAVE IN THIS SPACE?

Gulf IT has been a pioneer in the VAD space in the region. For us, it has never been about the product but about the data security strategy. The customer preference for Gulf IT is primarily due to the problemsolving skills we bring to the table for them through the best in breed technologies. Our focus has been on working with vendors that add a value to customer environments. We WE ARE TRYING TO SPREAD THE AWARENESS AMONG THE CUSTOMERS TO ENSURE THAT THEIR DATA SECURITY

THAT THEIR DATA SECURITY POLICES INCLUDE THE GDPR REGULATIONS AS WELL."

work with Imperva, Seclore, NNT and Sailpoint for the data security portfolio. They've always believed in Gulf IT's approach of trying to help customer environment to have a holistic view of the of structured and unstructured data security. They have proven time and again on how an effectively implemented solution can help customers achieve their intended goals without compromises.



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Based on IDC white paper commissioned by Dell EMC, "Delivering Efficient Business Expansion with Dell EMC VMware-Based HCI," October 2019. Actual results will vary. <u>https://www.emc.com/collat-</u>eral/analyst-reports/idcdelivering-efficient-business-expansion-with-dell-emc-vmware-based-hci.pdf

*Based on IDC WW Quarterly Converged Systems Tracker, 2019 Q1, Vendor Revenue.

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RING UNVEILS NEW RING VIDEO DOORBELL 3

R ing, whose mission is to make neighbourhoods safer, unveiled its new, next-generation Video Doorbell, Ring Video Doorbell 3. With improved motion detection and enhanced dual-band Wi-Fi, Ring Video Doorbell 3 is the latest addition to Ring's Video Doorbell lineup.

"At Ring, we are continuously pushing the boundaries on bringing the most innovative devices and features to our customers," said Jamie Siminoff, Ring's founder and Chief Inventor. "Now, with near zone, users can receive the alerts they care most about. With Ring Video Doorbell 3 and the all-new Chime and Chime Pro, we're excited to continue bringing customers even more choice when it comes to their home security options, while keeping user privacy and control front and centre."

Ring Video Doorbell 3 builds upon the great features of the Ring Video Doorbell 2 to now also include a new, adjustable motion zone, called near zone, that can detect motion within five to 15 feet of the front door, as well as enhanced dual-band 2.4Ghz/5Ghz wifi for improved connectivity. With Alexa compatibility, users can simply say, "Alexa, show me the front door," to see their Ring Video Doorbell 3's Live View, or say, "Alexa, answer the front door," to begin speaking with whoever is at their door. And with Linked Devices, available across all Ring products, users can link their doorbell to compatible Ring Cams to create an integrated, whole-home security system.

The newest addition to Ring's portfolio includes Privacy Zones, which allow users to exclude areas of the camera field of view from video recording. Similar to all of Ring's Doorbells and Cams, Ring Video Doorbell 3 features toggles that allow users to turn off video or audio recording for an extra layer of privacy, at any time.

Ring Video Doorbell 3, Chime and Chime Pro will be available for purchase in June from Amazon. ae, Jumbo, Sharaf DG and Virgin Megastore for AED 839, AED 139 and AED 239.



nng

CANON BOASTS ITS NEW CANON SELPHY SQUARE QX10

anon Middle East has announced the launch of the Canon SELPHY SQUARE QX10, the latest addition to its SELPHY range of compact photo printers and the Canon XS-20L square photo paper pack.

"We're constantly catering to a generation that's fueled by a world of visuals & creativity. This is why they're called the Instagram Generation! This SELPHY printer is meant to encourage the youth to get imaginative with their creations," said Binoj Nair, Marketing Director, B2C Business Unit, Canon Middle East.

With its built-in battery and Wi-Fi connectivity, users can print square 68x68mm (2.7x2.7in) prints from the Canon SELPHY SQUARE QX10. The Canon XS-20L square format photo paper (sold separately) features a bordered edge for adding hand-written captions. Due to the protective film coating, prints are smudge-free, water, dirt and tear resistant.

Available in four distinct colours (Black, White, Pink and Green), the battery-powered compact photo printer is wireless and prints dry and highquality photos in just 43 seconds. Scanning the Canon SELPHY SQUARE QX10's QR code from a smart device will connect the printer to the SELPHY Photo Layout app, from which users can access their smartphone photo library and add creative touches.









of data breach victims in 2016 were SMBs (small and medium-sized businesses with under 1,000 employees).





in reported damage to business and reputation harm were due to security breaches in 2016.



of businesses say that malicious attacks are the main cause of reported data breaches.



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1 Verizon's 2017 Data Breach Investigations Report

2 Ponemon Institute "Cost of Data Breach" Study, U.S. 2017

3 Up to 3.1x more Cryptographic Hashing performance. Intel Xeon* Processor Scalable Family: Platinum 8180 Processor, 28C, 2.5 GHz, H0, Neon City CRB, 12x16 GB DDR4 2666 MT/s ECC RDIMM, BIOS PLYCRB1.86B.0128.R08.1703242666. Intel* Xeon* E5-2600v4 Series Processor, E5-2650 v4, 12C, 2.2 GHz, Aztec City CRB, 4x8 GB DDR4 2400 MT/s ECC RDIMM, BIOS GRRFCRB1.86B.0276.R02.1606020546. Operating System: Redhat Enterprise Linux 7.3, Kernel 4.2.3, ISA-L 2.18, BIOS Configuration, P-States: Disabled, Turbo: Disabled, Speed Step: Disabled, C-States: Disabled, ENERGY_PERF_BIAS_CFG: PERF.

PRODUCTS

OPPO LAUNCHES RENO3 SERIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

G lobal Technology Brand OPPO has announced the launch of its Reno3 Series in the Middle East. OPPO Reno3 is powered by 64MP zoom camera with 20x digital zoom, ultra steady video 2.0, 44MP dual front camera with ultra-night selfie mode.

Ethan Xue, President, OPPO MEA, said, "We are extremely excited to bring Reno3 Series to the Middle East market. It is the latest masterpiece of our muchloved Reno series. Many cuttingedge imaging technologies and design techniques are perfectly fitted into the Reno3 series, making it a highly competitive and trendy photography smartphone. We are confident that Reno3 series will carry on the Reno legacy by providing its users with a holistic experience, further strengthening our regional market presence, and redefining the way trend-setting elites leverage new-age technology on their smartphones."

"The OPPO Reno 3 Pro is powered by MediaTek's Helio P95, our newest Helio chipset with our most powerful AI processing engine for 4G smartphones", said Dr Yenchi Lee, Assistant General Manager, MediaTek's wireless business unit.

OPPO Reno3 will be available for pre-order in the UAE from March 19th to March 25th at a price of AED 1,899.



HMD GLOBAL THROWS HAT INTO 5G SMARTPHONE RING WITH NEW NOKIA LAUNCHES

H MD Global, the home of Nokia phones, has recently unveiled three new Nokia smartphones, a new member of the Originals family and its brand-new hassle-free data roaming service.

The Nokia 8.3 5G is the first 5G Nokia smartphone added to the portfolio, and is joined by the brandnew Nokia 5.3 and Nokia 1.3, as well as the latest addition to the Originals family, the Nokia 5310.

Sticking with firsts, HMD Global also enters a brand-new service category with HMD Connect global data roaming, its innovative and hassle-free service that keeps you connected to the things that matter most.

Florian Seiche, chief executive officer, HMD Global, said, "I am incredibly proud of the innovations we have introduced today that build on our unique commitment to ensuring the Nokia smartphone experience will only get better over time.

"We are kicking off a new chapter



for HMD Global as we step into 5G with a truly global, future-proof smartphone. Combined with the launch of HMD Connect, we are creating a truly seamless experience in terms of connectivity."

Juho Sarvikas, chief product officer, HMD Global, said, "We take great pride in working with our partners to deliver unique devices. That's why we're excited to announce a number of firsts with this launch. With the help of the Qualcomm Snapdragon 765G Modular Platform, we've created a truly global 5G Nokia smartphone that's designed with cost, usability and future-proofing in mind."

"Together with Google we've managed to introduce an impressively accessible Android (Go edition) device with the Nokia 1.3 - one of the first smartphones to launch with Camera Go and running Android 10 (Go edition). The new Nokia 5.3 takes powerful features like the quad camera and Qualcomm® Snapdragon[™] 665 Mobile Platform and puts these at the fingertips of an even wider pool of fans. And we couldn't ignore our wildly popular Originals family. That's why we're bringing back the Nokia 5310 – so you never miss a beat."

PRODUCTS

BOSCH ENHANCES ITS IP-BASED DICENTIS **ONFERENCE SYSTEM** PLATFORM

osch has enhanced its IPbased DICENTIS Conference System platform with the introduction of new DICENTIS Flush language selector and a platform-independent interface that supports integration of thirdparty control touch panels. With these two new entrants, Bosch has extended the interpretation product lineup in its IP-based conference system portfolio, ensuring companies in the UAE are supported with seamless connectivity.

Hakan Ozyigit, Regional Director of Security Systems & Building Technologies, Robert Bosch Middle East FZE, said, "The FLUSH language selector is an intuitive device that supports up to 100

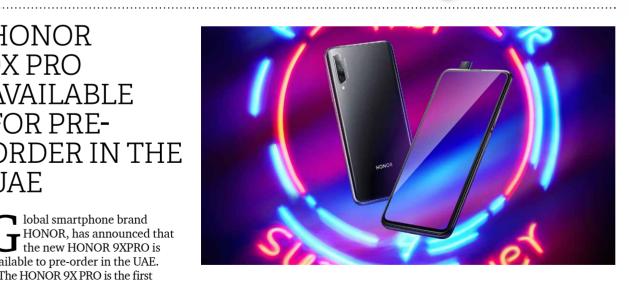
interpreter-provided languages, and will serve as a great tool for companies in the UAE because of various dialects spoken among the expatriate community. DICENTIS will also empower meeting organisers by controlling all the functions in a meeting via a single device due to the introduction of integrated third-party control touch panels. This will further enhance the visibility of the status of all connected devices in a conference setup."

"These two new enhancements to our IP-based conference system will strongly support the companies in the UAE who are committed to adopting emerging technologies to streamline their business priorities and achieve their innovation agenda", he added.

HONOR 9X PRO AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER IN THE UAE

lobal smartphone brand HONOR, has announced that the new HONOR 9XPRO is available to pre-order in the UAE.

The HONOR 9X PRO is the first HONOR phone to be powered by the new Kirin 810 octa-core processor, built on a 7nm manufacturing process, which is the first batch to use this technology on the mobile device. It's also the first HONOR smartphone pre-installed with the Huawei AppGallery, one of the top three app distribution platforms.



"HONOR is committed to making the flagship experience accessible to everyone by delivering unrivaled products with unbeatable value. This is made possible by continually pursuing excellence for our customers. We are excited to introduce the HONOR 9X PRO to our

fans in the UAE who will be enjoying a boost to their smartphone's experiences," said Chris Sun Baigong, President, HONOR Middle East and Africa.

HONOR 9X PRO will be available for pre-order in the UAE from 19th March for a price of AED 999.



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Access control is a security technique that regulates who or what can view or use resources in a computing environment. It is a fundamental concept in security that minimizes risk to the business or organization.

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