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GOVTECH:
HIGHER
COLLEGES OF
TECHNOLOGY

DRIVING DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

APPDYNAMICS EXECUTIVE DAVID NOËL, OUTLINES THE ROLE THE GLOBAL APM PROVIDER PLAYS IN ENSURING BUSINESSES MEET THE EVOLVING DEMANDS OF THEIR USERS.



HUAWEI'S MD ENTERPRISE BUSINESS GROUP ME

> GELLIFY'S CEO AND CO-FOUNDER

PURE STORAGE'S ME REGIONAL DIRECTOR

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Since its acquisition by Cisco in 2017, the company has gone from strength-to-strength, and Noël superbly articulates the science behind its success.

THE NEW NORMAL

he COVID-19 pandemic has forced us all to embrace new practices in relation to how we work, where we work and when we work.

Last month, we held a number of successful virtual webinars with clients such as Alpha Data, Emitac and Exclusive Networks, which represented a new chapter for us all at CPI Media Group.

We also have a number of other virtual webinars and panel discussions planned for next month as we continue to adapt to what has been described as the 'new normal'.

Restrictions are beginning to be scaled back in the UAE, and that is encouraging for us all — as despite the wonders of modern technology enabling us to always be connected, we still miss those face-to-face interactions with our colleagues and peers.

On the front cover of June's edition of CNME, we spoke to David Noël, Regional Vice President — Middle East, AppDynamics, to learn how the APM provider plays such a critical role in ensuring we enjoy seamless experiences with all our smartphone applications.

Since its acquisition by Cisco in 2017, the company has gone from strength-to-strength, and Noël superbly articulates the science behind its success.

In this month's edition of Women in Tech, we spoke to Clare Holburn-Archer, who is one of the most distinguished marketing executives in the Middle East region.

In an excellent interview, Holburn-Archer details her career with Emirates, and expresses her excitement in her new role as the CMO of CAFU.

In GovTech, we spoke to Dr. Abullatif Al Shamsi, President & CEO at the Higher Colleges of Technology, to find out how this applied higher education institution has been able to maintain its operations amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

HCT has always been progressive in terms of embracing new technologies, and he explains how that approach allowed them to make a seamless transition to online learning.

The magazine also features great interviews with Midis SI Group, Computer Network Systems and exciting new startup accelerator GELLIFY, coverage from all our virtual webinars and great op-eds from Huawei and Barco.

Enjoy!

Mark Forker Editor















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Huawei to invest \$200 million in computing ecosystem in 2020

Huawei has announced that it will

invest \$200 million in the computing ecosystem and help support 2 million developers worldwide in 2020. It also revealed that it would advance its computing strategy in the year ahead, fostering an ecosystem anchored in computing and the Huawei Cloud.

The company has made the announcement during the 17th Huawei Global Analyst Summit, which was held online in May.

By cultivating product innovation and optimising business models, Huawei aims to give partners more ways to develop digital applications and fully tap into data value for business benefits.

During summit, Huawei also highlighted how intelligent IP networks accelerate intelligent connectivity. Kevin Hu, President of Huawei's Data Communication Product Line, said, "2020 is the first year for commercial use of intelligent IP networks. The entire industry has witnessed a historic shift of IP networks from Internet IP in the World Wide Web era to videodriven All IP, and is now on the way to intelligent IP oriented at the 5G and cloud era. Huawei will keep proactively increasing investment in super capacity, intelligent experience, and autonomous driving to build end-to-end intelligent IP networks for customers."



Kevin Hu, Huawei Data Communication Product Line

Dubai mandates use of single digital ID system



Dr Aisha Bint Butti Bin Bishr, Smart Dubai

The UAE PASS will soon become the only

digital identity for all residents of Dubai, including citizens and expats, to access government services within the emirate as well as other parts of the country.

The announcement was recently made by Smart Dubai following a decision issued by the Strategic Affairs Council – part of The Executive Council of Dubai.

The initiative aims to expedite the rate of the adoption of UAE PASS by citizens and residents, which will lay the foundations for

a digital future across the government and private sectors.

UAE PASS eliminates the need to physically visit customer service centres and submit paper identification documents. It provides an authorised digital ID through smartphones, and includes a digital signature feature allowing users to sign official documents. Users can access more than 5,000 government services by using a single username and password.

Dr Aisha Bint Butti Bin Bishr, Director General of Smart Dubai, asserted that the Strategic Affairs Council's decision to mandate the use of UAE PASS by all individuals and government entities in Dubai will considerably accelerate its adoption across the entire Dubai community, and promote its use for various transactions in the UAE.

"UAE PASS allows users to easily access services, as well as to digitally and remotely sign the necessary documents. This, in turn, supports Smart Dubai's efforts to establish the emirate as the world's happiest and smartest city," she said.

du customers enjoy the fastest fixed broadband services in Gulf

du, from Emirates Integrated

Telecommunications Company (EITC), has announced that it is currently the provider of the fastest fixed broadband services in the Gulf region.

As part of the Telecommunication
Regulatory Authority's (TRA) initiative to
ensure seamless continuation of distance
learning and working, average fixed
broadband speeds have already been
increased to 100 Mbps across UAE. Based on
du's network performance tool, du customers
are benefitting from average of 130 Mbps — 30
percent above the average speed in the UAE.

Saleem AlBlooshi, Chief Technology Officer, EITC, said, "It is our responsibility as a telecommunications operator to provide the best-in-class connectivity for the entire ecosystem. The ongoing circumstances have resulted in an unprecedented demand for high speed fixed network services, which are essential



Saleem AlBlooshi, du

for various segments including education, remote working, entertainment, and streaming services. We have managed to double the capacity of our fixed network to meet the demand during the COVID-19 period. High speed internet traffic across applications that support distance learning and remote working are essential for providing the best possible experiences across related platforms. Our world-class network has continually provided reliable communication services and accommodated all surges in traffic. This aligns with our vision to drive digital transformation and deliver pioneering solutions to our valued customers."

Moro Hub, Avaya team up to accelerate digital transformation in UAE



Moro Hub (Data Hub Integrated Solutions

owned by DEWA), a wholly owned subsidiary of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), has launched Moro Connect, a disruptive offering that provides Unified Communications-as-a-Service (UCaaS) and Contact Center-as-a-Service (CCaaS) for businesses across the UAE.

Moro Connect is built on technology powered by Avaya, a global leader in business communications software, systems and services.

Mohammed Bin Sulaiman, CEO, Moro Hub, said, "Businesses in the UAE are increasingly adopting ICT in their daily operations to boost their productivity, growth and to accelerate digital transformation. At Moro Hub, we recognise the importance of embracing technology to power innovation to devise new products, services and processes."

According to Bin Sulaiman through their partnership with Avaya, Moro Hub will be introducing groundbreaking unified communication solutions in the UAE.

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

Through 'Moro Connect' offerings, businesses in the UAE will benefit from greater flexibility, enabling them to respond quickly to changing business demands, improve customer experience, and manage costs more effectively.

"Avaya solutions, hosted by Moro Hub, will give businesses in the UAE the flexibility and agility they require to benefit from the latest technology trends and prepare for digital transformation. Enterprises will be able to get access to Avaya's innovative technology solutions at prices that suit their needs, while benefiting from the reliability and expertise that industry leaders such as Avaya and Moro Hub bring to the marketplace," said Nidal Abou Ltaif, Avaya President, Asia Pacific, Middle East, Africa and EU.

of UAE firms have of their technology producing the panda

NetApp names Microsoft veteran as new president



Cesar Cernuda, NetApp

NetApp has announced the appointment of Cesar Cernuda as president of NetApp, reporting to CEO George Kurian, effective in July.

As the company's new president, Cernuda will be responsible for leading its global go-to-market operations spanning sales, marketing, services and support. He joins NetApp from Microsoft, where he was president of Microsoft Latin America and corporate vice president of Microsoft Corporation.

Cernuda has an extensive experience in leading business transformation, building diverse, high-performing teams, and driving a successful cloud business. In his role as president, Cernuda will continue to evolve the NetApp go-to-market strategy and organisation to accelerate growth by transforming how we approach the changing customer landscape and capture new growth opportunities, particularly in cloud.

"As the adoption of cloud and data services continues to grow in the EMEA region, NetApp is well positioned to help customers and partners navigate this digital transformation," said Cernuda. "The key hyperscale public cloud vendors have bet on NetApp technology to support them with their customer offerings, and I believe this is one of the best examples of how NetApp has been transforming to become a cloud-first organisation. I am thrilled with the opportunity to help and support customers and partners manage and protect one of their most important assets— their data."

Ingram Micro urges partners to stay vigilant against fraudsters

Ingram Micro, one of the largest

technology distributors in the META region, has recently warned partners against the increasing number of fraudulent sales orders.

In a letter shared with its partners, Ingram Micro offered practical advice to help them mitigate fraudulent behaviour to protect "our company, your company, and your clients."

"We're seeing instances of fraud experienced by our partners from their long-term Existing customers (who have had their email breached) as well as from 'New customers' that are 100 percent fraudulent," said Ingram Micro Director, Cyber Security Division – META Marc Kassis in the letter.

To help companies and employees identify and stop fraud, Ingram Micro shared the following advice:

New customers

If an order comes in from a new customer, is unsolicited, and seems too good to be true, then it probably is. Other potential fraud signals that we've seen from the frontlines include:

- If the new customer is pressed for time and okay with any price you give them.
- If the customer is ordering something that is not your core area of focus.
- If the new customer wants you to overnight a large order with no concern for cost.
- If you suspect a fraudulent order from a new customer, what should you do?

"As a best practice, perform an internet search on the company name and check their email address against the known company domain," said Kassis in the letter.

Partners should check any address given to them as a 'ship-to' and see the locations and its surroundings on Google Earth. "Warehouses in desolate areas or non-descript office parks and freight forwarder addresses are all common ship-to addresses for scammers. They have been known to



Marc Kassis, Ingram Micro

transpose street numbers or zip code numbers on their ship-to location to look very similar to actual end user addresses," he said.

Existing customers

Existing customers can be and are being breached as well. The bad guys are getting into their email systems and creating PO's on company letterhead, which can look perfectly legitimate — especially when it is sent directly from a valid email address from a known customer. And watch for abnormal purchases. Is your managed security client with 50 employees, sending you a PO for 150 users?

If you suspect a fraudulent order from an existing customer what should you do?

- Check the email address sent to you for the request carefully. A common trick is when an email address has one character off from the actual company or entity domain name or will use a .net instead of .com or .org.
- Check if the ship-to location is different than the location you usually ship to (ex: a different city, a completely different address or an

- unlikely address for that company or entity).
- Perform an internet search on the company and check the domain website against the domain email address.
- Pick up the phone and call your client to verify.
- Take a quick inventory. If the existing customer is buying unusual product than what they typically purchase AND are buying in fairly extraordinary quantities, STOP and call them via the phone number YOU have on file for them, not the one in the email sent to you with the request.

Sometimes the scammers are also sliding into the daily conversations between Ingram Micro and its partners, according to Kassis. He noted that they have recently witnessed a few cases where a fraudulent email was received by their partners, which seemingly came from Ingram Micro.

Kassis highlighted that they have recently issued a warning about BCE (Business Email Compromise) where they reiterated that partners need to take precautions such as verifying the email addresses of all emails they receive; contacting the sender to confirm the mail either with one-to-one email or via other means; and not proceeding with any payments should they receive details about an unconfirmed changed Ingram Micro bank account.

"We usually, communicate and request acknowledgement in several ways in case we change bank account," he said.

"Fraud isn't as easy to spot as it used to be," explained Kassis.
"Scammers are getting better and more sophisticated. At Ingram Micro we are continually training our team to spot potential fraud and to contact you directly to confirm if there is any doubt."

Oracle supports digital transformation of Saudi Arabia's national mining firm



Saudi Arabian Mining Company (Ma'aden)

has chosen Oracle's Gen 2 Cloud Infrastructure for a strategic digital transformation aimed at achieving business efficiency and driving growth.

According to Oracle, the implementation will help Ma'aden create an agile, secure and modern IT infrastructure that is geared to utilise latest emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence.

Dr. Arif Mustafa, Group Chief Information Officer, Ma'aden said "Cloud led transformation is an imperative for our organisation to scale operations swiftly, drive innovation, create a real-time view of all our resources and projects, ensure cost efficiency and implement robust security measures for business continuity.

Oracle's Gen 2 Cloud provides a complete set of services for managing data and provides rich AI-based visual analytics. The implementation will span more than 9000 users at Ma'aden, and with Gen 2 Cloud being supported by the Oracle Exadata Database Machine, which Ma'aden currently uses, the transition to a cloud ecosystem will be seamless.

"Oracle architected its next generation cloud infrastructure for the enterprise, while also building a platform that supports new emerging technologies.

The Gen 2 Cloud is a perfect platform for enterprises like Ma'aden to replace their on–premises data centres with a cloud deployment model to achieve strategic business objectives," said Fahad Al Turief, Country Leader – Saudi Arabia, Oracle.

Bahrain to offer COVID-19 test results on WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger

Bahrain has become the first country in the world to offer COVID-19 test results by WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.

The announcement comes as governments across the globe experiment with launching their own official chat channels, including Singapore, New Zealand and the World Health Organisation.

Bahrain's results service, which is available in English and Arabic, has been launched by the Kingdom's Ministry of Health as part of efforts to combat the ongoing global health crisis.

The chatbot delivers up-to-date information on the spread of the Coronavirus and provides direct links to YouTube guidance videos as well as the country's official COVID-19 Be Aware app.

The free chat service has been built using the WhatsApp Business API and Infobip's global communication platform to provide critical information to citizens and residents.

Dr Waleed Al Manea, from Bahrain's Health Ministry, said, "We are working to reach a bigger and wider community in our health efforts to combat the spread of Covid-19."

As global lockdowns begin to lift, Bahrain – one of the first countries in the world to loosen restrictions on movement – is taking a series of steps to prepare for the next phase of the crisis.

"We are working to reach a bigger and wider community in our health efforts to combat the spread of Covid-19."

AWS customers in UAE and Saudi Arabia can now benefit from AWS Outposts

Amazon Web Services (AWS) customers in the UAE and Saudi Arabia can now avail AWS Outposts.

AWS Outposts allow customers to run compute and storage on-premises, while seamlessly connecting to AWS's broad array of services in the cloud. It also allows customers to use the same AWS APIs, control plane, tools, and hardware on-premises.

Customers in the UAE and Saudi Arabia who have workloads that require low latency access to on-premises systems, local data processing, or local data storage can benefit from AWS Outposts. These include applications that may need to generate near realtime responses, need to communicate with other on-premises systems, or control on-site equipment. Customers can also use AWS Outposts to securely store and process customer data in countries where there is no AWS Region.

Andy Isherwood, managing director, Amazon Web Services EMEA, said, "We are pleased to bring AWS Outposts to the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Following the launch of the Middle East Region in Bahrain last year, customers have been continually expanding their use of AWS and have asked us to help them with moving their most sensitive workloads to the cloud. AWS Outposts helps them to achieve this. It is also particularly beneficial for customers in UAE and Saudi Arabia with low latency and local data processing requirements as AWS Outposts seamlessly and securely integrates with AWS Regions."

EMITAC AND HPE

EMITAC AND HPE HOST WEBINAR ON 'UNLOCKING' DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Emitac, one of the leading system integrators in the Middle East and global IT leader HPE have collaborated in conjunction with CPI Media Group to host a webinar which examined how together they can help businesses 'unlock' their digital transformation goals.

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Our approach with HPE GreenLake is to build a true partnership model by helping customers plan on resources they need and outcomes thev hope to achieve."

he webinar drew participation from a number of prominent thought leaders from within the IT ecosystem in the UAE.

Mohammed Nimer, Head of Sales at Emitac Enterprise Solutions began the session by giving a detailed overview of the successful journey that the company has embarked upon since its inception in 1976.

The Emitac executive said the company has managed to sustain its phenomenal success over such a sustained period of time due to a combination of factors such as its industry expertise and ability to forge strong partnerships in the IT industry.

Emitac is striving to support its customers for their digital transformation journey by being their trusted partner that can provide the right solutions at the right time at the right cost. "Our vision is to be a trusted digital transformation partner. We strive to provide solutions to our customers that meet their specific requirements and exceed their expectations," said Nimer.

Nimer also highlighted how the systems integrator is providing inspiring solutions that 'truly matter'.

Nimer also highlighted how Emitac is providing inspiring solutions ranging from cabling up to the application layer for all verticals including Government (Local and Federal), Oil & Gas, Banking, Healthcare, and Retail.

These solutions (Hybrid IT, Security, Operations and Applications Modernization, Cloud and other Next-Generation Solutions) are distinguished from Emitac side by:

- Providing the highest level of partnership with the OEM's.
- · Certified professional

- teams from designing, implementation and services perspectives, in addition to certified and trained sales team.
- Encapsulating these solutions with Emitac added-value services.

"We have the highest level of partnership with HPE, and our primary objective is to provide our prestigious customers with turnkey solutions from A to Z that help them to deliver the services they need to enhance their business operations and make their customers more happier," said Nimer.

Kshitij Saxena, GreenLake Channel Sales Lead – Middle East, Saudi Arabia and South Africa at HPE, delivered a highly engaging and forensically detailed presentation on HPE's GreenLake Solution.

Saxena acknowledged that COVID-19 has presented

enterprises with a unique set of challenges and stressed the importance of managing and optimizing costs during economic uncertainty. He then proceeded to discuss some of the trends that he described as 'compelling'.

"A few years ago, nearly every customer was on a cloud journey. We found that companies loved that public cloud experience, but what we're now seeing is that customers realize that not all of their data can move to the public cloud. There are several reasons for that. The cost savings expected from the cloud were not really there. It's also to do with control and customers often do not have answers to 'who controls my data', 'who has access to my data' and also 'where is my data'. It's also to do with compliance within the industry and/or within the company" said Saxena.

Saxena touched upon the various options businesses have had in terms of choice traditionally such as purchase and leasing/pre-provisioning - but highlighted the buying behavior changing to organizations preferring the hybrid cloud experience with consumption-based models emerging as the preferred option.

"Our CEO has announced that by 2022, we would have moved to being an as-a-service organization and what that means for our customers is that we are already transitioning to be the edge to the core to the cloud platform as-a-service provider to our customers," said Saxena.

He added that HPE is seeing some of the highest ever customer satisfaction





rates with GreenLake. The rapidly emergent model gives the customer the power to scale up in minutes, pay only for the capacity used, reduce risk by keeping key workloads on premise within ITs control. GreenLake further increases financial flexibility with no upfront outlay and also eliminates the cost of overprovisioning.

Saxena disclosed that enterprises on average overprovision by 59% on compute and 48% on storage and demonstrated how HPE GreenLake can help businesses save on costs.

"Our approach with HPE GreenLake is to build a true partnership model by helping customers plan on resources they need and outcomes they hope to achieve. HPE builds that infrastructure inside their data center in their control along

with a buffer which they only pay for when used" said Saxena.

Saxena concluded his presentation by expressing what he believes really differentiates HPE GreenLake from other rival solutions.

"What truly differentiates us is that we are a complete and true consumption-based model. The differentiating factor is around control. Control over performance, cost, data sovereignty and latency. HPE GreenLake offers on-premise levels of control but with a cloud like experience. We also have really strong partnerships across our entire IT ecosystem including co-location. We can embed that into our GreenLake contract providing customers with data center services inclusive of infrastructure as a service, simplification and the economic model that they're looking for "said Saxena. Come

CAFU

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

In this month's edition of Women in Tech, CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Clare Holburn-Archer**, Chief Marketing Officer at CAFU, to learn more about how she established herself as one of the most influential communications and marketing professionals in the Middle East region.

ou've enjoyed a decorated and distinguished career here in the Middle East. Can you tell us about your journey with Emirates and the different positions you held during your decade at the company?

I joined Emirates Group's Corporate Communications department in 2001. At that time, I was part of four people that made up the 'digital team'. To put this into perspective, when I left Emirates almost 15 years later, we had grown the team to over 70 people. Nowadays this might seem completely normal, but then, this was a large team to have.

The expansion of our team was driven by the need to rapidly grow direct sales through Emirates.com which meant that when I left the team, we managed 136 websites in 12 languages as well as digital communication globally. My role covered all Emirates Groups brands digital footprint and that included its various

business in addition to Emirates Airline which included Emirates SkyCargo, Dnata and Emirates Holidays.

The team was incredibly strong. We built in house content capabilities with native speakers in all languages and developed specialist skill sets within our team to manage each channel, so for instance, we had specialists within the performance marketing team, (looking after SEO, SEM, E-mail) where

others were responsible for digital within specific markets. We also had an analytics team who looked at our data and ensured each channel was

optimised.



The result was that over the years we developed award winning brand campaigns and won Gold, Silver and Bronze in various categories at the Cannes Lions Festival, which was made possible only by our close knit team that worked hand-in-hand with adjacent departments from Emirates Commercial, eCommerce, IT, Advertising and PR.

It has been a great journey for me and having been in digital for so long really has given me a good understanding of what does and what does not work for companies.

We're seeing more women being appointed to C-level executive positions within some of the world's largest organisations. You're seen as somewhat of a trailblazer here in the Middle East. How much of a paradigm shift have you seen here in this region in terms of gender diversity since moving here?

I personally have never felt gender was an issue in applying or interviewing for roles, nor a factor in whether or not promotions have been achieved. The companies I've been lucky enough to work for have always had robust recruitment processes which takes into account EQ, IQ, creativity and technical experience, over and above gender.

I have been lucky enough to work with very supportive leaders, Boutros Boutros, who is now the Divisional Senior Vice President of Corporate Communications, Marketing and Brand at Emirates Group, as well as Damien Latham, then CEO of Emaar Entertainment, both of which have been exceptionally supportive of my career.

At the same time, there have been moments in my career that have been challenging. As the only woman in a boardroom, it can happen to you that if you disagree with a colleague that this is been misread as you being 'emotional' which, I think it just made me learn to develop a thick skin and to choose my 'battles' wisely.

There have been great strides made in terms of championing women into C-level positions across the Middle East.

However, do you feel businesses and organisations still need to do more in terms of bridging that gender division that still exists in the region?

I think what is interesting to see at the moment is that the COVID-19 outbreak, whilst causing so much distress to many, has shown that women leaders are in some cases better in managing crisis.

Maybe that's because women could be viewed as better communicators and maybe because they are naturally more emphatic. Sure, there is still room for improvement, but overall, I think we are moving into the right direction and that women bring skill sets to the boardroom that are positive for everyone.

You recently joined CAFU. How excited are you at this new role and can you outline to us what your responsibilities for the company will be?

Two things I am really passionate about is Brand Building and Technology. So naturally, I have been hugely excited about the opportunity to work for CAFU and in particular to work along-side its visionary owner and tech-entrepreneur, Rashid Al Ghurair.

As a fast-growing startup, my role is to define CAFU's brand strategy and grow it into a globally recognised brand. Similar to the rapid growth of Emirates' digital team, we are looking for a group of highly motivated communications, digital and marketing experts that support CAFU's ambitious expansion plans into neighboring and international markets.

As such, one of my main responsibilities has been to work with our business development and international expansions teams on market entry strategies. As part of that, we are creating products and campaign tool kits for a global roll-out.

From a digital perspective – my home turf so to speak – we are developing a sophisticated performance marketing platform using predictive analytics and AI capabilities.

One example of what we are working on is churn predictions and looking at how we can take predictive action, or for example a recommendation engine which would tell us which kind of customer should get which message at the optimum time. Essentially, having AI make a recommendation for when and what to communicate.

CAFU is only a 1.5-year-old company but has been hugely successful. I am very excited to see how the company will grow over the next years and to be part of that growth.

As a fastgrowing startup, my role is to define CAFU's brand strategy and grow it into a globally recognised brand."

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GELLIFY

B2B TECH STARTUP GELLIFY SET TO DISRUPT MIDDLE EAST INNOVATION SCENE

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Massimo Cannizzo**, CEO and co-founder of GELLIFY Middle East, to find out how the company is leveraging its technological expertise and knowhow to help foster and develop high-potential B2B startups.



annizzo has enjoyed a celebrated career in the technology ecosystem here in the Gulf and has carved out a reputation as one of the region's prominent technology thought leaders in his previous role as Managing Director of Accenture Middle East.

What is evident throughout my conversation with the charismatic Italian is the genuine excitement he has at being tasked with the responsibility of driving the growth of GELLIFY across the Middle East.

But what exactly is GELLIFY?
Cannizzo explains by disclosing the unique layers of its business model that ultimately differentiates the company from other similarly branded startup accelerators.

"I decided to join GELLIFY because I found it extremely new, intriguing, interesting and something very different. GELLIFY is quite a unique concept in the environment of innovation, because while it's an accelerator for startups it also serves as a fund for venture capitalists. In addition to this, it also provides an innovation consultancy arm specifically for corporate entities. Essentially, we select high-potential startups and provide them with what they need through investment, and this approach makes the startup a much, much more attractive proposition to entice other investors," said Cannizzo.

According to Cannizzo many corporate enterprises love the idea of leveraging innovative ideas from startup companies but are reluctant to invest as there are conscious of the fact that startups tend to not have the capabilities and capacity to scale up quickly. However, that's where GELLIFY can bridge a gap in the market.

"GELLIFY serves as an incubator for the startups to help them grow. We've created a concept called Gellification. The ideation phase in which you process the ideas is what we call the 'air state.' Then the first prototypes, contracts and pilots represent what we call the 'liquid state' of a startup, but then the process of Gellification is needed to reach the 'solid state' as a startup company, which will either position yourself to attract further investment, or have your technology acquired by a large tech company," said Cannizzo.

The dynamic tech expert also heralded the impact of Fabio Nalucci, Group CEO and Founder of GELLIFY, in terms of making the startup accelerator such a success since its inception in 2017. Cannizzo pointed out that Nalucci has a storied history and track record of building, growing and selling innovative B2B tech solutions to major companies like IBM and Accenture.

Following the initial success of GELLIFY in Italy, the decision was taken to embark upon an international expansion.

"We felt the time had come for us to extend our operations on an international scale, and we decided to launch in the UK, Spain and the Middle East, which will represent the first wave of our expansion strategy. Our overall aim is to replicate the same kind of services, style and ideas that

we were successfully applying in Italy," said Cannizzo.

Cannizzo believes the company is well-positioned to grow in the Middle East and have already started engaging with key stakeholders here in the ICT environment in the region. He also disclosed that they've started growing their advisory portfolio, and in the second part of the year will build the local startup portfolio and opening their venture capital fund.

Business continuity has been severely affected by the current global COVID-19 pandemic which has ground the global economy to a halt. These unprecedented market conditions are not particularly conducive for launching operations in a new market, but Cannizzo and the GELLIFY shareholders were undeterred, and decided to go ahead with their plans.

"Naturally, the global COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted and impacted our plans and we had a meeting with all our shareholders to determine whether we would slow down, speed up, or simply stop. However, in the end we decided to go ahead with the plan for two reasons. Firstly, we were still able to communicate and market ourselves despite the pandemic, so we continued with our plans here in the region. Secondly, digital and innovation is a big component of the solutions that we need to adopt to emerge from this crisis, so we felt the time was right to position ourselves in the Middle East, to help new businesses survive, grow and expand," said Cannizzo.

GELLIFY have also recently announced a new initiative called 'Future-Proof Your Organization with Black Swan Capabilities,' a weekly series of online webinars in which they provide details on how companies can 'future proof' their businesses.

"We believe that COVID-19 is not creating a new paradigm shift in terms of new changes. Most of the shifts that we see occurring all over the world is more an acceleration of shifts that were already ongoing prior to the outbreak of the crisis. The transformation call towards agility, liquid workforce, remote collaboration, business virtualization and digital adoption is not new, but now this becomes vital for any business and a strong acceleration is needed." said Cannizzo.

Cannizzo also claimed that GELLIFY has been observing over the last few years a progression in the change of human attitudes and ethical values because of the exponential growth of technology.

"It has become evidently clear that the advancements in AI is posing a question. Where are we going? What will be the future of mankind? There are huge opportunities, but also massive risks with AI, and we need to manage them and mitigate those risks. However, I'm very optimistic and positive about these changes, because if we do the right things at the right time, then we can create an incredible future for all in society, by "elevating" the role of humans to be more creative and emotional in organizations, " concluded Cannizzo.

Whilst the debates about AI and the impact of other emerging technologies will rage on and the fallout from COVID-19 will take precedence, one thing is for sure and that is GELLIFY Middle East, with Cannizzo at the helm are set to make a huge impact in the tech ecosystem here in the region.

GELLIFY is quite a unique concept in the environment of innovation. because while it's an accelerator for startups it also serves as a fund for venture capitalists."

ALPHA DATA AND HPE

ALPHA DATA AND HPE HIGHLIGHT BENEFITS OF ITS IT CONSUMPTION MODELS

CPI Media Group, in conjunction with HPE and Alpha Data, hosted a virtual webinar on the business benefits of HPE's Container Platform and Consumption models.

uring the webinar, expert speakers
Erdinc Kaya, Lead
Storage Solutions
Architect, HPE; Navid Hussain,
Category Manager (GreenLake)
– MESA Region and Wassim
Babelli, Financial Area Manager
– Middle East, shed light on how the latest solutions and capabilities from HPE can help organisations future-proof their business models and accelerate their digital transformation journeys.

The webinar was kickstarted by Gibi Abraham Thomas, Manager – Presales and Technologies at Alpha Data, who emphasized the importance of the systems integrator's long-running strategic partnership with HPE. Thomas highlighted Alpha Data distinguished history in the IT industry which has spanned over 40 years – and said that the company has evolved to become the go-to partner for digital transformation in the region.

"We serve over 3,000 customers in the country and that ranges from SME's to large multinational organisations. We also have a strong ecosystem of partnerships, and we really value our collaboration with our vendors. We also have the highest level of with partnership with HPE. Traditional IT has evolved from client-server architecture to a virtualisation model and has moved into a cloud era of containers. Customers are on a cloud journey and they want

a consumption model that is agile and gives them flexibility and choice," said Thomas.

Erdinc Kaya, Lead Solutions Architect, HPE, then delivered his presentation which take a closer look at the HPE Container Platform, which was entitled bringing 'Kubernetes to the Enterprise'.

"We're seeing new ways to deploy applications and this containerization is bringing many advantages for enterprises. We're also seeing that the adoption of hybrid cloud and private cloud and having the ability to flexibility to migrate applications between these locations is something enterprises want," said Kaya.

Kaya claimed that containers and Kubernetes represented the next wave in software development.

"Containers have emerged as the standard way to build, deploy and migrate applications. Kubernetes is the container orchestration solution and is an open-source platform. Kubernetes essentially allows developers to be able to deploy, monitor and manage containers in a vast ecosystem of development, so it could be deployed in cloud or virtual environments," said Kaya.

Navid Hussain, Category
Manager, GreenLake — MESA
Region then delivered his
presentation which closely
examined the unique
capabilities that makes
GreenLake such an attractive
proposition for enterprises.

"What we do with HPE GreenLake is review what you



need and install extra capacity on-prem, which you don't pay for until you use it, so that addresses issues concerned to agility and reduces your costs. Unlike public cloud, at GreenLake we suggest what are the best technologies for your environment," said Hussain.

Hussain highlighted some of the key findings that emerged from a comprehensive report compiled by IDC on HPE GreenLake.

"The report by IDC found that HPE GreenLake reduced the time to market by 65%, improved ROI by 30% - and it also enhanced operational efficiency by 45%. Traditionally with procurement your returns would take about 3-5 years, but on this consumption model, because you're not making any investment upfront you will see an ROI within a year," said Hussain.

Hussain further illustrated

the benefits of the solution and outlined what it gives its customers.

"It is an operational console for users and IT – and it is managed for them so they can focus on their business. It unifies and simplifies operations across their hybrid estate," said Hussain.

Wassim Babelli, Financial Area Manager, Middle East at HPE, was the next executive to deliver his presentation which was entitled 'The Power of IT Economics.

During his presentation he mapped out the huge success HPE Financial Services has enjoyed and outlined the key role the company is playing in terms of assisting its customers with refinancing and relief packages during COVID-19.

"HPE Financial Services offered \$2 billion in refinancing and new programs to help its customers and partners cope with the economic impact of

COVID-19. HPEFS has launched programs that includes payment relief initiatives to help customers acquire new technology to navigate their way through the challenges they face in this uncertain climate caused by the global pandemic," said Babelli.

Babelli conceded that each company has their own specific KPIs and goals, but he said that HPEFS has positioned themselves to be an 'agent of change' and has helped their customers accelerate transformation.

"Our role is to work closely with our customers to help them execute their business objectives and then design a plan to help them acquire the technology they need to deliver their services. What we've discovered is that the majority of customers want to reduce costs, drive efficiency and minimise risk," said Babelli.

Customers are on a cloud journey and they want a consumption model that is agile and gives them flexibility and choice."

D-LINK

KEEPING YOU 'CONNECTED'

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Sakker Hussain**, Director – Sales and Marketing, Middle East & Africa at D-Link, to find out how its innovative end-to-end suite of solutions is empowering remote working and keeping businesses 'connected' during COVID-19.

Nuclias
Cloud offers customers the
opportunity
to create
secure and
easy access to WiFi environments with
versatile
deployment
options."

uclias Cloud
is a complete
end-to-end
cloud-managed
networking solution for SMBs
and large enterprises. Can
you outline to us the unique
capabilities of the solution
that ultimately differentiates
it from other similar cloudmanaged solutions that are
on the market?

Nuclias Connect and Nuclias Cloud Remote Network Management Solutions are part of our transformative remote work solutions portfolio and are genuine market differentiators.

The complete end-to-end innovative suite of solutions is crafted to assist and empower remote learning and working. It is unique because never before have IT administrators set up, automated, monitored and scaled wireless networks remotely so easily and seamlessly.

Nuclias Cloud portfolio allows SMBs and large enterprises across retail, education and hospitality, as well as MSPs, to deploy professional-grade networks from anywhere and anytime, eliminating physical space constraints. Convenience, cost-effectiveness and ease of use make the solutions ideal for onboarding, studying, troubleshooting as well as monitoring and reporting network activity quickly and easily.

Nuclias Managed Wireless
Networking Solutions offer the
capability, hosting flexibility,
and value that customers
need to carry out their digital
transformation efforts with
minimal interruptions. The
solutions offer centralised remote
network management via an
intuitive interface, and multitenant architecture that makes
outsourcing simple for end-users.

The ability to always be 'connected' is critical for businesses in an era driven by experiences. How does Nuclias Cloud help enterprises negate the issue of running their operations on unmanaged Wi-Fi connections? How does it provide seamless and reliable connectivity?

The success of digital workspaces, remote business models and e-learning relies on seamless network connections. A network downtime can result in a huge loss for a company.

A study done by Gartner a few years ago, revealed that the average cost of network downtime is around \$5,600 per minute, which amounts to a whopping \$300,000 per hour. While there could be a number of reasons for experiencing a downtime, Nuclias Cloud promises poor connections will not be one of them.

Additionally, with ransomware attacks and other security threats increasing around wireless devices, online transactions and cloud applications, businesses can no longer run the risk of 'winging it' with unmanaged Wi-Fi anymore.

Nuclias Cloud is designed to help customers make the transition from unmanaged consumer-grade equipment to a managed profession-grade one as effortless as possible. With Nuclias Cloud, customers can focus on their core businesses and eliminate the learning curve and enjoy guaranteed reliability for their secure connections.

Nuclias Cloud also removes the technical barriers for customers through DIY installation and operation, remote management of entire network and robust automation with minimum downtime.

Nuclias Cloud has been specifically designed for SMBs, large enterprises, hospitality, education and retail sectors. Can you tell us how these different industry verticals have utilised and leveraged the capabilities of the solution to help them maintain 'business continuity' during COVID-19? Nuclias Cloud was introduced to the region during the peak of COVID-19 lockdowns. Businesses were able to deploy solutions



from Nuclias Cloud portfolio effortlessly to connect to company networks as the installation process demanded a minimal need for in-house IT skills.

As the name suggests, customers can manage their networks from the cloud with this solution, which brings several benefits around control and convenience to the forefront. Regional companies and chains in the hospitality, educational, retail, SME as well as large enterprise sectors have capitalised on the opportunities Nuclias Cloud offers to maintain business continuity and accelerate digital transformation agendas,

especially during the current market conditions.

This includes ease of use, analytics and deep insights, customisation, secure Wi-Fi access, connectivity enhancing features, web content filtering and application controls for added security among others.

The COVID-19 pandemic
has forced many employees
to work remotely. However,
cyberattacks are on the increase
and companies are finding it a
major challenge to keep their
assets protected. How does
Nuclias Cloud help businesses
become more secure?
Nuclias Cloud offers customers

the opportunity to create secure and easy access to Wi-Fi environments with versatile deployment options.

The solutions are created for businesses where security and privacy are prioritised above everything else. With D-Link's Nuclias Cloud, customers are assured that the user data never leaves their possession and they can add additional security measures easily as they scale their operations.

Can you outline to us what your primary roles and responsibilities are as Director - Sales & Marketing, D-Link Middle East & Africa – and how have D-Link been affected by COVID-19?

My responsibilities include assisting D-Link expand its sales and partner base through dedicated partner programmes and in-depth sales and marketing support. I encourage partners to focus on innovation and get out of their comfort zones to stay ahead in the market.

The pandemic has reinforced our digital journey. D-Link Middle East implemented work from home policies much before the official lockdown in the UAE. D-Link made sure employees had access to the corporate networks in a secure manner. We offered support to our extensive customer and partner base through virtual meetings.

As a well-established leader in the networking and cloud space, we were able to make the transition to remote working securely, efficiently and successfully.

ADAPTING TO THE 'NEW NORM'

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Sami Abi Esber**, President – Midis System Integration Group and Board Member - Midis Group, to find out how the IT Leader is coping with the challenges of COVID-19 – and what impact the acceleration of digital transformation has had on the ICT ecosystem.

OVID-19 has ground the global economy to a halt and forced us all to adapt to what is being described as the 'new norm'. A major challenge for enterprises has been maintaining 'business continuity'. How has Midis SI Group leveraged its expertise to help its partners during this crisis?

The pandemic has pushed the global economy to the brink – and no industry or organisation has been immune to the crisis. In fact, every industry is still trying to deal with the stark reality that some businesses will not go back to usual as they were before COVID-19.

There is no secret that adaptability has become a critical trait today. To stay on top of this rapidly evolving world, Midis SI is working with customers to assess new situations, make intelligent decisions, and implement them effectively. These traits are incredibly important for organisations when it comes to responding effectively to unprecedented events like COVID-19. In addition, we are helping our customers establish greater business resilience which has been vital to all organisations, with business continuity being a huge topic of discussion.

The Midis SI Group's entities are being able to manage the expectations of our customers

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during this critical time. Our teams have constantly been in touch with customers, vendors and other stakeholders to ensure we are closely connected at all times. This has enabled us to keep abreast of the changing market dynamics and specific requirements of all our stakeholders.

We are keeping a real-time pulse on changing customer preferences and rapidly innovating to address new concerns of our customers, such as strengthening technology for disaster recovery and business continuity and providing them with new applications to enable better digital/online experiences.

The current global COVID-19 pandemic has really illustrated and reinforced the importance of embracing new technologies and adopting a 'digital first' approach in order to maintain business operations. In your expert opinion, do you think COVID-19 has accelerated digital transformation for many businesses?

There's no doubt that COVID-19 has accelerated digital transformation efforts even more to meet new customer and operational agility needs. Having said that, most companies are prioritising on employee experience for remote work and productivity and they have quickly made investments to address immediate technical needs. Organisations have also been more conscious in building practices for keeping everyone engaged.

COVID- 19 did give rise to a 'contact-free economy' -

digital commerce, telemedicine, distance learning and automation industries in particular are seeing a pivotal turning point

I also feel that cloud computing is gaining momentum and has emerged as an established operational model within businesses. Having said that, complete transition to the cloud is an ongoing journey - we still have a long way to be able to capture all of its benefits.

COVID-19 has also paved way for building awareness and response to new security threats in a digital landscape, especially with the need of government and companies to provide citizens and customers with secure access to information and digital services

Today, businesses are implementing video conferencing to replace travel or face-to-face meetings, and this has urged them to further build enhanced support options. Total cost of ownership has never been an easy metric to calculate, but as companies are becoming more strategic with their technology use, they are building an understanding that investments must go beyond individual devices or applications.

However, I believe that digital transformation efforts still have a long way to go, but we're talking about transforming an organisation, and not just adding a handful of tools. Certainly, there is a cultural aspect to this, but there is also an architectural aspect.

One area in which we've seen a lot of tangible digital transformation has been in the workplace. Due to COVID-19 We have always been on top of our game, wherein our business processes are agile enough to ensure a quick response to changing require-

ments and

customer

needs."

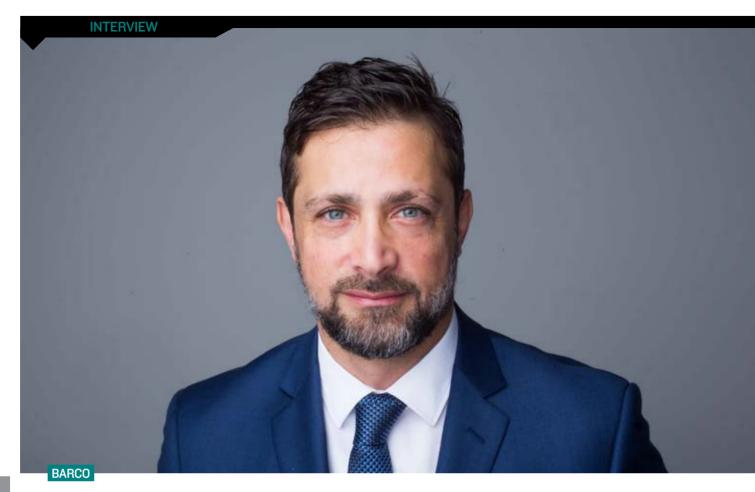
businesses have had to transition from the compounds of their traditional office environment to a virtual modern workplace. How have Midis Group coped with that challenge?

Currently the Midis SI Group operates across 13 countries and 20 major cities with our employees being our biggest assets. And we want to ensure their safety before anything else. Also, being able to manage the expectations of all our stakeholders is critical.

We have been successful in coping with some challenges in terms of employee requirements by giving them access to the organisation's internal network so they are always connected – while at the same time remaining robust from a security perspective by implementing strict security guidelines around access to sensitive data.

I'm extremely satisfied with the way Midis SI Group has been coping with challenges which have come our way in the last few months. We have always been on top of our game, wherein our business processes are agile enough to ensure a quick response to changing requirements and customer needs. The IT infrastructure that we have in place in all our offices across the region is designed to support these circumstances, and we have been highly effective in working remotely in the most efficient way.

This ultimately differentiates the Midis SI Group in today's evolving climate – and we have been successful thus far in helping to support all our stakeholders during these unique times.



THE FUTURE OF OUR WORKPLACE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Ramzi Itani, Vice President - Middle East & Africa at Barco has penned an exclusive op-ed for CNME which examines how the future of our workplaces will look like post COVID-19 - and outlines some tips businesses can implement to adapt and cope with these new challenges.

n the last decade, innovations in digital connectivity coupled with employee demands for flexible working conditions have inspired a re-evaluation of the traditional business model. However, the current pandemic has pushed organisations to embrace the remote working culture rapidly – accelerating the digital transformation

journey of many companies – to increase productivity, maintain business continuity and ensure safety of the staff.

Many countries across the globe saw businesses comply to this new form of working and adapt accordingly. In the UAE, 80 per cent of the private sector employees and 100 percent of public sector were asked to work from home as a

preventative measure to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Technology is empowering unprecedented collaboration in the workplace and has revolutionised the way that colleagues and clients communicate and share data with each other. A recent Barco ClickShare survey revealed that 78% of employees strongly support tech-enabled meetings that facilitate the participation of remote joiners.

This means that cross-collaboration between co-workers is maintained despite geographical locations, a benefit well suited to the spread of globalisation and international business practices.

While the pandemic has generated an enforced mass movement to home working, employees who have been in lockdown for several weeks are now beginning to crave the human contact that an office environment delivers.

In a post-virus world, businesses will better understand the benefits of a remote structure but will, more likely, want to adopt a hybrid approach that mixes office-based work and home working more fluidly. This approach delivers the physical interaction that humans need to thrive, with the convenience and flexibility of remote working.

The ability to reduce the number of employees based centrally by implementing flexible working has additional benefits. Office space can be reduced to accommodate a less permanently based workforce while the majority of workers can spread across multiple locations where they often have more immediate access to clients and suppliers.

This fluid approach to remote working also lends itself to the popular freelance economy where workers are brought in as and when required in response to market demands. Contractors largely work from home as they are a temporary workforce and readily engage with technologies that enable remote collaboration.

With the explosion of personal device ownership, employees welcome the opportunity to interact with colleagues using their preferred technology and software solutions. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) culture has resulted in a growth in efficiency as it delivers a more agile workforce, where employees can use their own devices to connect to myriad

conferencing systems in meetings or remotely.

This is one of the main reasons Barco invested in its new ClickShare Conference solution to cater to employees and businesses who want flexibility now and need technology that facilitates this. Indeed, our study showed that 71% of employees are already selecting their own preferred conferencing system to communicate with co-workers, with, on average, six different conferencing solutions being used by companies in the past six months.

As the BYOD – or in this case, Bring Your Own Meeting trend increases, companies must adopt agnostic solutions that facilitate seamless collaborations between multiple software and cloudbased technologies. Solution like ClickShare Conference, which enable employees to use multiple conferencing systems to host remote meetings, are designed to empower companies and employees as they drive efficient collaborations while delivering secure access to a corporate network.

Security is a key priority for all organisations as sensitive data is being transferred across networks and being accessed by external devices. There needs to be a mindset shift around this potential security threat. With the right technology, security measures and training of employees, the risks can be mitigated.

Apprehension surrounding employees using their own devices and software solutions to access internal infrastructure are of course justified. However, there are strong cyber safeguards that can be implemented to protect company networks and safeguard the integrity of those devices logging on. IT systems can protect themselves from cyberattacks by ensuring that appropriate identification and authorisation steps are taken during set-up and all transferred data is encrypted.

Personal devices are often lost or stolen providing opportunities for unauthorised access to sensitive company data. Remote device management software can help to mitigate against such risks.

The disruption to normal working life from COVID-19 has been huge, and technology has become even more vital in these trying recent weeks and months. But it must be remembered that these trends were happening long before COVID-19; we have been moving to flexible, remote working and towards more virtual collaboration for some time now.

However, as people return to work post lockdown, many more will appreciate the benefits of being able to collaborate remotely and will expect a revised structure where remote working plays a bigger role in their working week. Businesses must ensure they are future proofed to enable them to adapt to and embrace everything that technology brings in this area.

By providing a flexible working model empowered by powerful digital collaboration tools, companies can give their employees the best possible chance of doing their job effectively and productively – no matter what the future holds.

The disruption to normal working life from CO-VID-19 has been huge. and technology has become even more vital in these trying recent weeks and months."

APPDYNAMICS

THE APM PROVIDER FUELLING YOUR DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **David Noël**, Regional Vice President - Middle East, Africa & Russia CIS, at AppDynamics, to find out how the global APM leader is empowering businesses to deliver unrivalled digital experiences to its customers.

e now live in a truly connected digital world which is ultimately driven by user experiences. Technology now plays a fundamental role in our daily lives, but with that comes heightened expectations when it comes to how we interact with applications.

Any negative experience that consumers may encounter when using an application can have severe financial implications and repercussions for businesses. In this new digital world, brand loyalty is something of a rarity, and what has become abundantly

clear is that our attitudes to the applications that fuel our experiences are fickle to say the least.

Businesses understand that 'customer experience' is critical to their very survival – and that is why AppDynamics has become the go-to player globally for enterprises striving to ensure they meet the demands and requirements of their users.

Whether it be booking a taxi, or ordering food, a poor experience can determine if we are likely to stop using that application entirely – or advise our family and friends to avoid using a particular product or service. "Given our low tolerance level for less than perfect digital experiences, it's

easy to make the argument that 'application loyalty' is the new 'brand loyalty'," Noël explained.

Noël is a former Gartner account executive who joined AppDynamics four years ago and was tasked with the responsibility of spearheading its operations here in the UAE, and across the Middle East and Africa region.

Prior to joining AppDynamics, he was well-positioned to see that there was going to be an explosion of digital transformation across the Middle East - but stressed that this process and journey has been accelerated by the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic.

"I've always loved working at the forefront of innovation, and when I was at Gartner, I could see that this region was heading towards a path of seismic digital transformation and it has been on that path for the last four years. But this has been exacerbated in the last three months due to COVID-19. We've seen digital transformation projects implemented in days and weeks that would normally have taken months or years."

In a new study launched in May, 'The Agents of Transformation Report 2020 - COVID-19 Edition', AppDynamics discovered that an overwhelming 99% of IT professionals in the UAE said their organisations had changed their technology priorities as a result of the pandemic. And 78% confirmed they had implemented digital transformation projects in a massively shortened time frame.

"Many organisations have had to scramble to transform

digitally. The availability and performance of applications and digital services has become a priority for IT teams, and technology such as Application Performance Monitoring (APM) has become more business-critical than ever," said Noël.

The dynamic executive then outlined the science behind how the APM provider helps businesses overcome challenges in terms of the delivery of their services to ensure seamless experiences.

"Every time a user interacts with a mobile application it initiates a transaction in the application. When something understand performance, especially when you consider the complexity of multi-cloud. We use ML & AI to monitor the real-time performance of the application. This enables us to create an intelligent machine learnt baseline," said Noël. "We now know what normal looks like".

According to Noël the creation of a 'dynamic baseline' informs IT managers across the UAE, from banks to airlines, if their application is performing like it should be.

"As soon as there is any deviation from the machinelearnt baseline, it is immediately



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flagged and reported to their IT department. The information conveyed in real-time, alerts them proactively to the fact that something is degrading and that customers are going to get very frustrated, very quickly, because the application isn't working properly. It is essentially an early-warning system that allows them to start fixing the issue before it impacts more customers and hurts their financial performance," continued Noël.

"The additional value of seeing the execution of 'every line of code' give us the ability to visualise business data. Application Analytics, allows customers to automatically extract the data associated with each transaction flowing through their application and propagate business context without having to worry about

coding to logs. With this, users get insight into the real-time revenue, and business performance," said Noël.

AppDynamics entered the market in the Middle East back in 2016 – and has quickly positioned itself as the partner of choice for a whole host of major companies from across different industries in the region.

Noël explained that he was the first employee on the ground in this region for the APM provider, and in the following years AppDynamics has exponentially grown its direct sales teams and partner ecosystem to ensure strong coverage in each of its target markets.

"We work with enterprise organisations across the region in multiple sectors including telecoms, airline, banking, financial services and insurance. Many consumers across the UAE use applications every day where AppDynamics is playing a role in delivering exceptional digital customer experience,"

The charismatic regional VP explained the strategy behind the customers they specifically targeted when attempting to penetrate the market here.

"When we started, we quickly identified which customers we can help the most. We honed in on organisations that have significant digital services delivered through web and mobile and quickly demonstrated how AppDynamics can improve both their customer experience and customer satisfaction with demonstrable business benefits and proven ROI," said Noël.

Returning to the Agents of Transformation report and the ongoing challenges caused by the pandemic, Noël explained that the pressures technologists have faced in recent months have been unprecedented. 72% of technologists feel under more pressure at work than ever before and 81% believe that COVID-19 has created the biggest technology pressure that their organisation has ever experienced.



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to the challenge and become Agents of Transformation within their organisation. Despite the pressure, 88% of technologists see this time as an opportunity to show their value to the business and 85% say their perception within the business has been positively impacted by the IT teams response to COVID-19," said Noel.

Crucially, AppDynamics has shown solidarity with its customers during these unprecedented times by launching its COVID-19 Assist Program.

"AppDynamics launched the COVID-19 Assist Program to help companies experiencing a surge in traffic on websites and mission-critical internal and external applications. The program includes offering free licenses to use our SaaS platform for a period of three months, free 30-minute meetings with a technical consultant to review and revisit the new requirements in the current climate and free access to our AppDynamics Premium University. We're passionate about helping enterprise organisations as they adapt to the digital demands resulting from COVID-19," said Noël.

In addition to this,
AppDynamics customers
are benefitting from Cisco
Capital's Business Resiliency
Program which enables
customers to defer 95%
of payments on qualified
purchases until 2021.

"Our proposition for the industry when the pandemic hit was pretty powerful, and the approach has been very well-received by the industry," said Noël.

It's impossible to ignore COVID-19 as it has affected every aspect of our daily lives, but it has also further increased our dependence on applications and we're using them now more than ever before to remain connected. A trend that AppDynamics has been tracking for some time.

In 2019 AppDynamics released a report titled 'The App Attention Index'. The regional VP explained what is meant by a 'digital reflex' which is a term coined from the report.

"During nearly every waking moment of the day, people are interacting with a host of applications that deliver digital experiences. These experiences drive so much of our everyday lives that, often, we're not even aware of our reliance on them. In this way, the use of digital services has become an extension of human behavior, an impulsive, natural, sub-conscious action - a "digital reflex." So it's vital brands acknowledge that exceptional digital performance and world-class customer experiences are no longer aspirational - they're business-critical."

When asked what ultimately differentiates AppDynamics from other APM providers in what is an ultra-competitive environment, Noël believes the combination of its capabilities coupled with that of Cisco, which acquired the company in 2017, makes the company a formidable force.

"When we joined

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Our proposition for the industry when the pandemic hit was pretty powerful, and the approach has been very well-received by the industry."

forces with Cisco in 2017, it helped them transform
– and together we built a common purpose across the Cisco stack and AppDynamics.
We've created a vision for AIOps called the Central Nervous System (CNS) for IT. Through the CNS vision AppDynamics and Cisco empower businesses with AI-powered insights and automation that help customers take the right action, at exactly the right time," said Noël.

However, he points out that when you have a poor digital experience the application is not always the issue. Equally the network or underlying infrastructure could be the source of the problem.

"The combination of AppDynamics and Cisco is unique. With Cisco we're able to provide full end-to-end visibility through the whole stack. Other APM vendors will be stuck on the application side, but we can go right into the applications, the server layer and virtualisation all the way into the network, or the hardware - and the clients today are demanding full stack visibility - our ability to do this differentiates us from other competitors, " concluded Noël. Come

COMPUTER NETWORK SYSTEMS

CNS ADAPTS ITS BUSINESS MODEL TO HELP CUSTOMERS COPE WITH COVID-19

Hatem Hariri, CNS Managing Director, outlines how the IT leader has been serving customers in the UAE and Middle East region for the last 34 years in delivering technology innovations and solutions to their business problems.



NS is a regional leader in providing innovation and cutting-edge technologies and has been offering digital solutions for more than three decades to support organizations in the UAE and across the GCC.

"We thrive in offering a full-service blend of software, hardware, and innovative technologies in addition to a round-the-clock service support and managed services to enable clients in their digital transformation journey, and their customer support," said Hariri.

Hariri alluded to the impact COVID-19 is going to have on IT spending globally and said some industries will recover quicker than others.

"No one can deny that COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact globally and regionally on almost every industry. Several studies have shown that IT spending will decline by approximately 8% in comparison to last year due to the impact of COVID019 on the global economy," said Hariri.

The CNS Managing Director believes that industries such as hospitality, entertainment, and aviation will recover slower than others – and feels that client demand patterns will also shift and said that companies must be able to adapt in order to align with these new changes.

"At CNS, we're turning this massive challenge into meaningful change by engaging more in supporting our customers, by doing more with less. We're providing a new all comprehensive offering with an OPEX model, with highly efficient managed services," said Hariri.

According to Hariri, cloud based transformational solutions and services are one of the key highlights during the pandemic and will be post COVID-19 such as cloud-based telephony, messaging and cloud-based conferencing.

"We're enabling several clients with remote working and distance learning solutions

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We are very happy to have CNS IT services.
CNS are doing an excellent job and have been great about taking on extra assignments.
CNS quickly identified and understood our key needs and suggested creative and cost-efficient solutions to addressing them."

Ghassan Saleh, Project Management expert at Federal Tax Authority





by providing them with high security levels to empower them and maintain a high-level of business continuity. I've got full confidence that we are reshaping the IT landscape in the region thanks to our post-COVID-19 adapted business model which is supporting clients in their digital journey," said Hariri.

Meet the Experts:

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to Asef Sleiman— Head of innovation and technology partner business unit at CNS to find out how Computer Network Systems have been leveraging their expertise and knowledge to help their clients maintain 'business continuity' during the lockdown.

"Technology has played an essential role in helping both people and organizations to continue being productive and connected. Our strong relationships with our clients and our understanding of their business needs and objectives helped us to act quickly and respond to their immediate requirements and same time opened new areas of innovation



to support our enterprise customers," said Sleiman.

CNS supported their clients in their business continuity through different solutions such as automation (business and communication), remote working type capabilities like collaboration and secured communication.

"We addressed the security demand for remote working, for example we responded very quickly to new demands due to the COVID-19 situation for frontline customers like MOHAP where we had to help them mobilize quickly and provide the connectivity and security requirement for more

than 28 quarantine locations in addition to providing the managed services for this demand. Our focus on cloud has also been paramount which supported our clients in their business continuity. Thanks to our expertise and cloud offering whether on–premise or the hybrid one, our clients benefited during this critical period from instant access to computing infrastructure," said Sleiman.

Ayman Basha, Head of Digital Banking – partner business unit at CNS, explained how they have been helping their customers in the banking and finance sector before and during COVID-19.

"It's very imperative to understand the implication of the current banking and finance challenges before and during the pandemic event of COVID-19. The banking industry faced a considerable disruption from many of the FinTech companies as they were filling gaps within the banking services, offering more sufficiently and efficiently services which meet

CNS Middle East delivered on the main objectives of MOHAP project by building an IT foundation that is backed up by 24×7 service delivery and technical support to guarantee service continuity and customer satisfaction."

Mubaraka Mubarak Ali Ibrahim, Director of Health Information, MOHAP.

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Over the last three years our experience with CNS has been fantastic and we're very satisfied, especially their technical team which is very proactive and always support us with high priority. I also appreciate the Desktop and Network and Sales team members for their response and valuable support."

Shah Mohammed, Networks Analyst, Social Care & Minors Affairs Foundation.

consumer needs anywhere anytime," said Basha.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Basha also believes many financial institutions are facing challenges due to legacy issues.

"The need to have digital services avoiding physical interaction is currently a must and not a choice anymore. The banking and finance industry are clearly suffering from the legacy, and traditional way of doing their business, and they are exploring all digital options, including moving their entire CORE banking into cloud and SAAS model," said Basha.

Basha also highlighted CNS's role in supporting their customers which is based on their long history of technology innovation.

"We are positioning CNS-BFSI to be an essential cornerstone that enables banks to build and implement their digital transformation strategies in a progressing and logical way, and enhancing their traditional banking model, by enlarging the focus on embracing and transforming their technology infrastructure and e-channels to enable digital services targeting customer needs by enabling quick ROI for customers based on SAAS model with ready API's connectors," said Basha.

Saeed Khan, Head of managed services and ITO at CNS, explained how they helped clients maintain operations whilst at the same time reducing their costs.

"CNS offers a shared delivery model through our NOC centers in Dubai and Abu Dhabi for managed services to enable service and business continuity which can help organizations to reduce cost through our OPEX model," said Khan.

CNS's service improvement programs are systematically planned initiatives which attribute improvement in one or more of the following parameters of service delivery:

- IT Service Management through adoption of digital transformation AI & RPA technologies
- Detect incident/ problem reduction and improve capacity and availability through analysis.
- · Knowledge Base Management
- Defined roles based on IT Service Management processes rather than skills.
- Identify bottlenecks as processes execute.
- Monitor and dynamically adjust actual work.

JUNE 2020

RUBRIK AND EXCLUSIVE NETWORKS

RUBRIK AND EXCLUSIVE NETWORKS HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF CYBER RESILIENCE

CPI Media Group, in conjunction with Exclusive Networks and cybersecurity vendor Rubrik, hosted a virtual roundtable last month which examined how Rubrik's suite of innovative solutions were helping enterprises become cyber-resilient during COVID-19.



urthy Sadasivan, Vendor Manager, Exclusive
Networks
opened the roundtable by briefly documenting the details of its partnership as one of Rubrik's distributors in the region.

"We essentially assist the channel partners of Rubrik and its enterprise customers. Rurik's flagship cloud data management solution helps customers with their data compliance and data protection for their on-prem

and cloud infrastructure. We go to market together to enable the channel partners and system integrators in the region can effectively support all their customers in terms of protecting their data," said Sadasivan.

Mohammed Al Tamimi, Regional Sales Director, Middle East, Turkey, North Africa, Rubrik, deliver his presentation and pointed out that the evolution and progress of data management has been slow and there has been a lack of innovation in this area.

"Nothing much has changed. You still need to have this infrastructure to have a proper back-up and you still need back-up software. Many enterprises have been trying to improve their back-up infrastructure by changing these silos – but they

Each appliance of ours has built in flash, and we give you 30,000 IOPS to be able to restore your data faster."

switch vendors hoping that will improve performance but end up encountering the same pain points," said Al Tamimi.

The financial damage of ransomware attacks globally in was \$300m in 2015, but that rose to \$12 billion last year and is being projected to reach \$20 billion by 2020.

"Ransomware recovery is critical – and attackers are attempting to further capitalize on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as many businesses are extremely vulnerable in the current climate. Each appliance of ours has built in flash and we give you 30,000 IOPS to be able to restore your data faster. In our appliances our intelligence is not in the hardware it is in the software," said Al Tamimi.

Al Tamimi illustrated the nuances in its enterprise solution compared to that of their rivals – and said its ability to encrypt its metadata differentiated Rubrik from others in the market.

"Our enterprise back-up solution is very simply to set-up and easy to deploy, and it is ultimately built for security. If you're backing-up your data, but you're not able to protect it, then we're not doing our job. Our job is to not only back it up but also protect it. What differentiates us from our cybersecurity solution providers is we start encrypting the data as soon as we start backing it up. It's a full end-to-end encryption. The key difference between us and other vendors is that they encrypt their data, but they don't encrypt their metadata, so their file system is not protected. Our file system is immune, and our data is encrypted," said Al Tamimi. **cnme**

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EUFY SECURITY: CONNECTING PEOPLE IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL DISTANCING

How eufy Security helps families and front-liners stay in touch with loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic



s we practice social distancing and follow guidelines to flatten the curve and reduce the spread of the coronavirus, a reliable home security system like eufy Security can help us keep an eye on what is happening outdoors, at home, at the office, watch elderly relatives living remotely while essential front liners can keep an eye of their family while at work.

COVID-19 has caused significant 'anxiety' for families, making it difficult to keep an eye on children around the clock or monitor elderly parents who live remotely. eufy Security Smart Wireless Cameras and Video doorbells, hence, have become essential at this current moment using 'motion activity alerts' that shows who is entering or leaving your home or any room, who is at your door step and users can define the

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designated zone to get alerts on unusual activity.

While some parents are allowed to work from home during isolation, essential workers do not have that privilege and need to monitor home schooling or child sitting at a distance. For these parents, knowing what is going on at home while they are away is vital. Are the kids staying in the house and attending their classes and is their lunch or dinner arriving on time are questions that can cause anxiety.

The motion detection alerts in eufy Security cameras, which can be wirelessly installed near the front door and are triggered by movement can answer the above questions. Users receive a smartphone alert when a motion is detected and recorded and the video is viewable at the same time.

The real-time response feature on the camera allows you to speak directly to anyone who approaches your front door via two-way audio as well as keep the kids disciplined during study time. It is a great way to be plugged into your kids' activity while working on the front lines and ensure intruders stay away.

The eufy Video Doorbell has also proven to be another great accessory during isolation. If you use online food and groceries delivery services like Talabat, Uber Eats, Amazon, noon, you may know that they practice 'no-contact delivery' by placing your food or grocery in a way that minimises inperson contact. eufy Video Doorbell alerts you when your

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: EUFY VIDEO DOORBELL



ufy Security's wireless 2K Video Doorbell is powered with artificial intelligence (AI) technology to help homeowners to easily determine and analyse whether or not a human is present within the vicinity of the device. The device is equipped with a built-in Sony 2K sensor and professional-grade lens that allow users to view any activity in picture-perfect resolution. Users can see visitors in sharp detail as they approach the door. The AI feature ensures that only relevant alerts are sent to the users and that they are notified in real-time.

In true eufy Security fashion, the wireless eufy Video Doorbell can stay powered and functional for six months in one charge. Users can also connect the device to Google Voice Assistant, Amazon Alexa or Apple Homekit to check in anytime on what's happening outside their homes.

Keeping not only security but also privacy in mind, all data collected by the wireless eufy Video Doorbell are stored locally, which means users won't need to pay for cloud storage.

"At eufy Security we are continuously working towards delivering data privacy while also developing innovative products to provide more choices to our customers and ensuring the highest value for their money," said Syed Sameer Ali, senior sales and operations manager, Eufy security GCC.

eufy Security video doorbell is now available at Amazon, noon, Sharaf DG, Jumbo and Virgin Megastore for AED 725.

food or grocery has arrived and you can see and speak to the delivery team using the eufy Security app.

If you are worried about unfamiliar faces or strangers in the neighbourhood, you can check suspicious activity from your smartphone. eufy Doorbell (2k resolution) is equipped with a two-way audio system to scare off intruders and allows you to save footage with no monthly charges.

If you are in quarantine or at the hospital, you can also stay in touch with people at home and office and feel as though you are in the same room.

eufy Security Doorbell is more important now than ever during these challenging times as COVID-19 keeps us away from our office, our elderly relatives and in some instances, away from family if our jobs require us to be out in the field helping to battle the coronavirus. It has made isolation from our loved ones more bearable and relieves anxiety with the real-time interaction.

IVANTI

IVANTI PARTNERS WITH UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH TO TRANSFORM IT SERVICES

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to senior representatives from the University of Sharjah, to find out how the deployment of Ivanti's Service Manager solution has transformed their IT services at the academic institution.

r. Hussein Elmehdi,
Dean of Academic
Support Services,
Omar Harara,
Service Desk Manager, and
Anissa Bettayeb, Head of
Academic Computing Service
Section at University of Sharjah,
articulated the impact the
solution has had in terms of
enhancing the IT services it
provides for faculty, students
and staff.

Harara said that in the last 18 months the University of Sharjah began implementing an overhaul of service management in their IT department.

"The first decision we took was to re-establish the Service Desk. We did previously have a Service Desk, but it was largely ineffective and inefficient. There was no IT Service Management framework (ITIL), monitoring of IT performance, user requests or tracking. I joined the University of Sharjah 18 months ago, and I was tasked with the responsibility of both

architecting and implementing IT Service Management processes and to re-establish the Service Desk and make it much more effective for the end-users," said Omar.

The dynamic Service Desk manager at University of Sharjah also highlighted how they determined that they also needed to implement ITIL processes such as (service catalogue, service agreement, incident, request, problem and change management) and how these processes showed the value of the IT department to the stakeholders.

"We were providing a lot of services to the end users, but ultimately we had no classification of our services or the incidents that were flagged, so we couldn't categorise them or evaluate the performance of our services in terms of incidents and service requests," said Omar.

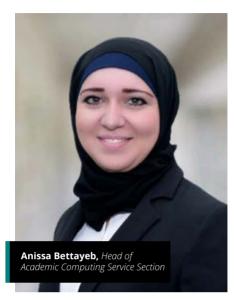
He added, "The endusers feel that they can now communicate much better with the IT department and that there is a single point of contact for all their requests. It has enabled the end-users to build trust in the support services provided by the IT department as there is complete transparency on our IT performance," said Omar.

His colleague Anissa Bettayeb documented the benefits her section got from the implementation and confirmed the significant benefits gained after implementing Ivanti Service Desk.

"The IT Service Management really empowered us with the capabilities to evaluate and monitor the performance of our staff and processes through the dashboards and reporting services. It also allowed us to better diagnose, categorise, prioritise and flag incident, service and changes requests. However, now we have a dashboard and system in place that monitors and records all of this automatically," said Anissa.







She added, "The capacity of my instructional technologies support distance learning team was 3, which in normal circumstances was adequate. However, when lockdown restrictions came into effect and we rolled out remote learning this rather inevitably resulted in a heavy load and the demand increased exponentially. Ivanti Service Desk relayed information to us in terms of statistics and real-time data that allowed us to request an extension for additional staff and we relocated different staff from other departments to be part of my new team in an effort to cope with the new demands."

Dr. Hussein Elmehdi, Dean of Academic Support Services at University of Sharjah said they recognized the importance of support services for various academic and administrative entities at the University.

"University of Sharjah has set a clear strategic goal to establish a Service Desk that is well-equipped and well-resourced to ensure that the needs of the stakeholders are fulfilled. In addition to this, we plan to expand the Service Desk to cover non-IT departments such as admissions and registration department. Our strategy is to have unified communication and support channel for all students, faculty and administrative staff requests," said Dr. Hussein.

Many commentators including Dr. Hussein believe that the way education is delivered will be fundamentally changed forever as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis.

"The smooth transition to eLearning, in a relatively short time, will definitely have a positive and immediate impact on the way we view education in the future. For example, at University of Sharjah the strategic goal was to incorporate blended learning gradually with annual KPIs that will enable

University of Sharjah has set a clear strategic goal to establish a Service Desk that is wellequipped and wellresourced to ensure that the needs of the stakeholders are

fulfilled."

us to reach 100% utilization by 2024," said Dr. Hussein.

He added that this will have a great impact on education in the future where technology will be viewed as an integral tool that will not only facilitate teaching and learning – but will also serve as a possible replacement to face-to-face education.

"The success witnessed in the past three months in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic came about as a result of excellent collaboration among different entities within the institution, with Service Desk playing an integral role by providing timely technical support that extended beyond working hours. Personally, I believe we're heading to an area of 'education without borders' - where time and geography will not be considered as limiting factors on the decision for students to pursue their education at postsecondary level and beyond," concluded Dr. Hussein. Cnme



TIME FOR AIRPORTS TO EMBRACE DIGITALIZATION

Alaa Elshimy, MD & SVP, Huawei Enterprise Business Group, Middle East explains why airports needs to embrace digitalization in order to build a smart ecosystem required to take the aviation sector to the next level.

he evolving digital world requires digitally-enabled airports. Travel today is more accessible than ever before, with 4.4 billion worldwide passenger journeys in 2018, and an estimated 4.5 billion journeys in 2019.

While things may have slowed down so far in 2020 as a result of the global COVID-19 outbreak, airports will still need to consider how best to embrace digital technologies in order to build the smart ecosystem that tomorrow's aviation industry will require.

Technology has had a transformative impact on every aspect of the travel industry, from aircrafts to passenger bookings, to check-in, and the way we manage our personal itineraries. Passengers today expect a seamless experience from start to finish.

Many are eager to embrace the way convenience that technology brings to their travel experience, such as there no longer being a risk of losing paper travel tickets or boarding passes as – for most major airlines – everything is now available on a mobile app, or the fact that online check-in and the ability to make, change, and personalise bookings through a website or app empowers them to take control.

Airlines have clearly embraced the digital passenger experience, so why should airport technology lag behind?

A smart airport is one that

adopts technology into its very core. Applications driven by artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and soon 5G will enable then to not only provide a better experience for passengers and airlines, but to enhance overall operations.

Technology gimmicks are nice to have, such as hologram greeters, talking robots, and interactive tablets or displays, but these are just surface solutions that have little impact on the overall efficiency of an airport, even if they do contribute somewhat to the passenger experience.

When selecting smart solutions as part of an airport's digital transformation journey, it is important to look at several key factors. These will vary



depending on the individual requirements of each facility, but generally speaking, there are three main considerations: return on investment, contribution to operational efficiency, and the impact on airport staff, airlines and passengers.

The latter – impact on passengers – is perhaps the more simple consideration to address. It is expected that any journey through an airport, whether departing, arriving, or transiting through, is seamless from start to finish.

Solutions that introduce efficiency in processes, such as check-in or security scans, increase satisfaction and lower

stress levels. Self-service solutions are winners here. Unmanned check-in and bag-drop services are one example here, cutting down queuing time for passengers – or allowing them to skip the queues altogether.

AI-enabled biometric scanning at immigration check points and e-gates are also beneficial for efficiency, especially as high resolution imaging, coupled with powerful data processing technology, makes it possible to identify individuals even in crowded conditions.

In terms of airlines, the impact of smart solutions can mean anything from minutes saved to increased safety. AIenabled solutions can run gate logistics more quickly than a human, assigning aircraft to the most logical option in order to offer the best possible experience for disembarking passengers by reducing the walk time to immigration.

In terms of safety, smart technology has been successfully implemented in numerous air traffic control towers around the world. There are currently several remote or 'virtual'

control towers in operation,
which takes the entire
control team to an
off-airport site using a
high-speed network
of cameras, sensors,
AI and big data
to safely guide
aircraft onground and
in the air.

Alaa Elshimy MD & SVP, Huawei Enterprise Business Group, Middle East This is possible at present on 4G networks – imagine the immense potential for advancement once 5G, with its lower latency and faster connectivity, becomes more prevalent.

Both aspects explored above contribute significantly to airport of the second of

Both aspects explored above contribute significantly to airport staff experience. Making the shift to become a digitally-enabled environment typically benefits employees by making their life easier. AI can step in and assist in the completion of certain tasks. Big data can help to predict patterns and aid in decision—making. Cloud computing will enable easier, faster access to all data, from anywhere.

Naturally, these all feed into overall operational efficiency, as well. But, in addition to making an airport run more smoothly, smart technology can also be used to make it more environmentally efficient, by helping to reduce emissions and lower energy consumption, for example. In a building that is functional 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, this is especially important to lessen carbon footprint.

With so many benefits, return on investment for an intelligently designed digitalisation initiative become obvious.

And the above examples are only scratching the surface of what is possible, with the practically limitless applications of technology's big-hitters – 5G, AI, big data, and cloud computing. Any airport, anywhere, can benefit from embracing smart solutions... all it takes is the right technology partner, with proven capabilities and a passion for innovation, to make it happen.

In terms
of safety,
smart
technology
has been
successfully implemented in
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control towers around
the world."











Backup Battery for HomeBase



Live Streaming



100dB Siren Anti-Theft Protection







AES 256 Military-Grade Encryption



Assistant

Two-Way Audio

Apple Home Kit

eufy Security Range of Products





eufycam 2C 2+1 kit T8831



eufy Floodlight Cam T8420



eufy Doorbell 2K with Homebase E8210



Available at















HIGHER COLLEGES OF TECHNOLOGY

HCT SUCCESSFULLY OVERCOMES COVID-19 DISRUPTION AND LEADS FUTURE EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

In this month's edition of GovTech we spoke to **Dr. Abullatif Al Shamsi**, President & CEO at the Higher Colleges of Technology, to find out how this applied higher education institution has been able to maintain 'instructional and business continuity' amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

CT has established itself as an impactful transformative leader in the education sector in the UAE – and has forged a reputation for pioneering emerging digital technologies and introducing them across their diverse range of applied degree programs at its 16 campuses.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted every aspect of our daily lives and has ground the global economy to a halt. Every industry has been impacted in some way by the crisis and the education sector has not been immune to that.

However, what has become

evident during the COVID-19 outbreak is that some organisations were much better prepared and equipped to deal with the crisis than others — and a perfect example and illustration of this in education is the Higher Colleges of Technology.

Al Shamsi pointed out that whilst millions of other students around the world have been severely impacted by COVID-19, the strategic foresight and preemptive outlook of the UAE leadership has enabled 'instructional and business continuity' — and the government commitment to supporting their academic institutions through continued

investment has enabled them to deliver interactive and engaging distance learning experience for all its students.

"Over the last 10 years the UAE government has invested significantly in emerging technologies as part of their efforts to ensure that all our students have access to a technology enabled learning experience. The readiness of HCT in response to this crisis has come from a concerted effort over the last four years that is summarised in five key strategies: (1) acquire all the latest educational technologies, (2) build a solid digital infrastructure, (3) digitise curricula and teaching



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our students. Our learning environment is well equipped to provide digital content for our students, yet we also recognise that we are dealing with Generation Z. They have grown up with technology embedded in their daily lives and as such have become tech savvy — so providing them with digital learning solutions accessible at their own pace was a no brainer for an institution like HCT that has technology in its name."

Al Shamsi elaborated further and said "Worth mentioning that HCT was the first educational institution in the UAE to provide e-Teacher certification in collaboration with Blackboard International to certify its entire faculty body in teaching with technology. We all know that itis not simply about the infrastructure, or acquiring technology, it is all about empowering our people to utilise it more effectively for the best interest of our students."

This forward-looking educational leader also said that HCT's 'hybrid learning' approach that they have been pursuing over the past five years made the transition to distance learning smoother in response to COVID-19 outbreak.

He said "The decisions we have taken over the years paid off when it was mandated to move to online learning in less than a week. Our faculty were well-prepared, but more importantly our students were receptive to this type of learning environment".

Al Shamsi also disclosed

that HCT conducted a two-day pilot of full online learning on March 4th and 5th to assess institutional readiness ahead of commencement of the full online learning delivery mode when students returned after a two-week spring break.

He also added "We conducted a comprehensive survey during the pilot phase which helped us to identify what the gaps were and what we needed to do to ensure readiness for a full online learning delivery mode – scheduled to commence on March 22nd".

HCT is the largest higher education institution in the United Arab Emirates, and has more than 23,000 students across 16 campuses in the country. It was a complex challenge to ensure they maintained 'instructional and business continuity' during COVID-19, but Al Shamsi highlighted how much of a success this transition has been for HCT.

"During the first month of our full online delivery mode we were able to deliver 1.1 million hours of teaching and learning activities through our Blackboard learning management system. Our students have displayed a tremendous commitment to online learning and that has been evidenced through their attendance rate" said Al Shamsi.

HCT's CEO also reserved special praise for his faculty who he said had become very creative and innovative in how they delivered taught and engaged with their students.

"The change our faculty

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have encountered during this transition was not an easy one. They were under pressure to make sure their online classes are interactive and engaging for the students. However, we have seen exemplary performances from our faculty in providing a very high quality of instruction during this time," said Al Shamsi.

He also stressed the need for a distinction to be made between those speaking negatively about online education and the restrictions of COVID-19.

"We need to make a distinction between the lockdown and online learning. You will hear frustrations being expressed by parents, students or faculty because many have been overwhelmed by this almost overnight change in 77/7

During the first month of our full online delivery mode we were able to deliver I.I million hours of teaching and learning activities through our Blackboard learning management system."

terms of how we have been typically delivering education over centuries. Students are stuck at home during quarantine with their family 24/7 and that is creating stress because they are desperate to see their friends and resume their social lives – and many people working remotely also could not wait to get back into the office because they miss

engaging with their colleagues on a daily basis. Now this is not because online learning is terrible, it's simply because of the social restrictions imposed," said Al Shamsi.

When asked what education will look like post COVID-19, Al Shamsi concluded by saying that he feels we will have an 'Uber-like' education ondemand model.

"I strongly believe that education will not come back the way it was before COVID-19. We strongly believe that online learning is going to last for a long time because it is much more exciting for students and gives them greater autonomy. Education will no longer consist of simply coming to class and listening to a lecturer deliver his material. What we have achieved, and what we have proven is that we can deliver education to the highest level of quality while leveraging the technologies of the fourth industrial revolution - and therefore, in my view, the future of education is going to be more digital in format, on demand in delivery, personalised in design, and agile in relevance to emerging economic and social trends. Traditional brick and mortar campuses however will remain to serve a different purpose that is to introduce immersive simulated learning environments to address priority economic and societal challenges," said Al Shamsi. cnme



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جوف تك

كليات التقنية العليا

كليات التقنية العليا تتخطت "إرباك" كوفيد 19 بنجاح وتقود التحولات المستقبلية للتعليم

بنسخة هذا الشهر من جوف تك "GovTech"، تحدثنا مع **الدكتور عبداللطيف الشامسي** ، مدير مجمع كليات التقنية العليا، لعرفة كيف تمكنت هذه المؤسسة التعليمية الرائدة في مجال التعليم العالى التطبيقي بدولة الإمارات من الحافظة على استمرارية التعليم والعمل خلال أزمة كوفيد-19.

كليات التقنية العليا أسست مكانتها

على مدار أكثر من 32 عاماً كمؤسسة رائدة في التعليم العالى التطبيقي وأحدثت فرقا في المخرجات التعليمية وتتمتع اليوم بسمعة طيبة على مستوى تمكنها من التعليم التطبيقي باستخدام التقنيات الحديثة في مختلف برامجها وتخصصاتها وعمليات التعليم والتدريب فيها، والحقيقة أن وباء كورونا (كوفيد-19) أعاق الحياة في مختلف دول العالم وأثر على الاقتصاد العالى وعلى كافة القطاعات بطريقة ما، وقطاع التعليم أحد القطاعات التي تأثرت بهذه الأزمة، ولكن في الوقت ذاته كشفت لنا الأزمة عن أن بعض مؤسسات التعليم كانت مستعدة بشكل أفضل وتمكنت

من التعامل مع كوفيد-19 أكثر من غيرها، وكليات التقنية العليا هي أفضل مثال على ذلك.

بدايةً قال الدكتور عبداللطيف الشامسي، مدير مجمع كليات التقنية العليا، أن انتشار وباء كوفيد-19 أثر سلبا على ملايين من الطلبة حول العالم، لكن دولة الإمارات بفضل رؤى قيادتها الحكيمة التي دائما ما تستشرف الستقبل وتضع استراتيجيتها وخططها بأفكار ورؤى استباقية دعمت مؤسسات التعليم فيها للتعامل الناجح مع تحديات كوفيد-19، لأن الإمارات دوما تستثمر في التعليم وتدعم مؤسساته لتمكينها من بناء منظومات تعليمية متطورة ومستقبلية، مما مكّن المؤسسات التعليمية من توفير تجربة تفاعلية

ناجحة للتعليم عن بُعد لجميع طلبتها.

فعلى مدى السنوات العشر الماضية استثمرت حكومة دولة الإمارات بشكل كبير في التكنولوجيا التقدمة على كافة الستويات، وهدفت إلى توفير هذه التكنولوجيا في مؤسسات التعليم وجعلها في متناول الطلبة وجزء من حياتهم التعليمية، وكليات التقنية هي جزء من هذه التوجهات وهذا الاستتمار التعليمي وعملت على الاستعداد للمستقبل من خلال خمس استراتيجيات رئيسية ركزت عليها في السنوات الأربع الماضية وهي: (1)العمل على اقتناء التقنيات التعليمية الحديثة، (2) تأسيس بنية رقمية قوية للكليات، (3) التحول إلى مناهج رقمية ومواد ومصادر وأدوات

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نجاح طلبتنا في التعامل معه وبل والاستمتاع بميزاته.

السؤال الآن للدكتور الشامسي عن التعليم ما بعد كوفيد-19 وكيف براه؟

أكد الدكتور الشامسي أن التعليم بعد كوفيد-19 لن يعود لما كان عليه قبله، أي قبل عدة أشهر، فالتحول نحو التعليم على غرار "أوبر " بتحوله كخدمة تصل للطالب أينما كان وفي أي وقت، قد حقق نجاحات ومكتسبات أكدت أنه لم يكن وليدة اللحظة، بل نتاج جاهزية مسبقة لتحقيق هذه النقلة النوعية في التعليم، والظروف الحالية ما هي إلا مسرعات لحدوثها، وفي الرحلة القبلة ما بعد كوفيد-19 سنجد أن التعلم عن بُعد سيفرض نفسه كأحد التعلم عن بُعد سيفرض نفسه كأحد

والبيئة التعليمية لدينا مجهزة لتقديم المحتوى الرقمي للطلبة، ولكننا ندرك أيضا أننا نتعامل مع ما يسمى "الجيل Z"."

الخيارات التعليمية لمدة طويلة كونه تجربة شيقة تتيح للطلبة العمل باستقلالية، لذا لن يكون التعليم منحصراً في حضور للمحاضرات والصفوف، بل يمكن أن نقدم تعليماً بأعلى مستويات تكنولوجية مستثمرين تقنيات ومهارات الثورة الصناعية الرابعة وطبيعة قدرات جيل اليوم.

وأوضح أن الجاهزية التكنولوجية دعمت استمرار الدراسة من خلال

التعلم عن بُعد ، ولكنها في الوقت ذاته أحدثت إرباكاً في التعليم (Disruption) ولكن بالعنى طايحابي ، وهذا الإرباك فرض إعادة صياغة منظومة التعليم وتحويلها التعليم النمطي"في المباني" والتعلم عن بُعد. وذكر أن المؤسسات التعليمية مع تطبيق منظومة التعليم "الهجين" ، ستفتح الجال لتطبيق التعلم عن بُعد والتعليم النمطي "داخل المباني" معاً ولكن بشكل مدروس، من خلال معاً ولكن بشكل مدروس، من خلالرا

تطبيق منظومة التعليم "الهجين"، ستفتح المجال لتطبيق التعلم عن بُعد والتعليم النمطى "داخل الباني" معا ولكن بشكل مدروس، من خلال خمسة عوامل: (1) تقليل حضور الطلبة للحرم الجامعي خاصةً على مستوى الدراسة النظرية، وذلك بعد تحديد نسبة المحتوى النظري للعملى لكل مادة على حدة، مقابل إفساح المجال لقبول أعداد أكبر من الطلبة، لأن الأمر لن يرتبط بالطاقة الاستيعابية للمباني، (2) التوجه لإعادة هيكلة المباني التعليمية لصالح الدراسة التطبيقية بتوظيف الساحات للتدريب العملي والمختبرات، (3) إعطاء أهمية خاصة لتوجيه الطلبة نحو الابتكار وريادة الأعمال اللذان يمثلان ركيزة هامة للمستقبل لواجهة التحديات ودعم الاقتصاد. (4) مراجعة البرامج والتخصصات لتتناسب مع القطاعات الحيوية المتوقع نموها وطبيعة المتغيرات الوظيفية ما بعد كوفيد-19، منها مجالات العلوم الصحية، والتكنولوجيا المتقدمة، والتقنيات الحيوية المرتبطة بالأمن الغذائي، وعلوم الكمبيوتر والمعلومات، والأبحاث التطبيقية وغيرها، (5) إتاحة فرصة استقطاب خبراء ومختصين للتدريس عن بُعد من مختلف الدول، وخاصةً في المجالات الدقيقة والهامة، دونما حاجة لاستقدامهم إلى الدولة، مما سيوفر كفاءات بتكلفة أقل.

JUNE 2020 www.tahawultech.com

خلال الشهر

الأول من

التعلم عن بعد نجحنا

فُي تقديم 1.1 مليون

تدريسية من

إدارة التعلم

خلال نظام

بلاكبورد

ألترا."

تطىيق

ساعة

من حياته اليومية ولديه مهارات رقمية عالية، لهذا عند تقديم الحلول الرقمية لطلبة هذا الجيل والتحول نحو التعلم عن بُعد كان تعاملهم معها سهل وناجح ".

وذكر الدكتور الشامسي أن كليات التقنية العليا أيضاً كانت أول مؤسسة تعليم عالي تمنح أساتذتها شهادة " المعلم الرقمي" بالتعاون مع بلاكبورد العالمة، لأن كل الأساتذة يستخدمون التكنولوجيا في تحقق مع التحول إلى التعلم عن بعد في ظل أزمة "كوفيد-19" لم يكن فقط بفضل البنية التحتية أو يكن فقط بفضل البنية التحتية أو الأساتذة ورفع جاهزيتهم لاستخدام الأساتذة ورفع جاهزيتهم لاستخدام الطلبة.

وقال الدكتور الشامسي أن التعليم "الهجين" عملت عليه الكليات منذ نحو خمس سنوات وهو تعليم قائم على الدمج ما بين الدراسة الأكاديمية والتدريب العملى والمهارات الوظيفية بالاعتماد على تمكين الطلبة من التقنيات الحديثة والمهارات الاحترافية العالمية، وهذا ما سهل على الكليات الانتقال نحو التعلم عن بُعد ، مؤكداً أن كل الخطط والقرارات التي اتخذت خلال السنوات الاضية جاءت لصلحة الكليات ومكنتها في ظل أزمة كوفيد-19 من التحول للتعلم عن بُعد خلال أقل من أسبوع وسط جاهزية الأساتذة واستجابة الطلبة وتفاعلهم مع هذا النوع من البيئات

وأضاف د.الشامسي: "نفذنا مرحلة تجريبية للتعلم عن بُعد على مدار يومي 4 و5 مارس 2020 لتقييم التجربة الؤسسية قبل التنفيذ الفعلي، وقيّمنا التجربة من خلال استبيان شمل الطلبة والأساتذة

حددنا من خلاله جوانب القوة و الجوانب والثغرات التي تتطلب مزيد من الدعم والتطوير ، وبناءً عليه انطلقنا بقوة في تطبيق التعلم عن بُعد بتاريخ 22 مارس بعد أن أنهى الطلبة إجازة الربيع وسط عمليات متابعة وتقييم مستمرة".

"لدينا في كليات التقنية العليا 23 ألف طالب وطالبة يدرسون في 16 فرعاً للكليات في مختلف إمارات الدولة، وخلال الشهر الأول من تطبيق التعلم عن بُعد نجحنا في تقديم 1.1 مليون ساعة تدريسية من خلال نظام إدارة التعلم بلاكبورد ألترا، وكانت نسبة الحضور والالتزام عالية جداً من الطلبة والأساتذة"

الدكتور الشامسي أشاد خلال حديثه بجهود أعضاء الهيئة التدريسية ووصفهم بالتمكنين والبدعين، لأن



التحول في زمن قياسي نحو التعلم عن بُعد لم يكن بالأمر السهل عليهم حيث كانت هناك ضغوطات كبيرة، لكنهم نجحوا في تقديم تدريس متميز ونوعي متغلبين على العقبات.

وأكد الدكتور الشامسي أهمية أن
يفرِّق الناس ما بين التعلم عن بعد
و"الحجر المنزلي" لأننا قد نسمع
أولياء أمور يربطون بين الاثنين نتيجة
طروف وتحديات "كوفيد-19" ولكن
على العكس تماماً فالتعلم عن
بعد خيار رقمي، فتح أبوابه أمام
طلبتنا في ظل الظروف الاستثنائية
الحالية، ليمكنهم من مواصلة
عامهم الأكاديمي دون انقطاع، وهو
عامهم المتظرة لجيل اليوم للخروج
من حدود القاعات الدراسية، و
تلقي تعليمه كخدمة تصله متخطية
حدود الزمان والكان، والدليل على
تميز هذا النوع من التعليم هو

PURE STORAGE

"INVESTING IN INNOVATION MEANS INVESTING IN THE FUTURE": PURE STORAGE

The rapid shift to remote environments has placed unexpected demand on IT departments. Pure Storage regional director for Middle East **Assaad El Saadi** explained how VDI makes it much easier to support work-from-home employees.



he coronavirus pandemic has brought seismic shifts to today's workplace.

Many organisations are now adopting innovative ways to enable their remote workforce in the age of the new normal. However, while businesses have been quick to adapt, they are facing significant challenges in optimising workloads on their data centres and cloud environments while ensuring they deliver access to their user base.

With the increasing shift to remote environments, businesses are turning to virtual desktop infrastructures, which are known to help increase data security, lower TCO for desktops, and create better performance over physical endpoints. VDIs enable organisations to become a lot more agile, gaining the ability to address users that work both at home and in the workplace with widely ranging compute requirements.

In an exclusive interview with TahawulTech.com, Assaad El Saadi, regional director – Middle East, Pure Storage, who discussed how VDIs can help Middle East firms quickly enable and scale remote working environments.

How can VDIs enable organisations to effectively adapt to a remote infrastructure?

Desktop virtualisation helps reduce desktop IT costs, improves

security, increases control, and expands connectivity. A robust virtualised desktop infrastructure enables organisations to host desktops in their data centres and deliver access from any device, anywhere. Deploying VDI allows organisations to be more agile and optimise their data centre operations. It helps them develop new business models and improve both IT operations and user satisfaction.

Many businesses today are increasingly looking at VDI to enable their remote workforces. They are realising its many benefits including how easily it allows them to integrate new users, user devices and applications.

It also allows developers to respond faster, users to utilise a rich desktop environment and enables organisations to efficiently facilitate business operations by incorporating a completely virtual desktop ecosystem. VDI also allows businesses to scale from the data centre and into the cloud.

What should organisations keep in mind when deploying VDIs and how important is the role of storage to its success?

Storage performance plays a critical role in the success of any VDI deployment. All-flash storage in combination with efficient data reduction improves VDI success while keeping costs in check. The goal of a VDI solution is to allow an organisation to swiftly and seamlessly connect an X number of clients to one system. However, many existing converged infrastructure solutions are built on slow and inefficient legacy disk storage or

non-optimised hybrid storage systems. This makes them unsuitable for VDI workloads that demand an always-on and high-performance foundation. If a VDI platform goes down, everybody in the organisation will experience the disruption. That's why organisations need system performances that are not only fast but also consistent – it shouldn't be fast today and slow after half an hour.

Another aspect they need to keep in mind is a VDI solution's scalability. When you start VDI, you don't begin with a big bang approach. You start with a smaller set of either a department or a group and then you start growing it. You need a solution that can grow and scale without a forklift approach. You need to be able to scale linearly. Performance and availability are important factors for VDI.

What have been some of the most common missteps that organisations take that have caused them to struggle with their VDI deployments?

Selecting the wrong infrastructure and storage solutions are among the key issues that could lead to ineffective VDI deployments. Depending on the functionality that an organisation wants, they could either choose Citrix or VMware architectures. However, the success of a VDI project relies on the infrastructure that it is built upon. This means that selecting an inadequate storage right from the beginning will impact the whole lifecycle of the VDI implementation from its administration to availability, uptime and scalability.

Many companies often choose technologies that they think will

help them save money, but they end up spending more as they face problems that are costly and leave their employees or users unsatisfied.

What kind of enablement initiatives does Pure Storage have in helping customers succeed with their VDI deployments?

Pure delivers the modern data experience by bringing simple, seamless and sustainable solutions and services to our customers. From day one, we have developed solutions that are easy to deploy, use and manage. We always communicate with our customers that investing in innovation now means investing in their future. That's why we are committed to bringing them offerings that grow and evolve as they do.

AI is increasingly becoming pivotal in the transformation of business today. In a datadriven world, Pure accelerates modern analytics and AI workloads to help businesses harness valuable insights to help them grow. Our AI-powered Pure1 cloud-based management software also provides customers with storage management and support that's effortless and intelligent, enabling them to focus on innovating for their businesses.

On top of all this, from a modern data experience, we also offer our customers the Evergreen Storage ownership model. This enables them to acquire storage that only needs to be deployed once and allows them upgrade and expand it as they grow without any downtime or impact on system performances.

Storage performance plays a critical role in the success of any VDI deployment."

SERVICENOW

WORKPLACES OF THE FUTURE

ServiceNow CIO, Chris Bedi, and its Chief Talent Officer, Pat Wadors examined what the 'Next Normal' workplace will look like following COVID-19.







nowledge 2020, like so many other tech events all over the world not immune to COVID-19 - and as a result of the pandemic the fabled ServiceNow digital networking conference was moved online.

Despite its new online format that certainly didn't detract or dilute from the quality of their fabled breakout sessions and panel discussions – as users had access to a plethora of content that highlighted the latest customer and platform innovations designed to create great experiences for businesses.

ServiceNow executives Chris Bedi and Pat Wadors attempted to predict what workplaces will look like post COVID-19.

Wadors said that the current pandemic, which has forced half of the US workforce to work remotely, has presented many companies with a number of challenges in terms of what the future of their workplace will be.

"When the crisis emerged, it took 5 minutes for the executive team to send our employees home to keep them safe.

However, it's much harder to navigate what that looks like on a day-to-day basis when they eventually return to the workplace. Our primary aim is to take care of our employees and ensure they have the tools at their disposal to remain productive, but we've also got to provide them with the space to do their job effectively," said Wadors.

The Chief Talent Officer at the global enterprise software leader also said that working remotely has made it difficult for many employees to separate their work life from their home life, before adding that the traditional workplace would now be consigned to history.

"COVID-19 has resulted in our life and work now crashing The immediate

mediate
focus for
businesses
was how
to make
sure they
can still
operate,
and their
employees
can still
be productive."

together, and we've got to adapt in terms of how we work and when we work, and we need to leverage technology to smooth all that out, but it's clear that it's not one size fits all.

The pre-COVID workplace no longer exists. I know for us and from speaking to some of my peers they will make dramatic shifts to ensure employees are safe, healthy, productive and adaptable for the new workplace," said Wadors.

When asked how CIO's managed their resources during the pandemic, and whether or not he feels the role of a CIO has changed, Bedi explained that there was two different phases or chapters that we've embarked upon and that the first chapter is now drawing to a close.

"The immediate focus for businesses was how to make sure they can still operate, and their employees can still be productive. That's heavily reliant on cloud systems like ours, and others such as Zoom, to ensure that employees can still connect and collaborate while they are all at home. But that phase is now drawing to a close and we're about to move onto the next chapter," said Bedi.

Bedi stressed that the next approach was trying to determine what's going to be new and how it can all be navigated. He said that while C-suite positions and their roles may change, one thing that will remain untouched.

"There is one common thing between all the C-level positions and that is that everything will be powered by technology. It is all powered by workflows, so my role as a CIO will be to interact with every C-suite executive to figure out how to navigate the 'next normal'," said Bedi.

JUNE 2020



Here in the Middle East we've seen phenomenal leadership from the ICT ecosystem in terms of how they have responded to the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

At tahawultech we want to acknowledge their efforts and show our appreciation to the exceptional technology thought leaders and companies who have leveraged their expertise and knowledge to equip businesses with the tools to cope and reshape the world post COVID-19.

The tahawultech.com 'Transformational Leadership Awards' will celebrate the top CIOs, CISOs and Technology

Vendors from across the region that have clearly illustrated remarkable vision and foresight that has ultimately helped enterprises navigate their way through these unchartered waters.

In a first for CPI Media Group, we will be holding the event virtually on 20th July 2020.

To submit your nominations for the CIOs and CISOs that you believe have shown outstanding leadership during COVID-19 please visit tahawultech.com/transformationalleadershipawards/2020 by 9th July 2020.

Get in touch

Sponsorship enquiries: info@cpimediagroup.com

Nomination enquiries: mark.forker@cpimediagroup.com













Data Intelligence More Than Ever

FIGURE 5



OceanStor Dorado All-Flash Storage Ever Fast, Ever Solid, Al-Powered

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