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FEATURE

Tackling the new normal

INTERVIEW

Forward and Ahead

PRODUCTS Pure Storage

DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACROSS ME: SAMI ABI ESBER, PRESIDENT, MIDIS SI GROUP

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NEWS

We bring you the lowdown on the discovery of a critical RECON vulnerability that puts

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Ranjith Kaippada, MD of Cloud Box Technologies, describes the 5 things that make up his world.







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DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION **ACROSS ME**

Sami Abi Esber, President -Midis System Integration and Board Member-Midis Group. discusses how MIDIS SI Group has leveraged its expertise to introduce cutting-edge technology solutions to the market.

TOP STORIES



20 Major channel players analyse what keeps their businesses ticking post the COVID-19 pandemic.



INTERVIEWS

- **32** Lara Yousuf, Partner Manager at Mimecast, points out the need for tighter cyber security measures as the pandemic forces the whole world to go completely online.
- 36 Abhijeet Sanyal, Vice President – Technology Staffing Services at Ragmiyat, says hiring has taken on a new paradigm since the COVID-19 pandemic.







how home security has evolved from basic CCTV cameras to customisable, Wi-Fi devices. onapsis









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EDITORIAL

Riding the wave of change

he COVID-19 pandemic hit us unexpectedly, just as we thought 2020 was going to be a year of growth and prosperity. But while it turned our lives upside down and forced us indoors, it also gave us ample time to think of doing business differently. It forced us to re-examine existing strategies, forge new synergies and explore previously unidentified opportunities. So, post the lockdown, as the world stepped outside hesitantly, companies in the Middle East, energised by this contemplative phase, moved ahead and decided to capitalise on the new trends that emerged: a need for greater collaboration and team work, a distinct preference for remote working and a demand for more effective cyber security solutions.

In this issue, we take a look at the changing market paradigms, especially in the channel world. What has changed in a world that's trying to cope? How much has changed? How has the crisis actually impacted businesses? Where do the opportunities lie? What are the key learnings? How can channel partners ensure that in a fast evolving, dynamic market, they concentrate on what's relevant and in demand? Above all, in a world that is suddenly, overwhelmingly online, how can they ensure smooth and seamless communication?

Anita

Anita Joseph Editor Responses to these questions are interesting and varied. While some say remote working solutions are the need of the hour, others are of the opinion



that strengthening partnerships to tackle the market disruption is the best strategy going forward. Some say a brand-new approach to sales and marketing is key to survival while others point out that fortifying a company's internal resources by hiring the right talent is what counts.

In the midst of these divergent voices, one thing is clear: those who're still wondering what happened and waiting for the crisis to play out are left behind. On the other hand, those who choose to embrace the change, innovate and stay agile, survive and emerge stronger. Indeed, action and innovation are vital to keep moving forward at this time, and channel partners are testament to this fact. Through these pages, let's find out what makes today's businesses tick. Let's follow the experts to fathom what the future of the channel looks like.

In the meantime, stay safe!



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TOP STORIES

NETAPP'S MAYA ZAKHOUR TAKES ON NEW ROLE AS CHANNEL DIRECTOR FOR MEA, ITALY AND SPAIN

RetApp, the leader in cloud data services, has announced that Maya Zakhour will take on an expanded role as Channel Director for Middle East and Africa, Italy and Spain. Maya will report to Kristian Kerr, VP Partner Organisation EMEA. In her new role, Maya will work closely with in-country channel leaders, distributors and alliances to build a stronger partner ecosystem, increase NetApp's footprint and grow the business across her new territories.

"I am excited to take on this new role at a time when the adoption of cloud services is rapidly growing across the MEA region. My focus is to strategically grow NetApp's channel business across all territories, while ensuring profitability for partners, especially in this time of crisis," said Zakhour.

"NetApp has a strong go-to-market strategy, a robust channel community, and exceptionally rewarding partner program and enablement plan that will boost our efforts to ensure our customers' transition to a cloud-first organisation."

With Italy and Spain being hard hit due to COVID-19, the impact on businesses has been significant. With a competent in-country partner ecosystem,



Maya Zakhour, channel director for MEA, Italy and Spain, NetApp

Zakhour is tasked with driving partners to leverage NetApp's strong cloud offering along with its public cloud alliances across MEA, Italy and Spain.

"Our priority is to get businesses back on track and help them prepare for the new normal as well as future disruptions. NetApp's alliances with global hyperscalers Microsoft, Google and Amazon Web Services coupled with the recent acquisitions of CloudJumper, Talon Storage, and Spot, strengthens our overall cloud offering and allows our customer to unlock the potential of the cloud and get more out of their cloud investments," Zakhour added.

RAQMIYAT- KORE.AI VIRTUAL ASSISTANTS TO DELIVER PERSONALISED, CONVERSATIONAL BANKING EXPERIENCE

Raqmiyat, in partnership with Kore.ai, has introduced Kore. ai, a market-leading Enterprise Conversational AI and Digital UX Platform with proven experience in implementing conversational banking among leading banks across the globe. Raqmiyat-Kore.ai's Banking Virtual Assistant harnesses the intelligence and power of AI and NLP to provide next-generation conversational, digital, and self-serve experiences for customers.

Trained in more than 50 capabilities, it lives within your online or mobile banking applications and is fully client-configurable. The solution is fully functional, secure, domain-trained, personalised, and extremely scalable to meet bank requirements. Apart from basic services, Raqmiyat - Kore.ai Banking Virtual Assistants can support a wide range of customer support activities such as adding/



removing a payee, setting up recurring bill pay, checking account overdraft, and more that have the potential to transform how banks create personalised experiences that increase customer acquisition, conversion, retention, and loyalty.

These virtual assistants humanise digital transactions, steering user conversations with sentiment analysis and tone processing. Virtual assistants built with Kore.ai analyse the emotional state of users and callers and model their response to provide excellent service.

EXCLUSIVE NETWORKS TO DELIVER CYWARE SOLUTIONS IN MIDDLE EAST



Exclusive Networks ME

xclusive Networks has signed an agreement to distribute Cyware's threat intelligence and cyber fusion solutions in the Middle East. The agreement accelerates the availability of Cyware's solutions for threat intelligence sharing, cyber fusion, security orchestration and automation and threat response.

"Exclusive Networks Middle East is proud to partner with Cyware," said Nathan Clements, Managing Director, Exclusive Networks ME. "The addition of threat sharing and security automation perfectly complements our existing cyber and cloud ecosystem, and directly addresses the increasing demand in the market. We look forward to working with the Cyware team and are confident of building a strong and successful partnership."

Cyware's product suite includes a situational awareness platform (CSAP), an advanced threat intelligence platform (CTIX), a cyber fusion and threat response platform (CFTR), and a security orchestration layer (CSOL). "We are excited to be partnering with Exclusive Networks, one of the top cybersecurity distributors in the Middle East," said Ahmed Ali, VP of Sales, EMEA, Cyware. "The local expertise and global scale they bring to the table will only help accelerate our ongoing growth in this region and allow us to provide next-gen security solutions to organisations looking to improve security preparedness and maturity."

HIGHLIGHTS

EMT DISTRIBUTION, OPSWAT PARTNER TO DELIVER ROBUST CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE CYBERSECURITY



mt Distribution, a regional VAD that offers breakthrough technologies in the region, now delivers unique and efficient technology primarily focusing on critical infrastructures and IoT/SCADA/air-gapped environments in collaboration with OPSWAT.

With the vision of 'Trust no file, Trust no device', OPSWAT's flagship technology

Metadefender Core addresses the challenges of customers who do not want to compromise on the authenticity of the files entering their environment through any mediums, be it web/emails/USB/ APIs, etc.

With module such as 'Multiscanning' where the power of 35 antivirus engines with the likes of Crowdstrike, TrendMicro, McAfee, and many more come to play and, 'deep CDR' (Content Disarm & reconstruction a.k.a. Data Sanitisation) Metadefender Core ensures every file is scanned and 'disarmed' from the most common attack vectors before reaching the user.

OPSWAT's ICAP server can integrate with almost all firewalls, web gateway, data diodes, NAS and more. According to the company, these capabilities further augments file upload protection. An ideal use case for organisations like banks, ministries, tender boards and the likes who have a web portal for file uploads.

Offerings such as Metadefender Kiosks are optimal for customers like oil & gas, aerospace, defence and power stations among others who have 'zero tolerance' for external USB's and yet want to develop a framework of trusted files received from external environments.

With over 60 named OPSWAT customers in the Middle East, emt Distribution's focus is to build strategic partnerships and create a channel ecosystem to address challenges of critical infrastructures through consulting and inhouse professionals.

VAD TECHNOLOGIES, MARCH NETWORKS JOIN HANDS

· Searchlight, intelligent applica-

tion software for banks and retailers

integrating video, data and analytics for

advanced loss prevention and business

video recorders (NVRs) - secure, pur-

pose-built devices available in hybrid,

• High-quality IP cameras, including

dome, PTZ, bullet, ATM and 360° camer-

• The industry's most reliable network

central location.

intelligence reporting.

tribrid and all-IP platforms.

as and new AI-powered devices.



AD Technologies and March Networks have signed a distribution partnership for the Middle East. According to both companies, the partnership will deliver advanced video surveillance technologies to customers across the Middle East.

March Networks' video solutions are used by the world's largest financial institutions, retail brands, transit authorities and commercial facilities to improve efficiency and compliance, reduce losses and risk, enhance customer service and compete more successfully. Its secure,

IT-friendly product portfolio includes:

powerful video management software enabling organisations to easily manage and maintain hundreds - or thousands - of surveillance recorders from a

"Video plays a central role in security, but it can also be a rich source of business data," said Trevor Sinden, Director of Sales, March Networks - Middle East and Africa. "March Networks is dedicated to helping our customers protect and secure their assets while also leveraging video for usable business intelligence. Video, when integrated with transaction data, analytics and IoT devices, lets customers see what's happening across their organisation, and make informed decisions that can improve performance and profitability.

"We are very pleased to partner with VAD Technologies to make our intelligent solutions more widely available in the Middle East."

Mario M. Veljovic, general manager, VAD Technologies, said, "We have a built a very successful physical security practice and strong partner ecosystem over the years with a focus on AI and smart analytics powered solutions. We are very proud about this new partnership, as March Networks' comprehensive product and solutions portfolio supports us to better address the challenging requirements of the market."

• Command,

cameras and video

HIGHLIGHTS

WESTCON ME HOSTS VIRTUAL PARTNER SUMMIT

Westcon also



estcon has announced the success of its 'Virtual EDGE Partner Summit', which highlighted the latest offerings from F5 Networks for its

partners across the Middle East. The two-and-a-half-hour virtual event, which was held on 7th May, was attended by over 148 channel executives from across the region. 'EDGE' stands for Engage, Develop, Grow and Extend and is the framework that Westcon consistently follows while building its value-added offerings throughout the sales engagement journey with partners.

During the virtual event, executives from Westcon delivered a session enlightening partners about solutions from F5 Networks that address the current market requirements along with session on Westcon's digital distribution capabilities and how it can assist them in the current challenging times. During the summit, the guests were kept engaged and entertained through live

.....

keting services. Since the situation around COVID-19 started escalating in late February, Westcon has immediately started with lead generation campaigns through MaaS focusing on work from home solutions with a set of key partners and has helped them increase their business by providing with qualified leads. Following the success of the campaign, Westcon has now extended the MaaS offerings to its extended partner base.

Furthermore, in keeping the spirit of giving in mind during Ramadan and the situation around the spread of COVID-19, Westcon has donated a meal to the venerable individuals on behalf of every attendee during the summit. A total of 148 meals were donated by Westcon on behalf of the attendees towards the 10million meals initiative.

Steve Lockie, group managing director, Westcon-Comstor Middle East, said, "Keeping in mind that physical events are no longer possible due to social distancing, we came up with the idea to

hold virtual partner summits to further strengthen our on-going engagement with the partners. The focus of the summit was to help the channel partners become aware of the technology segments which are currently in demand and how we can support them in these challenging times. We remain committed to helping our partners by providing them unhindered support and services."

Paul Cunningham, chief marketing officer, Westcon-Comstor, said, "It's great to see that our need to move into large scale virtual events has not only enabled us to engage with our partners in challenging times but actually enhanced the range and impact of interactions we can benefit from. Of course, we all look forward to meeting again in person at the right time and in the right context but we have demonstrated the powerful way in which technology allows us to get things done in new and productive ways and is in no way a barrier to building relationships and sharing values."

With a wide footprint across the Middle East region, Westcon offers channel partners value-added distribution services that include global logistical capabilities and a range of support and technical services. Along with offering a wide range of value-added services, such as Professional Services and Marketing as a Service (MaaS) that revolve around the unique EDGE framework Westcon also offers integrated Digital Distribution Platforms including PartnerView, which helps deliver the technology integration and automation partners need to grow and thrive.

VERTIV LAUNCHES VIP **SPOTLIGHT INCENTIVE**



esellers selling Vertiv can now earn double the bonus points with Vertiv's Spotlight incentive. The Vertiv Incentive Program (VIP) is a completely automated platform that rewards the resellers with Bonus Points for buying Vertiv products.

With the VIP spotlight incentive, the resellers can earn now double the bonus points for selling the eligible products. At the end of every quarter, the points are distributed to resellers and once redeemed, the resellers can transfer them to their credit card as real money.

The spotlight incentive running currently is valid on Vertiv's best-in-class product families including Avocent KVM Series, Avocent LCD Local Rack Access Console, Avocent ACS serial console server series, Liebert itON, Liebert PSI UPS, Liebert PSA UPS. Each bonus point earned is equivalent to 1 EUR or 1 GBP.

New partners are also welcome to join the Vertiv Incentive Program (VIP) and get a chance to earn extra Euros/Pounds.

SECURELINK PARTNERS WITH CIRCADENCE



ecureLink, a risk advisory firm based in Dubai, has announced a new strategic distribution partnership with Circadence - pioneers in hands-on, gamified and self-evaluating online cyber-learning that helps to build cybersecurity skills. Through this partnership, SecureLink aims to provide customers in the Middle East and Africa (META) with an innovative Al-based, next generation cybersecurity learning platform, Project Ares.

The partnership was born out of the market demands and challenges currently facing the cybersecurity community, namely the shortage of skilled professionals who seek hands-on skills training to keep pace with evolving threats. Circadence has responded to these dynamic challenges by delivering its award-winning gamified training and learning platform, Project Ares. The online cyber range learning solution helps cyber operators build and advance in skills and competencies.

Reghu Mohandas, Director - Risk Analytics & Advisory, SecureLink said, "Our relationship with Circadence brings to the region a true Gamified on-demand learning experience like no other. Circadence provides an authentic gamified learning environment which is optimized for offense and defense trainings. Users will love the game-like experience and organizations can greatly improve retention rates while incorporating the "learn by doing" method for their users.

The virtual range environment exercises are reflective of today's cyberattacks so organizations can better prepare their cyber workforce. These cybersecurity challenges, coupled with a need for remote learning and work-fromhome mandates, are touching enterprise, government and higher education customers, and is changing their approach to learning and how they ensure cyber security professionals are positioned for success. In this environment, Secure-Link's expertise and geographical coverage are critical to delivering a superior customer experience through a deep understanding of Circadence's product and the cybersecurity landscape.

"Our partners are core to everything we do and a critical part of Circadence's overall SaaS growth strategy," said Weslev Knee, VP of Marketing and Creative Services. "Through strategic, collaborative relationships we can ensure mutual success by creating better customer experiences and drive greater adoption of the Project Ares cybersecurity platform in the Middle East. We look forward to working closely with SecureLink ME to mutually grow our business."

MATRIX42 ADDS VAD TECH AS ME PARTNER



Mario M. Veljovic, VAD

atrix42, a provider of Workspace Management solutions, has added VAD Technologies as one of its regional partners in the Middle East.

As part of the strategic partnership between the two companies, VAD Technologies will promote the Matrix42 solutions through its extensive network of channel partners across the Middle East.



Lowtzow, director - Channel & Alliances, Matrix42, said, "The Matrix42 unified and intuitive platform offers a world class portfolio of Secured Endpoint Management, **Enterprise Service** Management and

Andreas von

Digital Workspace Management, and our exciting new partnership with VAD Technologies will provide a top-notch partner network and strong support for the Matrix42 Middle East expansion strategy."

VAD Technologies, a prominent IT and Technology value added distributor headquartered in Dubai, is renowned for providing customers with high-performance enterprise solutions.

Mario M. Veljovic, general manager, VAD Technologies, said, "We are extremely happy to partner with Matrix42 in the Middle East region. Our product and solutions portfolio require that we constantly scout for disruptive next generation technologies to ensure that our partners can offer the latest and greatest to their customers. Matrix42, a leading provider for digital workspace experience supports perfectly our vision and completes our comprehensive IT service management portfolio."

Matrix42's intuitive platform offers a world class portfolio of Secure Unified Endpoint Management, and Enterprise Service Management.

Its partnership with VAD Technologies demonstrates the company's commitment to its Middle East expansion strategy.

"The VAD team is well-known and well-placed to drive regional efforts, as well as experienced with a healthy disruptive technology and Cloud portfolio. We are looking forward to working together to deepen channel relationships," added Glyn Yates, Country Manager, IMEA region, Matrix42.

HIGHLIGHTS

STARLINK REPORTS DOUBLE DIGIT GROWTH IN H1 2020

he last few months will be remembered as the most challenging times in this new decade for all enterprises as well as individuals. Despite COVID-19's unprecedented global impact, StarLink has reported a record 2nd quarter and a solid finish for H1 2020 – closing the half with double digit growth, and close to making the plan that was set out at the beginning of the year.

How StarLink responded to these challenging times is a testimony of the company's solid foundation and a reflection on its agile and successful strategy addressing market opportunities and challenges proactively forming a business continuity teams who've been tasked to build business continuity and contingency plans and take precautionary measure to ensure employees safety and security while StarLink continues to deliver on its commitments towards vendors, partners and customers and support them during those challenging times.

Nidal Othman and Mahmoud Nimer

Nidal Othman, Co-founder and Managing Director, StarLink said, "As a solutions provider we were proactive in adopting technologies we deliver to our customers – from remote connectivity, cloud-based tools and various collaboration platforms to digitizing processes – which made our transition

to the 'new norm' seamless. We equipped our employees to Work from Home as their safety was our top priority, and we all staved focused on our vendors, channel community and end-customers to assess their immediate challenges and changing priorities, so that we could assist them accordingly. Our partners appreciate the credit flexibility

and financial support offered through the 'StarLink Capital' initiative – especially now. Furthermore, we capitalized on our great investment in StarLink's marketing engine to sustain our mindshare as well as market share during these very challenging times."

Throughout Q2 despite the suspension of all events and meetings our initiative, the StarLink Digital Summit served as a platform to more than 15 vendors, to showcase unique integrated solutions, thus educating, inspiring, and creating value to customers and partners alike. The webinars hosted by StarLink in Q2 alone saw 2500plus attendees consisting of partners and end-customers, not to mention the collective Top of Mind Awareness achieved through consistent social media marketing!

"WESTRONGLY BELIEVE THAT COMPANIES WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE, PERFORM WELL AND ARE TRUSTED MORE, NO MATTER WHAT."

"We strongly believe that companies with a strong sense of purpose, perform well and are trusted more, no matter what. Despite a global crisis, we have achieved our milestones like the expansion of the StarLink HO offices that will enhance our customers and employees experience and will allow us to welcome an additional 100 employees to the StarLink family as part of our expansion and growth plans for the coming couple of years. We also onboarded new strategic vendors and expanded our footprint with the existing ones, bringing innovative integrated solutions to the market. Although it is hard to determine the course of the pandemic and its economic consequences, we are well-prepared for a range of potential outcomes and the continued trust and support from our customers, partners and vendors makes us confident to remain unbeaten," said Mahmoud Nimer, Co-founder, and General Manager, StarLink.

"We are proud of our teams and how resilient our business and financial performance has been during these trying times. Landing at 95% of the H1 target with double digit growth is a remarkable result and required a huge commitment from the team who remained focused on their mission. Despite the various disruptions 7000-plus activities were executed by the team along with vendors, channel partners and customers. We are very pleased to see some important shifts in the market towards cloud adoption and virtual engagement which has opened multiple opportunities to explore. Through our remote training and service implementations we have seen enhanced potential and innovation as we support our customers throughout their digitization journey. The outlook for the 2nd half of this year is encouraging as we see an uptick in business momentum as many more countries are opening; we remain confident as we march towards our goal of becoming a half- billion-dollar business by the end of this fiscal year. StarLink will continue to add value to our Vendors, Partners and Customers through our specialized teams by investing locally, bridging the gap, facing challenges, and growing the business together," said Zaidoun Arbad, Chief Operating Officer, StarLink.

D-Link[®]

Contactless Temperature Measurement Solution



Temperature Measurement with Face Recognition



Face Recognition



Digital Temperature Measurement



Access Control



Touch Free



(_____) Mask Detection



All-in one Design

NEW D-LINK-BRANDED PARTNER STORE OPENS IN DUBAI



D -Link Corporation has announced a new reseller store together with its partner Grand PCD. The new D-Link branded store by Grand PCD is located at the heart of Khaled Bin Waleed Street (formerly known as Computer Street) in Bur Dubai, Dubai. The latest store will be Grand PCD's fourth showroom in the UAE.

D-Link customers now have one more avenue to experience the company's innovative SMB and consumer solutions and products before making a purchase and

.....

benefit from the regular on-going in-store promotions. Grand PCD's newest store is equipped to sell D-Link's products to individual customers as well as in wholesale for larger organisations. The friendly staff at the store are well-

trained to address customers' queries about any D-Link product expertly.

Sakkeer Hussain, Director, Sales and Marketing, D-Link Middle East, said, "The new store will contribute to promoting D-Link's latest offerings in the market and simultaneously offer customers the opportunity to get hands-on with a desired D-Link product before buying it.

"Grand PCD is one of our core partners, and we have been working together for a long time. The latest store is a true testament of their dedication and success. We are proud to be associated with them and look forward to further growing this partnership and making it even stronger."

Specialised in networking products, Grand PCD commenced its operations in 2008 and over the years has successfully built its credible reputation and stood strong even during turbulent market conditions.

Abdul Samad Alambath, Managing Director, Grand PCD said, "D-Link is among the reputed brands in our extensive portfolio. Our latest showroom, which is co-branded with D-Link, demonstrates our strong partnership with the global networking leader. We are excited to welcome all our customers to the new showroom. As part of our commitment to ensuring the safety of our customers and staff, we are strictly adhering to all UAE government regulations. We look forward to continuing growth of the business and contributing to the UAE economy."

Hussain added, "The regional economic climate is looking to be very positive, especially for channel partners. Thanks to UAE government's meticulous safety and control processes, the country is bouncing back faster than other economies around the world."

DRIVELOCK SIGNS UP DISTI360 AS VAD FOR MIDDLE EAST



Abdullah Abu-Hejleh, Founder & CEO, Disti360

In today's security architecture, zero trust means a paradigm shift according to the maxim "Never trust, always verify". DriveLock Zero Trust platform follows this principle. It combines the elements: • Data protection

- Endpoint protection
- Endpoint Detection
- Endpoint Detection & Response
- Identity & Access Management

The fully integrated zero trust platform supports different operating systems, end devices and is offered as an on-premise solution and managed security service.

Under the partnership, DriveLock will leverage the energy of Disti360 as one of the most energetic new distributors in the market with wide connections through its leadership.

"Most threats and vulnerabilities are consistently addressed with innovative security solutions and strategies, but one risk factor is still not under control – users and their behavior, we believe in the Hub of Virtual Distribution concept that Disti360 is presenting to the market and we have no doubt that they will succeed to address our innovative security solutions via their network of partners quickly and accurately," said Amer Sharkawi, regional sales director, DriveLock.

Abdullah Abu-Hejleh, Founder & CEO, Disti360, said, "DriveLock solutions help meet the challenges of various industries and IT regulations' i.e. attacks on production facilities, critical infrastructures (KRITIS) or devices that do not belong to conventional IT has become a reality in everyday corporate life. According to a BITKOM study, every second company is now threatened by cyber-attacks. Another example is healthcare sector; where to improve patient care and meet usage standards, hospitals and healthcare providers are increasingly implementing sophisticated, networked IT systems and utilizing electronic patient records (ePAs). This is where solutions around data encryption, USB access control, authentication and increasing security awareness play a vital role."

HIGHLIGHTS

A10 NETWORKS SIGNS INGRAM MICRO AS ATC FOR MIDDLE EAST



Ali Baghdadi, SVP and Chief Executiv of Ingram Micro META Region

10 Networks has announced that Ingram Micro, the global technology and supply chain services provider, has been approved to deliver training on behalf of the company across United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

As part of the agreement, Ingram Micro's trainers and qualified instructors have been through preparation and guidance with A10's technical team to ensure that they are certified and qualified to deliver A10 training to partners and customers. This will enable resellers' technical staff to be certified trainers and users, which in turn means that they will be able to provide enhanced implementation and support services to their customers. Similarly, if end users don't have certified engineers, they can sign up for training courses as well.

Ingram Micro will have in-country A10 ATC Accredited Instructors in UAE, KSA and Egypt. The training will be delivered through a combination of classroom sessions in the company's state-of-the-art lab centres (making provision for social distancing in light of the current pandemic situation), as well as online sessions. The training timetable will be published on both, the Ingram Micro and the A10 Networks websites.

The training courses will include System Administration, CGNAT & IPV6 Migration, Secure Web Access and DDoS Protection. For those that complete individual modules, they will be a 'certified professional' in that area. Upon successful completion of all exams, they earn the certification of 'A10 Certified Architect.'

Ehab Halablab, Regional Sales Director – ME at A10 Networks says, "A10 Networks

has been experiencing rapid growth in the Middle East. With this we have seen an increasing regional demand for training in our company's solutions, necessitating additional dedicated training resources. Ingram Micro has a big physical presence in the region and a strong portfolio of other technology vendor trainings that complement our offerings. We see the value- added distributor as being the ideal teammate to help deliver training in order to increase the level of recognised expertise within organisations, while increasing their capability for pre- and post-sales support."

"We believe that strengthening technology skills in the region through training and certification will provide an impetus to the digital transformation efforts of organisations in the Middle East."

Ali Baghdadi, SVP and Chief Executive of Ingram Micro META Region comments, "Ingram Micro Training is rapidly growing as a global industry leader in technology training and skills development. We are constantly looking to add vendors to our training portfolio who are technology leaders that address today's trends and imperatives like cloud, security, mobility and 5G. In this context, A10 Networks is of great value as the company's market leading portfolio of secure application services are engineered to accelerate and secure enterprise and service providers networks," he added.

XFX LAUNCHES NEW 'ONE-OF-ITS-KIND' EXPERIENCE ZONE FOR UAE GAMERS

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FX, a manufacturer and marketer of innovative IT Components specialising in graphics solutions for the worldwide gaming technologies, has recently unveiled an "one of its kind" Experience Zone, which showcases the best of XFX AMD Radeon Technology available for UAE gamers.

The showcase also feature products from WD, AOC, MSI and ThermalTake – that essentially complement all the products on offer by XFX.

The space has been designed to be futuristic and is headlined by a state-ofthe-art gaming machine that features a 32-core AMD Ryzen Threadripper, 64 GB RAM, 1 TB SSD, 4 TB HDD, a custom water-cooled loop, and graphics duty powered by the Triple Dissipation Thicc III Ultra XFX Radeon RX 5700XT. On display will also be all the products from the XFX lineup, along with technical guidance on what products best suit the needs of the customers that visit. Gamers who visit the zone can also experience gaming on these machines firsthand and will enhance the component buying process through experience and not just research.

Speaking about the XFX Experience Zone, Sunny Narain, Managing Director, XFXForce Technology LLC said, "XFX has been working exclusively with AMD since 2009, and it was time to double down on this partnership by showcasing the benefits of buying AMD products through experience and not just through recommendation. This is made possible by building the best Gaming PCs at all levels and allowing our guests to try the product before they invest their money in the products we recommend."

Narain added, "The Experience Zone also allows us to bring to market all the latest products at the same time as international launches – now putting the high-end Graphics availability in the UAE market on the same level as international distribution. We are looking forward to enhance the experience of any buyer."

The XFX Experience Zone is open for the public to visit, try and buy all the products from the XFX lineup along with any technical expertise on XFX Product range that may be needed to upgrade any existing systems that gamers have. Gaming machines ranging from the entry level budget gaming PC right up to the hardcore fully spec'd out 32-core based gaming PC will be on display and available to Experience. Apart from Hardware, XFX has its line of Gaming Chairs that are also on display at the Experience Center.

Q&A // BARCO

STRENGTHENING REMOTE COLLABORATION

Ekta Puthran, Regional Distribution & Channel Manager – MX Middle East & Africa at Barco explains why the main challenge today is to adopt personcentric solutions that put intuitive user experiences first, without disrupting the existing meeting set-up.

> an you tell us something more about the ClickShare Conference that you launched in February?

The new ClickShare Conference which we launched recently, has revolutionised the conferencing needs of businesses, especially during the post-pandemic days.

This is a first-of-its-kind platformagnostic technology that enables organisations to embrace a Bring Your Own Meeting (BYOM) approach to conferencing where employees are empowered to use any agnostic UCC system they prefer to host remote meetings, without impacting quality, security or compatibility.

How will ClickShare help businesses accelerate their remote working capabilities?

The pandemic has brought on a radical change in the working environment in most organisations with employees showing a preference to work on their own devices over those provided to them, even as they move towards working from the office and choose to work from home.

As a result, organisations need to roll-out platforms and solutions that will not interrupt efficiency, but also ensure data security, ease-of-use and seamless connectivity.

Responding to this need, ClickShare Conference is supporting businesses to ensure closer hybrid collaboration between employees, taking conferencing to an entirely new level. The wireless conferencing solutions from Barco ClickShare is designed to work seamlessly with existing video conferencing systems and tools and has made remote meetings as intuitive and straightforward as faceto-face meetings.

How is technology expected to enhance collaborative conferencing sessions, going forward?

The trend towards work decentralisation was already under way over the last decades, but the pandemic has accelerated the progression dramatically. Now more than ever, organisations are challenged with offering employees access to remote collaborative solutions and catering to their BYOM needs in order to seamlessly connect both on-site and remote workers.

The key, however, is to have personcentric solutions that put intuitive user experiences first, without disrupting existing meeting set-up of the enterprise. Again, ClickShare Conference enables IT managers to embrace BYOD and BYOM, helping employees connect seamlessly, whether on-site or remotely.

This is also while using their preferred devices and preferred UCC platforms, but also making the most from the AV peripherals in the actual meeting room. ClickShare devices are fully secure, easily accessible and fully compatible with the existing IT infrastructure.

How would you describe the growth of the remote conferencing market since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?

The pandemic has brought on a key behavioural shift in the working environment, primarily in the employee preference.

Employees prefer to use their own devices to connect, whether remotely or from the office.

According to Barco's research, 71% of employees are already selecting their own preferred conferencing systems, with on average six different conferencing solutions being used by every company.

Further, a Gartner report shows that by 2023 fewer than one-third of digital workers will select the corporate office as their preferred place to work. While remote working was already on the rise, the pandemic has only accelerated this movement.

We believe that the remote conferencing market is only set to grow and expand in the coming years with companies needing to adapt to the new working norm to ensure undeterred and seamless employee connectivity while also addressing the growing threat of cyber security as a result of external devices being connected.

What are the greatest cyberthreats currently at play and how has COVID-19 changed the cybersecurity landscape?

One of the primary challenges of the new hybrid working model today is the security implications of myriad systems being used at once. ACCORDING TO BARCO'S RESEARCH, 71% OF EMPLOYEES ARE ALREADY SELECTING THEIR OWN PREFERRED CONFERENCING SYSTEMS, WITH ON AVERAGE SIX DIFFERENT CONFERENCING SOLUTIONS BEING USED BY EVERY COMPANY."

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported a fivefold increase in cyberattacks since the COVID-19 outbreak.

Using this surge in online activity, cyber criminals have found unique opportunities to leverage existing attack tactics, techniques and procedures to exploit new opportunities created by a massive increase of employees working from home.

The most dangerous cyberthreats today are the ones that find their way into a company via the employees through phishing attacks or malicious emails. In such a scenario, the workforce may become the largest vulnerability for an organisation that needs to combat the threat with the right defence mechanisms and employee education programs in place.

How, in your opinion, can the security of remote devices be ensured, especially at this time?

A massive challenge faced by companies today is keeping organisational data and connections secure, especially when so many workers are working remotely and using their own devices or meeting room solutions for collaboration and team work.

Using smart, wireless collaboration solutions, such as ClickShare and ClickShare Conference, is imperative to ensure seamless, secured engagement and connection between in-office and remote workers.



SMART ACCESS FOR SECURE CONTROL



SECNOR ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM

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

There are two types of access control: physical and logical. Physical access control limits access to campuses, buildings, rooms and physical IT assets. Logical access control limits connections to computer networks, system files and data.

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DEALING WITH DATA

Rubrik regional sales director for the Middle East and North Africa Mohammed Al Tamimi highlights the importance of data management and protection as organisations seek agility in the time of COVID-19. Adelle Geronimo writes.



DATA BACKUP AND RECOVERY ARE AMONG THE KEY SOLUTIONS THAT BUSINESS AND IT LEADERS NEED TO FOCUS ON. DOING SO WILL EASE AND QUICKEN THE PROCESS OF DATA MANAGEMENT." he enterprise data management market is projected to grow by 9.3 percent and generate a revenue of \$126.9 billion by 2026, according to the latest data by MarketsandMarkets. For many enterprises, having a data management programme is key in identifying compliance, operational

efficiencies and risks, as well as in building client relationships, which are all driven by data quality and control.

Over the years, the data explosion has propelled the rise in demand for data management solutions as organisations recognise how vital it is to manage and protect data no matter where it resides, and that failure to do so put its very survival at risk.

This rings true now more than ever as organisations adopt unprecedented measures amid the COVID-19 pandemic. None was prepared for the sudden and dramatic changes that it would bring and with many companies implementing remote working schemes, issues around data protection and management arise as employees across organisations become dependent on technology platforms that will enable business continuity and offer a smooth and seamless experience for customers. "It's an extraordinary and challenging situation that no one saw coming," said Mohammed Al Tamimi, regional director, Middle East and North Africa, Rubrik. "Remote working requires organisations to implement different kinds of infrastructure to enable them to effectively set up their private cloud and deliver the same kind of experiences not only to their customers but also to their employees."

As businesses seek to become agile during these unprecedented times, Al Tamimi highlighted that data backup and recovery are among the key solutions that business and IT leaders need to focus on. According to him, doing so will ease and quicken the process of data management and accessibility, especially when the entire organisation is connecting remotely.

"This is where Rubrik comes in," he said. "We can help ensure that the backbone of a customer's data centre infrastructure can withstand cyber incidents such as ransomware attacks while assuring quick recovery time and business continuity after an event."

Rubrik offers a single, policy-driven platform for data recovery, governance, compliance, and cloud mobility, which works natively in cloud services such as Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure. The company, which has



Mohammed Al Tamimi, regional sales director for the Middle East and North Africa, Rubrik

seen a year-on-year growth of over 120 percent in 2019 in the MENA region, also specialises in helping businesses with multi-cloud and on-premise deployments.

"We are witnessing a lot of threat actors trying to exploit the current situation," said Al Tamimi. "We believe that organisations do not only need to identify disasters quickly to stay resilient. That's why our robust data management and backup solutions also provide enterprises with the capabilities to rapidly respond to such incidents to minimise business disruption and data loss."

Moreover, Rubrik also offers Radar, an intelligent application for defending against ransomware. Radar empowers enterprises to respond faster to security attacks by delivering deep intelligence on how an attack impacted their business-critical application data.

"Radar leverages behavioural analytics on the data that has been backed up," explained Al Tamimi. "Based on this analysis, we generate alerts for anomalies and suspicious behaviour such as ransomware. We then share this information with the customers and send them security alerts so they can conduct further investigations.

"I believe that this is an investment that organisations need to look at today. A security incident or disaster is inevitable. That's why Rubrik is not just an insurance policy, it's an investment," he added.

Looking ahead

How the COVID-19 pandemic will impact multiple industries for the longterm is still uncertain, as the situation is still dynamic and evolving. But one thing's for sure, it has propelled IT and technology to the forefront and underscored the need for the right kind of digital solutions. It has put the spotlight on the advantages and effectiveness of remote working measures, which has pushed organisations to re-think the way they handle and protect their data.

"I believe the current situation will reshape the future of work," said Al Tamimi. "That's why organisations need to realise that by implementing the right infrastructure and adopting the data management solutions, they will be able to deliver the best experiences to their employees, which will, in turn, allow them to yield optimal business outcomes."

As for the company, Al Tamimi highlighted that Rubrik will continue investing in the region by adding more resources for its regional operations.

"Whether it be by adding more people on-ground or onboarding new customers we will continuously grow our footprint here in the region," he said.

"We have been very successful in helping customers reduce their data centre footprint, so we want to continue to build on our success here. We have also partnered with major telcos across the region to offer in-country private cloud to enable customers to have our solution on-prem and utilise major telcos' data centres at the same time."

Al Tamimi emphasised its channel partners' contribution to their success in the region and reiterated their commitment to their partners.

"We are a very channel-driven organisation, however, we prefer less but focused partners such as Exclusive Networks. We operate on this model because we are committed enabling our partners' growth and by only having a focused set of partners in our network, we can ensure that each one of them can enjoy optimal margins."

ClickShare

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BARCO

INTERVIEW // CYWARE

NEED FOR THREAT Intelligence

Ahmed Ali, VP of Sales for EMEA at Cyware, tells **Adelle Geronimo** that with increasing complexities around cybersecurity, the need for threat intelligence is becoming more apparent.



Today's ever-evolving threat landscape and growing sophistication of cyberattacks make defending organisations a Herculean feat. That's why to gain an edge against threat actors, IT leaders need to be able to predict future attacks so they can prioritise their responses and accelerate the decision-making process as well as response time, providing better security altogether. To do this, threat intelligence is paramount.

With data at its core, threat intelligence provides context such as who is orchestrating the attack, what their motives are and what indicators of compromise should you look for, which help organisations make informed decisions about their security.

The Middle East has witnessed a significant increase in threat intelligence solutions over the past year. In the UAE, a recent industry study highlighted that 69 percent of businesses view threat intelligence as extremely important for their security strategies. A key driving factor behind this is the growing demand from organisations to be at the leading edge of security and the need to incorporate threat intelligence for more effective security operations.

Seeing this strong demand and opportunity, threat intelligence and cyber fusion products provider Cyware has recently entered the Middle East market and signed a distribution agreement with regional VAD Exclusive Networks.

Headquartered in New York, Cyware develops innovative solutions that deliver capabilities for strategic and tactical threat intelligence sharing, cyber fusion, security orchestration and automation, and incident response. The company also has a DevHub in Bangalore and an office in Mumbai. It extended its footprint into the region in late 2019 with its operations based in Dubai. At the helm of its regional business is its VP of Sales for EMEA Ahmed Ali.

"Threat intelligence is vital in fortifying the defences of the security technology stack at any organisation," he says. "Knowing what to defend against and how best to prepare for and prevent potential threats are they key benefits of threat intelligence. We have designed our threat intelligence platform solutions to make it as easy as possible to leverage automation and operationalise intelligence for a faster, smarter defence."

The use of threat intelligence provides numerous benefits in making security operations more proactive and understanding threat actor behaviour more effectively. When it comes to detecting and analysing threats at an early stage, tactical threat intelligence plays a central role by illuminating a threat actor's tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). Cyware's solutions make secure collaboration, cyber resiliency, and enhanced threat visibility a reality for organisations, sharing communities (ISAC/ISAO), MSSPs, and government agencies.

"There are four main tasks that are vital to a security team's role – prevent, predict, defend and respond," explains Ali. "Threat intelligence can help organisations predict behaviours, analyse them and then apply those analyses into their prevention measures. This will ultimately help them bolster their defences and allow them to better respond to threats."

Combating complex threats pushes security teams to adopt a wide variety of security products and solutions, which results in the creation of huge volumes of threat information in different formats. This makes analysing, correlating and prioritising this information a tremendous challenge for security teams to effectively triage and respond to critical incidents. To help address this challenge, Cyware designed its Cyber Fusion Center.

"The Cyware Cyber Fusion Center offers SOAR and more. It unifies several security functions such as threat intelligence, vulnerability assessment and incident response among others into a single, connected platform. It enables organisations to increase the speed and accuracy of their operations while reducing costs and risk of analyst burn out," says Ali.

He adds, 'Just like other SOAR platforms, it provides advanced orchestration and automation to stay ahead of increasingly sophisticated cyber threats. But what we have done differently is we developed a feature called 'connect-the-dots'. Speaking about the firm's partnership with Exclusive Networks, Ali says that the VAD's robust vendor portfolio and vast channel network make them the right partner for Cyware in the region. "Exclusive Networks has a strong reputation as a distributor of IT and cybersecurity products. With localised teams and a great technical knowledge, we see them as an extension of our global team." In the coming months, Ali says that they aim to continue to spread awareness about their capabilities and offerings in the region. "Just like every company across the globe, the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down some of our go-to-market strategies. However, we took the last few months as an opportunity to enhance our marketing and awareness plans."

FEATURE // CHANNEL & COVID-19



ASBIS Middle East: Hesham Tantawi, Vice-President



Channel Director, Middle East, Africa & India



Dell Technologies: Vangelis Lagousakos, General Manager - Channel Sales, Middle East, Russia, Africa & Turkey



D-Link: Sakkeer Hussain, Director - Sales & Marketing, Middle East & Africa





Avaya International: Fadi Moubarak, Vice President – Channels



Account Manager, UAE

TACKLING THE NEW NORMAL

Leading channel market players discuss the impact of the pandemic on their businesses and the challenges and opportunities they encounter in their journey to add value and offer relevant solutions to the digitally transforming market.



HANGING CHANNEL DYNAMICS ASBIS ME: People are changi

People are changing their lifestyles, adjusting to work from home

schedules and re-evaluating their needs and wants. In this situation, it's very important to focus and communicate with existing customers as well as with your internal team.

Avaya Int'l: Remote working has certainly become the norm, which means that the need for organisations to be agile to stay competitive becomes all the more critical.

Citrix: COVID-19 has forced channel partners to rethink the many aspects of doing business to the point of re-assessing vendor relationships, extreme focus on cash flow, managing supply chain disruptions, controlling sales cycles and accelerating opex.

Credence Security: From an operational standpoint, the two big challenges have been cash flow and how we conduct business. In order to ease the financial burden on our partners and customers, we have provided additional flexibility, where possible, around terms and license period to customers that have been struggling.

Dell Technologies: Now more than ever, channel partners have had to highlight their roles as consultants and not merely as companies selling products and solutions.

D-Link: From customer meetings to post sales, channel partners have had to invest in and implement remote work solutions to be able to engage with customers without any disruptions.

Finesse: One of the main challenges channels will look to address is consumers looking for more digital touchpoints in the fulfilment process – making it an 'anytime anywhere' company for the consumer.

Fortinet: The two areas of focus during the last few months have been implementing teleworking and restarting stalled application projects due to physical movement restrictions.

Manage Engine: Most businesses were forced to move all their operations from offline to online. Most customers also now prefer taking these meetings online and have switched to remote implementations. **Mitel Networks:** The Covid-19 pandemic has indeed brought in sweeping changes everywhere. Perhaps the biggest change has been in the area of IT spending. Spending has shifted from these traditional verticals to two major ones: healthcare and education.

SonicWall: There is constant and deep structural change in the cyber security sector as customers pivot away from archaic architectures. As corporate networks extend beyond the firewall, security remains an ever-present concern, especially as malicious actors look to exploit fears over the pandemic.

Spectrami: Channel partners today have their eyes on the following like never before, i.e, the cash flow commitment, optimisation of operational cost, preventing bad transactions, stringent expansion plans, playing on their core strengths and narrowing their product/ solution's focus. Though many business have reduced spending in the areas of IT, cybersecurity may be an exception.

Tenable: The biggest change for many has been adopting remote working practices for employees. While many organisations have supported a percentage of remote workers, this shifted to close to 100% of the workforce almost overnight in an effort to keep business functioning.

ThreatQuotient: As personal lives continue to become more and more blended with our work lives with many working from home, we will all have to continue to stay flexible, dedicated and transparent with partners and clients alike.

VAD Technologies: The channel is experiencing a new level of efficiency. That's why we call this era "The New Smart". While keeping in touch with your existing ecosystem is relatively easy and even efficient, building new opportunities and customers is a challenge for everyone.

Westcon-Comstor Middle East: As many of our partners have been working remotely, we have been creating more awareness for them to leverage our digital platforms such as PartnerView which allows them to access and manage all quotes, renewals, order tracking and history, and RMA submission with the click of a button.

REVENUE & GROWTH EXPECTATIONS

ASBIS ME: Some businesses are being forced to close while others are struggling

financially, and many are still conducting business as usual. Now is the time to excel at inside sales. Salespeople are often used to working independently and from home, but your clients may not be.

Avaya Int'l: Partners that have ingrained the subscription model into their DNA have innovated models that lead to higher subscription commitments, investment in consulting and services, and even sales. By adding the subscription model to their go-to-market mix, partners are equipped to provide customers with every option available to meet their particular near-term and medium-term requirements.

Citrix: How bullish or conservative the outlook may be for partners depends highly on the type of business the channel is focusing on – be it solution providers, system integrators, distributors, managed service providers. Channel partners that have embarked on a "cloud first" strategy will have an optimistically cautious outlook.

Credence Security: With organisations moving to remote work arrangements, we are seeing an increase in demand for cybersecurity solutions — we're having daily conversations with new customers and partners around new requirements.

Dell Technologies: Channel partners who work within diverse industries have had lesser impact than those who work within certain sectors that have been affected during the pandemic. In fact, channel partners have seen steady interest from organisations that are looking to adapt their digital infrastructure to the needs of the hour.

D-Link: Now more than ever, customers require experts to help them meet their digital objectives quickly. Partners should not lower their revenue growth expectations but instead be proactive and find new areas of opportunity.

Finesse: It is natural that with consumer and commercial spending being low, channel partners will have to lower the growth expectations. However, they should use this time to bring about changes that will future-proof them to the needs of consumers in the years to come.

Fortinet: Any short-term reduction in volume does not impact a company's need to secure their environment and data, whether they are selling B2C or B2B. For this reason, we see channel partners using caution and increasing focus rather

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Channel Director- UAE



Manage Engine: Nirmal Kumar Manoharan, Regional Sales Director



Director, MEA



than making any drastic changes to their picture of the future.

Manage Engine: The economic downturn has been sudden and dramatic, and many companies are struggling to survive the pandemic. It is too early to speak about the future revenue growth at this point, because it is not clear how long this crisis will persist.

FEATURE // CHANNEL & COVID-19





Tenable: Maher Jadallah, Regional Director - Middle East



ThreatQuotient: Alison Adkins, Busir <u>Development Manager</u>



VAD Technologies: Mario M. Veljovic, General Manager



Westcon-Comstor Middle East: Steve Lockie, Group Managing Director

Mitel Networks: I wouldn't say revenue expectations haven't gone down, they are just being realigned to suit the latest market needs. Nowadays, organisations go by relevance; everything else they discard.

SonicWall: Most organisations have deferred their IT budgets and spending. There is an increased demand for remote access solutions and therefore a demand for specialised channel partners who can help customers at this time.

Spectrami: Many channel partners are optimising their own operations. With respect to their Go-to-Market plans, they are focusing and aligning 80% of their efforts and resources behind customers that matter the most to them.

Tenable: Channel partners are perfectly placed to help customers who might be struggling with a change in working practices, such as a remote workforce, reduced budgets, or even a reduced IT/Security team.

VAD Technologies: Channel partners shouldn't lower their revenue growth expectations, but rather work on realigning their product and service offerings.

RE-ALIGNING SELLING STRATEGIES

ASBIS ME: Sales is at its best when helping customers succeed. Now more than ever the priority should be supporting customers, not trying to make a sale.

Citrix: Partners must stop just trying to sell and focus on solidifying the "trusted advisor" role. Today, more than ever, customers want to find new, cost effective ways to navigate through uncharted territory.

Credence Security: Our message to our partners is to stay close to the customer and nurture these leads the key is to, at all times, understand customers' changing timelines, budget allocations and priorities.

Dell Technologies: Data centres have traditionally been a key solution for channel partners as they drive a number of decisions for organisations. There are also significant opportunities for cyber security solutions as organisations are now realising the importance of a risk management framework.

D-Link: Channel partners must take time to truly understand what the requirement is before making a general pitch. By evaluating these and creating

genuine value-add for their customer, they will be successful.

Finesse: Align your goals around being customer-centric. Listening to customers will be paramount to strategise and sell better through partner channels.

Fortinet: When COVID-19 caused the lockdown, customers were very clear who they would call for help; these were the partners who had added value in the past. Every channel partner needs to understand what their customers value, and deliver that to them.

Manage Engine: We must realise that we are communicating in a highly overmessaged environment right now. Channel partners must be prepared to manage the communication and other challenges that arise in such situations.

Mitel Networks: Most channel players are experiencing a dip in revenue because they still haven't figured out what the market needs, and have stuck to traditional business patterns. Those partners who have anticipated this change are doing well.

SonicWall: Channel partners should be talking to customers to find out what their pain points are and discover what opportunities might be emerging as more firms start to re-engineer their architecture to include higher levels of remote working.

Spectrami: The market behaviour and experience of emerging out from Covid-19 phase will engrave a new formula of execution and growth expectation with most businesses. The selling strategies and the sales actions will more judge the productivity and realistic outcome of their efforts.

Tenable: Managed service providers can work with organisations to reduce their day-to-day overheads. They might also consider bringing in professional services to boost the skills of internal teams by using existing tools to be more effective.

VAD: Clients seek agile, elastic and flexible IT Infrastructure to be better prepared for any future eventuality. Cloudification of your offering is definitely a must.

Westcon-Comstor: We have seen a surge in requirements for unified communications and cyber security solutions since the onset of the pandemic. Today, end-customers are more aware than ever of having proper solutions in place to maintain business resilience.

INTERVIEW // WESTCON-COMSTOR

DIGITALLY DRIVEN

Steve Lockie, Group Managing Director, Westcon-Comstor

Steve Lockie, Group Managing Director, Westcon-Comstor, gives a lowdown on how the valueadded distributor is enabling channel partners to adapt to the market shifts and changing patterns brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

How has COVID-19 impacted your business with existing customers?

COVID-19 has resulted in widespread concern and economic hardship for consumers, businesses and communities across the globe.

Consumer demand patterns are shifting as companies are being required to continuously adapt to new and uncertain market conditions. The small business segment seems to be the most impacted due to the pandemic but based on historical data it is also generally the segment to bounce back at the fastest rate once market disruptions have settled. The situation around COVID-19 has also created new market opportunities specially in the IT industry. The need for remote working has led to a surge in requirements especially for Unified Communications and Security Solutions. The customers are more aware than ever to have proper solutions in place to maintain business resilience.

How did Westcon-Comstor transform its strategies to adapt to the impacts of COVID-19?

Being one of the only few distributors in the region to have maintained a full functional supply chain through the entire period of lockdown, we were able to assist our vendors and partners in ensuring supply of infrastructure for critical projects including public sector specially healthcare.

Our Global Deployment Solutions (GDS) team has been working with some regional and global telcos and extending its expertise on some huge multi-site projects across the region.

We have been making continuous investments into our GDS team to enhance their capabilities. Also, a big priority for us is also to maintain healthy cash flow in the business by keeping quality credit checks in place.

Our focus on Digital Distribution and the investments we have made into our digital capabilities over the past years have helped us conduct



business with our partners with almost no disruption.

As most of our partners have been working remotely, we have been creating more awareness for them to take leverage of our digital platforms such as PartnerView which allows them to access and manage all quotes, renewals, order tracking and history, and RMA submission with the click of a button.

We have also decided to cut back on any non-essential marketing spend and focus only on essential areas of marketing such a lead generation for our partners.

As a socially responsible organisation, we understand and acknowledge our role and responsibility towards the bigger community. We have been driving our CSR initiatives to help the venerable individuals impacted by the pandemic.

How is Westcon-Comstor working with the channel partners to help them get through this crisis?

We have been assisting our partners in identifying verticals and market sectors that have growth opportunity especially due to the surge in the requirements for remote working solutions.

By working closely with our vendors, we have we have created bundles and special pricing offers on the solutions which are in high demand.

We understand that there is a need for our partners to generate new

demand as some of their existing customers are highly impacted.

Many of these partners are themselves challenged due to lack of funds & resources to drive these marketing initiatives. Hence, we have been assisting our partners by generating new leads for them through our Marketing as a Service (MaaS) offering.

From the time the situation around coronavirus started emerging, we started working on these lead generation campaigns with a set of our key resellers. Having seen some very positive feedback on these campaigns, we have now extended the offering to a larger set of partners across multiple vendor technologies.



AS A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATION, WE UNDERSTAND AND ACKNOWLEDGE OUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE BIGGER COMMUNITY. WE HAVE BEEN DRIVING OUR CSR INITIATIVES TO HELP THOSE IMPACTED BY THE PANDEMIC."

What are the future initiatives that is Weston-Comstor is planning to take to help partners get back to normal business?

As the countries across the region start to open up their economies for business and as people start accepting the 'new normal' as a way of life, we expect the demand to start picking up with unified communications & security being the key areas for growth.

At Westcon-Comstor, we have maintained our focus on being a true 'digital first, data-driven' organisation. As a distributor, we're at the crossroads of thousands of business ICT transactions, which gives us immense insight into technology trends, customer needs and buying patterns.

We at Westcon-Comstor are uniquely positioned to take advantage of this data-rich opportunity to benefit our vendors and partners.

We will continue to share these valuable insights with our partners and help them identify verticals/ areas which still have opportunity.

We will also continue to assist our partners create new demand through our value-added offerings such as MaaS.

Our teams will continue to work with the channel partners and provide them assistance as per their needs. Cybersecurity

NAVIGATING CYBERSECURITY IN THE 'NEW NORMAL'

84% OF BUSINESSES ARE SET TO INCREASE WFH CAPACITIES BEYOND THE PANDEMIC DESPITE SECURITY WOES

espite security issues and concerns resulting from the massive and sudden increase in work-fromhome (WFH) initiatives caused by the global COVID-19 healthcare crisis, one-third (38%) of U.S. companies observed productivity gains during remote work and a staggering 84% anticipate broader and more permanent WFH adoption beyond the pandemic, according to new data today released by Pulse Secure, the leading provider of software-defined Secure Access solutions.

The 2020 Remote Work-From-Home Cybersecurity Report, sponsored by Pulse Secure and produced by Cybersecurity Insiders, offers an in-depth perspective on WFH challenges, concerns, strategies and anticipated outcomes. The survey, conducted in May of 2020, polled over 400 IT security decision practitioners across a broad representation of industries and companies between 500 and over 5,000 employees.

The survey found that 33% of U.S. companies anticipate some positions moving to permanent remote work and over half (55%) plan to increase their budget for secure remote work in the near-term. **WFH adoption accelerated cloud app growth and business continuity challenges**

The research indicates that three-quarters of businesses now have more than 76% of their employees working from home compared to just under 25% at the close of 2019. While a third of respondents cited their business being "ill prepared or not prepared" for remote working, 75% of businesses were able to transition to remote working within 15 days. Surprisingly, less than a third expressed cost or budget problems, demonstrating the urgency to support their business. Additionally, more than half (54%) expressed that COVID-19 has accelerated migration of users' workflows and applications to the cloud.

Increase in WFH employees fuels security and compliance issues In terms of security risks, two-thirds (69%) are concerned with WFH security risks with the majority expressing low user awareness training, insecure home/public WiFi networks, use of atrisk personal devices and sensitive data leakage as prime threat contributors.

In terms of application exposure, respondents feel anxious over file sharing (68%), web apps (47%), and video conferencing (45%) risks.

While 78% expressed enforcing the same level of security controls and data management for onpremise and remote users, a further 65% allowed access from personal, unmanaged devices.

Two-thirds of IT security professionals anticipate malware, phishing, unauthorised user and device access, and unpatched/at risk systems to be the most exploitable WFH attack vectors.

In addition, 63% expressed that remote work could impact compliance mandates that apply to their organisation; especially GDRP, PCI-DSS, HIPAA and those with data breach notification.

Wider trends toward security tools consolidation

Survey respondents employed various tools to secure remote work / home office scenarios with the top four controls being endpoint security, Firewalls, virtual private networks (SSL-VPN) and multi-factor authentication (MFA). According to separate research by Enterprise Management Associates, 57% of organisations regard the consolidation of access management solutions into a single platform to be a high or extreme priority for their business this year.

The WFH and tool consolidation trends coincide with a recent update to Pulse Access Suite, a secure access solution set that provides easy access for mobile workforces and a single-pane-of-glass to streamline provisioning, management and scalability.

The Suite integrates adaptive identity and device authentication, protected connectivity, extensive visibility and analytics, and threat response for hybrid IT.

Organisations can centrally orchestrate a Zero Trust policy to ensure compliant access to applications, resources and services across mobile, network and multi-cloud environments. OF ORGANISATIONS EXPRESSED CONCERNS AROUND WFH SECURITY RISKS

To learn more about the Pulse Secure and explore additional 2020 Remote Work-From-Home Cybersecurity Report findings, please visit: http://www.pulsesecure.net/ WFH_cybersecurityreport/



ALJAMMAZ, FIREEYE Partner to boost Security offerings

The partnership plans to jointly develop, strengthen and empower IT channel partners to implement cutting-edge cybersecurity solutions to customers in the region.



lJammaz Technologies has announced that it has signed a distribution agreement with FireEye, the intelligence-led security company. Through this agreement, the two organisations plan to jointly develop, engage, inspire and enable IT channel partners to provide the latest cybersecurity solutions to customers in the region. FireEye works as a seamless, scalable extension of customer security operations by offering a single platform

that blends innovative security technologies, nation-state grade threat intelligence, and worldrenowned Mandiant consulting. The strategic partnership will open new business opportunities and revenue streams for AlJammaz, which can now resell, service and support customers by offering them a wide range of intelligence-led security solutions from the FireEye and Mandiant portfolio.

Adel Qahwash, GM, AlJammaz Technologies, said, "We became the leading value-added technology distributor in Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries because of our focus on identifying, aggregating and distributing cutting-edge cyber security solutions to our channel partners and their customers. This new agreement with FireEye will further empower this partner community. Our aim is to work with FireEye on this to give customers peace of mind and control over their digital environment." Our aim is to work with FireEye on this to give customers peace of mind and control over their digital environment." A give customers peace of mind and control over their digital environment, " he added.

"Through this distribution a greement with AlJammaz Technologies, we look forward to expanding our channel footprint across a broader ecosystem of partners. With its vast experience and resources, the AlJammaz Technologies team will assist FireEye in recruiting new partners whilst empowering and enabling existing resellers across the country," said Fateh Karkanawi, Regional Sales Director – KSA & Bahrain, FireEye.

DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ACROSS ME

Sami Abi Esber, President – Midis System Integration and Board Member-Midis Group, discusses how MIDIS SI Group has leveraged its expertise to introduce cuttingedge technology solutions to the market, while remaining focused on the customers' needs.

Sami Abi Esber, President – Midis System Integration and Board Member-Midis Group



Midis SI Group has always been on a mission to introduce cutting-edge technology solutions in the region. As we grew over the years, we have always focused on the needs of our end customers while maintaining strong alignment with our business partners and expanding our partner eco-system to cover the majority of our customer needs. We rely on business entrepreneurship at the heart of our model. This is coupled by stringent governance and financial management as well as a code of conduct that ensures the highest levels of integrity in all of our operations. This helped us earn customers' and partners' trust and respect. Our portfolio today is quite comprehensive and diversified. We are proud that our customers and partners see us as the leading system integration partner in the region. Core to our growth strategy was to be closer to the customer. This is why we are today present across key markets in all the geographies we cover. Midis SI group, the system integration & services arm of Midis group, is now present in 13 countries across 20 cities with over 2,500 employees. Our human capital is spread across sales, pre-sales, implementation, tech support and other departments with the majority of employees in professional and technical support services. We have the highest level of partnerships with global technology vendors across the region. We focus on technologies and solutions such as cloud & data centre infrastructure services, managed IT services, managed security services, software & professional services, end user computing, mobility & communications, Site and Power business which builds data centres to name a few.

Our success story has been steady and consistent. We've managed 17%

CAGR in the last 10 + years. Then again, because of our unstinted focus on our customers, we've been rated the #1 IT Service Provider in different countries. I can confidently say that the company's growth is based on entrepreneurship, innovation and a hands-on presence in the market coupled with continuous investment in resources and strong governance. We've always made sure that our solutions are relevant, transparent and flexible. resonating well with our customers and helping them build a relationship of trust with Midis SI group. For us, what matters at the end of the day is a satisfied customer and for this, we're ready to travel that extra mile.

WE'VE ALWAYS MADE SURE THAT OUR SOLUTIONS ARE RELEVANT, TRANSPARENT AND FLEXIBLE, RESONATING WELL WITH OUR CUSTOMERS."

How would you describe the technology market in the Middle East? What are the opportunities here?

The Middle East market is a dynamic one and despite the fact that it represents only 2-3% of the global ICT market, it is innovative, progressive, resilient and extremely adaptable. Governments in the region are catalysts for change and they are willing to adopt advanced technology in key areas such as healthcare, eGovernment services, education and many more. All with the goal of improving citizen services and quality of life. In fact, the market is exciting and full of possibilities because we have plenty of opportunities and a modern infrastructure which allows us to deploy advanced solutions and be creative with our ideas. However, like all other markets, here too, there are challenges and pain points. Perhaps the main bottleneck here is that the Gulf region depends on the oil sector to a large extent, because of which fluctuations in oil prices tend to affect the overall market and IT spend. Geopolitical tensions in the region as well are another challenging aspect. The high suscaptance of the region to cybercrimes and attacks is definitely a matter of concern.

The Middle East market is rapidly moving towards cloud adoption and while private cloud was the main choice initially as well as SaaS solutions, the advent of mega-scalers like Microsoft and Amazon in the region opened up more opportunities and cleared some of the obstacles that prevented wide-scale cloud adoption. So, while some solutions were not possible in the past due to lack of scale or a suitable platform, now a wider range of solutions and opportunities are available and we can drive innovation in a more aggressive way. We also see a major thrust in analytics, AI and Big Data to help improve citizen lives, make them safer, optimize business performance and create new revenue streams of non-conventional services. So yes, the Middle East market is poised for some very interesting developments and we're keenly following the trend.

What is the company's differentiator as far as market consolidation is concerned?

As a group we are very progressive and agile. When it comes to financial stability, we've always strived to maintain a strong balance sheet and capitalisation which allows us to use our own resources to finance our growth and expansion . This means that if there is a crisis, we can continue to retain focus on customer service without having to resort to any drastic measures. This also permits us to remain a solid

COVER STORY// MIDIS SI GROUP

player for the long-term and gives us the ability to be a reliable partner with major vendors and technology providers. We are also blessed that we can pursue acquisitions to complement our portfolio of products, services and solutions. We're always open to feedback and are constantly evolving. We reorganise ourselves to remain costeffective and competitive in the market as well as synergize between the various group companies to deliver an end-to-end solution to the customer. Still, our biggest asset is our large family of 2,500 experienced and dedicated employees who made the Group what it is today. So, we are well prepared to weather the storms affecting the market.

How has MIDIS System Integration group transformed itself as a leading Digital Transformation player by aligning with new market trends, technologies such as IoT, Big Data, Cloud, Security and AI?

A few years ago, the Middle East market was clearly shifting to what is called the third platform, which was all about accelerating digital transformation. So, we worked closely with our partners, customers and key vendors to devise strategies and frameworks that focused on emerging technologies such as IoT, Big Data, Cloud, Security, AI and others.

In this connection, let me highlight a few initiatives that we've spearheaded in this space. We acquired eHosting DataFort, a leading managed hosting and cloud services company which can provide managed services on both private as well as public clouds. We also acquired LiveRoute, a dedicated Microsoft Azure partner and one of the leading Microsoft services and cloud partners in the region. We also developed strong capabilities in providing managed security services and building as well as operating security operations centres for government, aviation sector, BFSI, Retail and Hospitality and many others.



Recently, we partnered with a leading AI vendor in the area of Time-Series and will be making an announcement about this soon. We are focusing on building AI and Machine Learning expertise and partnerships, not only at the technology level, but as an end to end solution that can deliver business value to the customers based on industry use cases. We also have some very exciting ongoing projects under execution by our Site & Power Group where we are building the biggest Data Centers for the regional and international players based on the latest technology, but as you can appreciate, we are not in a position to give out the details because of the sensitive nature of these projects. But one thing is for sure: these projects will help boost cloud adoption and digital transformation in the region.

We also believe that the time is right for IoT. A few years ago, it was hyped and limited to a few use-cases, but now the concept has grown and you'll soon hear from us about some new partners we're joining hands with for IoT. In fact, we're already implementing POC's for key IoT solutions in the transport and oil sectors.

Midis SI group is passionate about Big Data and some of our affiliates specialise in Big Data-for instance, MDSAP are working on some very interesting projects with SAP to that effect.

That's not all. I am very pleased to announce that we've complemented our Big Data and robotics process automation portfolio (RPA) with the recent acquisition of Magnoos, A Value-Added Reseller and Technology Implementation company specialised in the Data Management & Analytics, Service Management and Automation software solutions industry.

We've also come a long way in positioning ourselves as a leading SI of choice for customers looking for digital transformation solutions. This, coupled with the range of technology partners and companies that we have, allows us to build an ecosystem where the expertise is present within the Midis SI group itself.

We are fortunate to have as many as 56 entities across various specialisations within the Midis SI group– to provide end-to-end solutions from within the group companies. We're also fully capable of partnering with 3RD parties to strengthen what we call the digital eco system. We're also focusing on IT operations management and IT services management – these are big drivers to improve availability, service turn-



around time and quality of services – especially with the challenges that multi-cloud adoption bring about and customers looking for reliable partners to help them effectively manage such hybrid environments. The acquisition of Magnoos strengthens our relationship with BMC, a leading player in that space and coupled with the Midis SI financial strength and market reach, it will enable us to help many more customers and service providers address the challenges of IT Operations management - ITOM , and IT service Management ITSM.

For RPA, our acquisition of Magnoos, allows us to expand the partnership with Automation Anywhere® and to help customers improve internal and external processes with intelligent workflows and process automation to reduce time, improve efficiency, reduce errors and drive quality. The acquisition of Magnoos also complements our offerings in the Big Data/Analytics space, as Magnoos is a key partner for Informatica®, one of the top providers of Big Data capabilities in the world and the region.

What is the 2021 market outlook for Midis System Integration Group? Our crystal ball is as good as yours, however, we believe that the market will pick up again in 2021 and beyond. The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the drive for digital transformation. This is why the IT sector did not suffer as much as other sectors, and overall is likely to be flat for 2020. We believe countries in the region have done a good job in controlling the spread of the virus, and with greater awareness, lower mortality rates and the very real possibility of a vaccine in 2021 we're hoping that the market will gather momentum sooner rather than later. With the gradual anticipated increased demand on travel, transport and production capacity, we expect oil prices to improve from 2021 onwards. This will have a positive impact on our markets and the government spend in general.

I must say that some sectors of the economy, however, have been more impacted than others as we all know. Those might be slower to pick up to pre-crisis levels. We believe markets in 2022 will return to healthy growth and we are hoping that at the geo-political level, things will stabilise in the region and more investors become more confident to explore the region than ever before.

How are the company's acquisitions expected to benefit the group as well as the different stakeholders (customers, vendors etc.)?

The acquisitions add, complement and strengthen certain capabilities of the Midis SI group. As you rightly pointed out, the strategic acquisitions we make, do benefit multiple stakeholders. For customers, it means that they can rely on Midis SI and its group of companies to provide end to end solutions in any of the newer technology domains in the region, namely Cloud Services, Big Data and Analytics, IoT, AI and ML, etc. Acquisitions also help us acquire some vertical expertise in areas where we don't have such expertise, hence can speak the customer's language and address their business priorities.

For our technology partners, it means a wider reach to customers, and accelerating growth by using the Midis platform to reach more customers. For our employees, it means opportunities for professional growth and opportunities as we integrate the new companies in our eco-system and scale the business, so a good acquisition is a win-win formula for all stakeholders.

SECURING CYBERSPACE

Lara Yousuf, Partner Manager at Mimecast, discusses the state of the cybersecurity landscape in the wake of the rapidly transforming digital world and the need for tighter security measures, especially where remote working strategies are concerned.



How would you evaluate the cybersecurity landscape at this point, with the pandemic bringing in a 'new normal'? Threat actors often exploit times of confusion or global events to conduct cyberattacks. These actors are opportunistic and will seek to exploit people's fear, in order to increase the likelihood of users clicking on an attachment or link delivered in a malicious communication.

Our Threat Intelligence Centre found that in the first 100 days of the coronavirus, there was a 751% increase in unsafe clicks by users in MENA. This indicated a need for better user awareness training, as companies transitioned to remote workforces.

The Threat Intel team found that employees of organisations that did not have Awareness Training were 5 x more likely to click on an unsafe link. Having an entire workforce working remotely and off the company network also means that an effective web security offering is more important than ever, especially with the rapid growth in fake and malicious websites over this time. Our Threat Intelligence Centre found over 115,000 Covid-19 related spoof domains, designed to steal personal information, that were detected in the first three months of the pandemic.

Now that remote working has picked up pace, what is your take on email security in the region? We initially saw an increase in remote

working due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but this could be a permanent arrangement for some. In the rush to move to remote working new systems were introduced along with basic security policies. Remote working makes employees more reliant on email for communication, which also happens to be the top attack vector for cyberattacks.

Mimecast's State of Email Security 2020 report that revealed that 74% of organisations in Saudi Arabia and 60% in UAE believe it's inevitable or likely they will suffer from an email-borne attack in the coming year. Fifty eight percent of UAE organisations and 48% in Saudi Arabia saw phishing attacks increase while more than half (56% in KSA and 58% in UAE) experienced an increase in impersonation fraud in the last year. Traditional security measures that have been used previously can no longer protect a fully remote staff.

Workers suddenly isolated from their day-to-day environment are more likely to click through and share passwords and other data that can compromise an organisation's network.

Many companies don't have the same level of web security for remote workers as they do in the office. Home routers with default or easy-to-guess passwords could open the employee - and the company - up to compromise.

Furthermore, webmail or private email are unencrypted, leaving employee devices at significant risk of compromise via interception or "man in the middle attacks," and can make home networks vulnerable to compromise as attackers may piggyback on these end users to compromise an otherwise secure environment.

The threat of impersonation attacks is also heightened during extended periods of remote work. It's now much harder to walk over to the financial director's desk and confirm a payment to a supplier.

How are you working with channel partners to adapt to the changing times and add value?

Our partner community continues to be our trusted advisors for our customers and prospects. They are in touch with our customers daily and are patiently navigating the urgency and complexity of organisations slowly trying to reopen their operations. Overcoming this uncertainty has driven a reinvention of their approach.

The current situation has created an opportunity for our partners to further build the competencies and skills needed to advise our customers and prospects around the importance of building stronger cyber resilience.

Our partners aim to provide customers with value, empathy, and continuous engagement during the crisis as they build deeper relationships and ultimately become their "trusted advisors" in a post-Covid world.

We developed a monthly webinar series called "The Partner Hangout Program" aimed at providing our partners with the necessary tools to remain educated and aware of the ever-evolving cyber landscape and how Mimecast can support organisations in the Middle East. We are increasing our Mimecast touchpoints with partner organisations and individuals so that whatever support they require is readily there, and resources from sales, engineering, and marketing are available to support them in their customer engagements.

We have also been looking at ways to strengthen remote productivity and to scale up the contactless customer engagements through informative and interactive partnerled customer webinars. Overall, our partners have been tremendous support for us in the market.

What would you say are some of the best practices for CIOs as far as email security is concerned? Organisations need to have layered security that protects all attack vectors,



WORKERS SUDDENLY ISOLATED FROM THEIR DAY-TO-DAY ENVIRONMENT ARE MORE LIKELY TO CLICK THROUGH AND SHARE PASSWORDS AND OTHER DATA THAT CAN COMPROMISE AN ORGANISATION'S NETWORK."

including endpoint, web and email. Data Leak Prevention is also vital to secure data, especially as employees are likely to be distracted and not always paying attention to what information they are sharing. The email threat landscape has changed and requires security professionals to evolve from a perimeter-based discipline to a more pervasive discipline.

Effective security controls must include protection from external threats at the email perimeter and internal threats within the network and organisation. They should incorporate effective cybersecurity awareness training into their strategy to protect the organisation from human error.

They then need tools that extend beyond the company's security

perimeter - such as DMARC and brand exploit protection - to help identify when their brand is being abused by impersonators seeking to exploit customers, employees and partners.

As adoption of cloud-based business applications grow in the wake of forced lockdowns around the globe, companies need to ensure they have the tools to recover in any situation. This includes a data management strategy that combines archiving, backup and data protection capabilities to allow for quick restoration of critical systems and applications in the event of disruption.

How is Mimecast's product range helping customers adapt to greater security threats?

The majority of our products have become increasingly relevant in this new world. For starters, there has been a major increase in COVID-19 related cyberattacks, which means our Email Security, Web Security, Brand Exploit Protect and DMARC solutions have all become incredibly important when it comes to protecting organisations and their customers from these threats.

Many organisations have also found that they weren't equipped for remote working environments. Our web security keeps the web safe and consistently secures employees even when they're off the company network.

With a distributed workforce and an abundance of scams doing the rounds, the cost of human error escalates, so organisations need to take steps to adequately prepare employees to spot these threats.

Awareness Training has never been more important. Finally, our comprehensive backup and archiving solutions are ready to restore access to critical business data should there be any unplanned downtime. The recent rise in Emotet ransomware puts organisations at increased risk and they will need to ensure they have continuity until the crisis passes.

We also remain focused on keeping our partners informed and educated as they lead these discussions with customers. We've shifted to virtual partner meetings and webinars while still maintaining the same rigor, pace and commitment to our partners and customers. SPOTLIGHT // D-LINK

OPTIMISING CONNECTIVITY

Sakkeer Hussain, Director - Sales & Marketing, D-Link Middle East & Africa, points out how the need to stay connected more safely and securely has become top priority for a world that is working remotely since the pandemic.

How has the connectivity solutions market been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic? How much has the demand for cutting-edge connectivity solutions grown during the last few months?

With the onset of the on-going pandemic, businesses were forced to move to remote work models and embrace digital solutions overnight. The change was dramatic and sweeping, and for these technologies to work seamlessly, having a strong and stable Wi-Fi connection became a prerequisite. This resulted in an unprecedented demand for connectivity solutions that are relevant, for the market simple and smooth.

A recent forecast by GSMA Intelligence said that the total IoT connections are expected to double between 2019 and 2025, reaching 24 billion. According to the firm, the Covid-19 pandemic will lead to faster adoption of IoT among companies, as well as AI/ML and 5G among other technologies to drive digital transformation. and tackle the new normal.

With more and more companies opting for remote working models, how challenging has it become, to ensure security of networks and devices?

As businesses across the region embrace remote working models, it opens the door to risks posed by unknown networks and devices that are not vetted by corporate IT teams. Ensuring security is embedded into personal devices and home Wi-Fi- routers becomes even more important during such a scenario. At the same time, we are seeing that cyber adversaries are taking advantage of the current situation and exploiting any vulnerability that they can find.

It is quite challenging to get customers to change their mindset and make security a top priority for their networks and devices. Most customers don't even change passwords on a regular basis. Additionally, with remote working gathering steam, the number of personal devices and home Wi-Fi connections that have access to corporate systems and networks have increased exponentially, placing critical data and information at a huge risk. In addition, hacking methods have also become more sophisticated, underscoring the need for greater and far-reaching security solutions.



REMOTE WORKERS CAN KEEP THEIR ROUTERS SECURE BY CHANGING PASSWORDS REGULARLY, UPDATING FIRMWARE, USING A SEPARATE NETWORK FOR GUESTS AND ENCRYPTING WIRELESS DATA."

Home Wi-Fi routers have always been a particularly vulnerable category. What are some of the main security issues that Wi-fi routers face today?

Home Wi-Fi routers are especially susceptible to attacks as its configuration presents predefined credentials readily available over the internet. Routers are susceptible to many known vulnerabilities as it is, which are oftentimes not fixed even with the latest updates. The average user rarely thinks about router security when making a purchase. To reiterate, according to a survey by Broadband Genie, only 31 percent of the 2,205 respondents have changed the Wi-Fi network password (which is different from the router's admin password), and only 30 percent checked the router's admin panel to see what other devices are connected to their router.

Other major risks include:

Piggybacking – Unknown users can access your wireless network and use your connection, if your networks and routers are not adequately secured.

Wardriving – Savvy computer users can effortlessly broadcast range your wireless access point to make it available from longer distances. It is a type of piggybacking.

Evil Twin Attacks – This is a bit more complex where the adversary uses a broadcast signal stronger than the one the user has to impersonate the user's network. This way hackers are able to access data such as credit card info, login details and other personal information from devices connected to the network.

Other risks include wireless sniffing, unauthorized computer access, shoulder surfing and possibilities of mobile devices theft. By actually stealing your device, attackers will have unrestricted access to all of its data, including any connected cloud accounts.

What tips can you offer those working from home, to keep their routers secure?

Remote workers can keep their routers secure by undertaking simple steps such as regularly changing the passwords,



ensuring the firmware is up-to-date, turning off features that enable remote access from outside the home, leveraging the option to use a separate network for guests and by being more aware of all the devices connected to the home network.

They can also encrypt their wireless data so no one else can view the details. Installing a host-based firewall directly on wireless devices will also help add an extra protection later. With the proliferation of IoT devices, it is critical to safely manage its operations through the router and take all the necessary cautionary measures.

What are some of the new age remote working solutions that D-Link has introduced, to help remote working employees enhance their working experience?

At D-Link, we have ramped up our offerings and introduced novel products to the market during this time through our extensive channel partner network. These new innovations ranged from D-Link Thermal Solution Fever

Screening Kit and D-Link Temperature Measurement Face Recognition Terminal suite of products to remote work management solutions such as the Nuclias Managed Wireless Networking Solution portfolio.

We also announced ground-breaking Wi-Fi 6 routers, including two of our flagship products - DIR-X5460 EXO AX AX5400 and DIR-X1860 EXO AX AX1800. We have also introduced our DWR-925W 4G LTE M2M Router in the region to offer seamless connections to businesses this year.

Additionally, D-Link's flagship Exo Smart Mesh Wi-Fi Router series come embedded with in-built security. The next-generation routers offer highperformance Wi-Fi connectivity combined with McAfee protection, providing a faster and more secure home network.

Which product is currently most in demand and why?

We are seeing an increased demand for secure wireless router portfolio, Wi-Fi 6 and 5G solutions.

Our Nuclias Managed Wireless Networking Solution portfolio has seen a great uptake in the regional market. It was introduced to the region during the peak of COVID-19 lockdown. 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.

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.

How is the channel market keeping up with the 'new normal' brought on by the pandemic?

Partners are thinking creatively and taking control of the situation by being customers' trusted advisors. The new normal challenges us to redefine the way we work and live for the better. There's always a learning curve when we have to get used to a new situation. Our partners are viewing it as an opportunity to be more innovative rather than think of it as a problem.

It is very important for partners to stay focused on their core offerings, and look at teaming up with other channel firms, to cater end-to-end to customers' evolving requirements. Customer experience must be central to all business strategies. The channel market must make it a point to be innovative and go the extra mile to fulfil a need and be agile and always available. Partners must be open to offering flexible options and most of all understanding the customer's changing business models. 🥯

HIRE RIGHT

Abhijeet Sanyal, VP – Technology Staffing Services at Raqmiyat, says the challenge now is to hire right talent from within the country without affecting commitments



Abhijeet Sanyal, Vice President – Technology Staffing Services at Raqmiyat

How would you describe the state of work, post the pandemic? What has changed?

From BC and AD, the world now has a new way of comparing eras. PC (pre-corona) / DC (during corona) and PC (post corona). If someone says it's business as usual for him then that may not be the actual fact. The way the world used to work has changed and so has Raqmiyat and its businesses.

This pandemic has re-emphasized the need for a higher degree of adoption of digital transformation across the organisations and getting their organisations safe from the vulnerability of cyberattacks.

The pandemic has seen a surge in malware attacks and phishing attempts many folds and hence at Raqmiyat, we have the right engineers who can have your work environment secure and help the organisations through rightful consultation.

How has hiring changed post the pandemic? What are companies looking for, now?

Well in this geography, when the majority of workforce are expats, the pandemic has changed the dynamics completely. With countries closing their borders and skilled engineers unable to travel, it was a real challenge for us to find the right fit within the country. To overcome this problem, we had to rework our hiring methodologies and changed the way we hire talent in this geography. We had to design a strategy whereby we can attract talent from within the country without impacting our delivery commitments. What was a real challenge in March has become the new norm in August and the team has beautifully adapted to the new norms.

As far as staffing solutions are concerned, what is your hiring process like?

I have always maintained that the real strength and USP of Raqmiyat's staffing solutions lies in the well-oiled delivery and recruitment engine that we have. My delivery team which is based out of our offshore centre in India has an excellent mix of experienced and talented recruiters who are trained to find technocrats even in the midst of challenges.

They are trained to ask the right questions from job seekers and are trained to find passive job seekers. We don't believe in complicating our hiring processes and have kept it simple to meet the demands on time.

Once the recruiter does the basic screening of the profile, the profile moves to the delivery lead who does a detailed interview which then moves to the third stage of filtration with the in- house technical panel. This panel typically consists of Raqmiyat engineers who are working for Raqmiyat in different projects across the Emirates.

We are very serious about the kind of profiles we present to our customers and each profile that lands in the customer's inbox will have gone through a minimum of three stages of a filtration process that reduces the hiring time of the customer. This is our unique proposition and not many can match us in this mechanism.

What are the sectors you hire people for? What is the demand for workers like at this point, in those sectors?

Traditionally, Raqmiyat has focused primarily on two sectors – the government sector and the banking sector. These two continue to be the sweet spot for us.

However, there is a focused approach in the healthcare sector. Aviation was also one such sector where there was a lot of focus but the pandemic changed all of that. Thankfully for us, both government and banking sectors are part of essential services and hence we don't see much of a dip in the demand for such sectors. We shall continue to nurture these two sectors with continuous investments in our sales and delivery teams.

What will hiring look like in the future? Will the same trend continue?

I strongly believe hiring will certainly change in the post-pandemic era. Professionals will need to upgrade themselves to keep up with the changing dimensions. Reskilling and upskilling must be the focus of experienced professionals otherwise they will find themselves falling behind in the race.

Then again, some jobs will permanently vanish from the horizon dur to the pandemic and there will be an increase in demand for AI and ML skills.

However, the need to hire a quality workforce will always be there, pandemic or not. It is just that the job seeker should possess the right skill required for the new post-pandemic era.


VALUE ADDED DISTRIBUTOR

CYBER SECURITY INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION





FORWARD AND AHEAD

Phillippe Jarre, CEO of Mindware, speaks to **Anita Joseph** about how the COVID-19 pandemic, which was certainly unexpected, has dramatically changed the face of business and how digital transformation has become an imperative for the short and longer term.

Cybersecurity is emerging as one of the top priorities for CIOs today. How is Mindware building on its security capabilities to address this growing demand? The demand for cybersecurity is not new. What is happening in 2020 is that this demand has been accelerated due to work from home requirements. In a way, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for seamless online interactions and for strengthening cloud applications.

There is an enormous requirement to help organisations and individuals to achieve this and to secure all their applications.

The increase in demand has been huge. Fortunately, for Mindware, we

were able to take over Arrow Middle East last year and, by this acquisition, we have been able to add a whole new array of vendors offering full-fledged, end-to-end solutions; from endpoint and data centre, all the way to Cloud protection. Moreover, we now have a dedicated Solutions Business Unit that is devoted to enabling & training our partners on all security verticals. In the COVID-19 era, we are witnessing a dramatic increase in our business offerings and the utilisation of our services. Consequently, although it has been a challenging time for the market in general, the cybersecurity business has been very positive for Mindware.

Have you had to adjust your market strategy in the wake of the pandemic, and if so what are some of key learnings?

A crisis such as this one, I would say, can be broken down into three phases. The initial phase was a rather straightforward one and involved what we have been already doing as a distributor i.e. working closely with our partners to support them financially especially as the impact of this crisis has affected the financial capability to do business.

Most people were extremely worried about their cash flow, and this naturally, also included our partners. Patience and understanding for our partners, along with communication & negotiation with our vendors helped enhance the financial competence of the channel in its entirety.

This was followed by the second "replanning" phase, wherein we took time to review the industries that were highly impacted by the crisis, to understand how we can refocus our tactics to transform them using our technologies. For example, we collaborated with Microsoft to provide tailored software packages for schools across the UAE to help with e-learning and online education programs.

We've also focused on providing an extraordinary large number of personal computers for students to support with online learning from home.

In fact, our operations have been realigned to cater to this new trend ever since.

The third and last phase was to simply put - decide the next steps. The COVID-19 pandemic is not a one-

off incident. It has dramatically changed the face of business, with digital transformation being an imperative for both the short and the longer term.

It forced a lot of CIOs to rethink the prioritising of their systems' digital

BY INTEGRATING WITHIN A SINGLE MARKET OUR FINANCIAL AND SALES CAPABILITIES, WE ARE POISED TO BECOME A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT TO THE VENDORS WHO ARE ALMOST ALL BASED IN DUBAI." renovation and how to securely accommodate it on the Cloud so that remote employees can seamlessly access it. In a nutshell, the pandemic has obliged us to swiftly re-imagine and re-engineer the way we operate in future and this is exactly what Mindware has been working on with its partners and vendors.

Security as a service AI IoT, how are these sectors, in your opinion, coping up with the new normal brought on by the pandemic?

Security-as-a-service is one more enabler of managing security. So, any company should be running a solid security operating centre to control and manage services.

AI is a vertical that is gradually coming into greater play these days, as people and organisations rely on IT more and more, especially for working remotely, and data requirements are spiking dramatically.

The same applies for e-commerce activities which have also been on the rise.

One of the main uses of AI is to help analyse all these vast amounts of data and produce reports to support businesses in making informed decisions.

IoT is an emerging segment in our region. At Mindware, we are soon going to announce a strategic partnership with a major IoT solutions provider.

We have been witnessing a huge demand for remotely controlled activities managed by IoT configurations.

For example, a telecom provider that deploys 2,000 antennas across a country, must ensure having the competence to control all these centres - both the day-to-day activities as well as the occasional failures.

How is Mindware working with channel partners to leverage technology to cope up with the new changes?

At Mindware, we're always looking forward and ahead. We prefer to engage with top-class technology vendors and to provide the best-suited solutions to our partners. Today, we are proud to be business partners with close to 40 vendors, covering multiple technology sectors. We constantly analyse and position such technologies, be it legacy or novel, to fit the market needs and to address potential gaps accordingly. With COVID-19, things keep changing daily but our industry is by itself a very dynamic one.

With cloud migration gathering steam, how do you think challenges such as unpredictable network latency and costly bandwidth upgrades can be addressed?

Personally, I do not believe this to be a challenge at all! I am quite sure that all the major companies and telcos will increase their bandwidth and digital know-how and will keep investing in new technologies to support this transformation. They, certainly, have the resources and expertise to make this happen.

This is only a transition phase. We will, sooner rather than later, be part of a world which is much more interconnected and virtual.

Everyone is working to make this happen and re-orient their business models. Mindware is excited about what lies ahead and we wish to contribute to the market to the best of our abilities.

What is Mindware's roadmap for 2020 and beyond?

Mindware is on a journey to become the largest regional distributor focused on the Middle East and Africa. We are always focused on the customer and aligned to the market needs.

Then again, by assimilating our financial and sales abilities within a single market, we aspire to become the bridge between vendors and clients.

We can see a robust growth trajectory. In 2019, we grew by 23% and in 2020-to-date, we are on a quite good footing as well.

Despite our market facing difficulties and challenges this year, we have been able to use this time to consolidate our market position, refocus strategies, channelise our energies, gain share and build momentum. We will keep working hard and building on our strengths and I am confident that we will be ending the year 2020 on a strong note.

PROTECTING YOUR HOME

The ideal home security device should exemplify safety while letting the user customise it to suit his requirements, says Syed Sameer Ali, Senior Sales & Operations Manager at Eufy Security GCC, part of Anker Innovations, a leading consumer electronics brand.

Syed Sameer Ali, Senior Sales & Operations Manager at Eufy Security GCC

How is eufy redefining the home security landscape in the UAE?

The UAE is a safe and secure country thanks to a proactive government that provides a secure environment with the best surveillance infrastructure. Even so, we as responsible citizens and residents have a duty to deploy smart security devices within our homes and private spaces to prevent any untoward incidents. Underscoring this fact, Eufy has been at the forefront of innovative security devices that provide convenience and a hassle-free, seamless operation.

Our devices are particularly relevant right now, when social distancing is the norm, since they allow you to monitor everyone within your immediate space, such as the door of your home.

Over the years, Eufy Security has changed the perception of safety, from being a full-time activity needing you to watch a bulky screen to monitor movements to and fro. Now, with our cutting-edge technology, users can monitor their property from anywhere, trigger an alarm for unwanted intruders and even set up motion alerts as needed.

We understand that every home has its own requirement, but home owners as well as tenants are gradually moving away from traditional monitoring CCTV to smart security devices that are wireless, weatherproof, have a 2-way communication system and allows users to define the alerts based on when and where these devices are needed, as well as the area to be monitored and timing.

For example, there are devices these days that allow people with a backyard to know if anyone is snooping around over there, such as an easy to install floodlight camera. The customisability available today is immense.

What differentiates eufy security's product range from those of its competitors?

Eufy Security devices are equipped with the latest technology and cutting-edge solutions that offer privacy, convenience and customization. HOME OWNERS AND TENANTS HAVE SLOWLY STARTED MOVING AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL MONITORING DEVICES SUCH AS CCTVS, TO SMART SECURITY DEVICES THAT ARE WIRELESS AND ALLOW CUSTOMISATION."

Let's talk about the privacy aspect first. Customers these days are very particular privacy and security. Realising this, eufy's products are designed to store, process and calculate user data locally using military grade encryption and do not upload user data to the server, allowing users to control their own data.

Coming to technology, eufy has integrated Artificial Intelligence (AI) into its devices, which uses deep learning algorithms to identify people and faces to remove false positives, and optimises the algorithm to identify vehicles, animals, and express delivery. Users can configure these devices themselves.

Our unique features don't end there. We have a battery system that is reliable, long-lasting and worry free. In fact, the eufyCam 2 brings one year's worth of battery life in a single charge. This means users don't need to worry about constantly recharging their devices, be carefree about their surveillance system and count on it to be there for them when it really matters.

Our devices work perfectly in the UAE environment and users can even view history video clips unlike competitors who require a subscription for the feature to be activated. Not only that, eufy devices also act as a Wi-Fi repeater which boosts signal to the cameras, extending the coverage area of the Wi-Fi network. Perhaps, the best feature of all is that users can customize these devices to receive only the alerts that matter. Users can also customize the area where they need detection to happen. To round it all off, all your recorded footage is totally private. Stored locally, with military-grade encryption. And transmitted to you, and only you.

What are some of your key products?

Some of our game changing devices are the EufyCam 2 Camera, equipped with a wireless home security system, has a long-lasting battery life of 365-days, is HD 1080p, IP67 weatherproof, has night vision, is compatible with Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant& Apple home kit 2-Cam Kit and has no monthly fee.

The EufyCam 2C Camera is again wireless with a 180-Day battery life, is HD 1080p, IP67 weatherproof, has night vision, is spot light compatible with Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant & Apple home kit 2-Cam Kit and has no monthly fee.

The Video Doorbell 2K is a wireless video doorbell (battery-powered) with 2K HD, no monthly fee, has on-device AI for human detection, features a 2-way Audio and can be easily self-installed.

The Indoor camera 2K & Indoor Camera 2k Pan & Tilt are true game changers. They work with voice assistants, motion tracking, night vision, requires a MicroSD card, doesn't require HomeBase.

Our Smart Floodlight with Camera comes with cutting-edge features such as dual 2500-Lumen bright and adjustable floodlights, all-weather ready, a 1080p camera, a real-time response feature, no monthly fees and secure local storage (existing round weatherproof box and outdoor wiring required.

Moreover, our products are easily available and one can get them practically everywhere. In particular, you can buy our products at leading electronic retailers like Jumbo, Virgin, Sharaf DG, Emax, Danube Home, Homesmiths, Lulu and online on noon. com and amazon.ae

NEWS // CYWARE

ONAPSIS DISCOVERS CRITICAL RECON VULNERABILITY THAT EXPOSES SAP USERS



n its July patch day, SAP released 20 new or updated Security Notes. While the number of critical notes was very moderate compared to the last patch days with "only" two HotNews notes and two High Priority notes, it was a patch day that required maximum attention from all SAP customers. SAP published patches for the extremely critical RECON vulnerability (CVSS Score of 10.0) that affects all SAP applications running on SAP NetWeaver AS Java and strongly recommends immediate patching.

Due to its criticality and thanks to the fast reaction of the SAP Security Response Team after Onapsis reported the flaw, SAP provided a fix within only a few weeks. SAP Security Note #2934135, tagged with the highest possible CVSS Score of 10.0, was published in the SAP July Security Notes and provided the corresponding patch. RECON (Remotely Exploitable Code On NetWeaver) affects more than 40,000 SAP customers, with increased exposure for internet-facing systems.

Given the severity of this vulnerability, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security issued a US-CERT Alert, AA20-195A, in coordination with BSI CERT-Bund and followed by other global organisations, providing warnings about threats associated with this vulnerability.

The RECON vulnerability that was discovered by Onapsis affects a core component that is included in the SAP Java NetWeaver layer. The list of directly affected SAP applications is quite large: SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), SAP Supply Chain Management (SCM), SAP CRM (Java Stack), SAP Enterprise Portal, SAP HR Portal, SAP Solution Manager (SolMan) 7.2, SAP Landscape Management (SAP LaMa), SAP Process Integration/ Orchestration (SAP PI/PO), SAP Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), SAP NetWeaver Mobile Infrastructure (MI), SAP NetWeaver Development Infrastructure (NWDI) and SAP NetWeaver Composition Environment (CE). With SAP NetWeaver Java being a fundamental base layer for several SAP products, the specific impact would vary depending on the affected system.

In particular, there are different SAP solutions running on top of NetWeaver Java which share a common particularity: they are hyperconnected through APIs and interfaces. The way SAP applications are opened to the internet in the form of SAP Enterprise Portals, combined with

integration technologies such as SAP SolMan or SAP Process Integration, creates an environment in which the exploitation of a vulnerability with a CVSS Score of 10.0 could ultimately lead to business processes, critical data, personal identifiable information (PII) and financials being compromised. Once a system is compromised, the possible impact is almost unlimited. Among other things, attackers can create a new user with administrative privileges, allowing them to manage (read/modify/delete) every record/ file/report in the system — impacting confidentiality, integrity and availability.

This vulnerability also may constitute a deficiency in an enterprise's IT controls for regulatory mandates-potentially impacting financial (Sarbanes-Oxley) and privacy (GDPR) compliance. Exploitation of the vulnerability allows an attacker to perform several malicious activities, including: steal personal identifiable information (PII) from employees, customers and suppliers, read, modify or delete financial records, change banking details (account number, IBAN number, etc.), administer purchasing processes, disrupt the operation of the system by corrupting data or shutting it down completely, perform unrestricted actions through operating system command execution and delete or modify traces, logs and other files. The business impact of a potential exploit targeting RECON could be financial loss, compliance violations and reputation damage for the organisation experiencing a cyber-attack.

Given the tremendous impact on SAP applications, Onapsis strongly recommends applying the provided patch. For more details and the impact of a potential exploit on SAP systems, read the Onapsis RECON Vulnerability Threat Report. Our partner Spectrami looks forward to giving you professional advice, contact: info@spectrami.com

REDINGTON VALUE // DISTRIBUTOR FOCUS

SYSTANCIA SIGNS UP Redington value as vad For Middle East & Africa

Systancia, a French software company, has appointed Redington Gulf as its authorised value-added distributor (VAD) for Middle East and Africa.



ystancia is a provider of certified and recognised application virtualisation and cybersecurity solutions. By providing the entire end-to-end chain of trust, Systancia allows users to access all their applications efficiently and securely from their work environment, whatever it may be. Systancia's combined virtualisation and cybersecurity solution, a hybrid offer (consisting of software products and Cloud services), gives everyone a single window to access their entire field of applications, leaving no application behind, and thus providing medium to large public or private organisations the best compromise between ease-of-use and business development on the one hand, and risk and compliance control on the other hand, without compromising the customer and user experience.

Under the crucial partnership, Systancia will leverage Redington's market presence

and a large channel partner base to provide Systancia solutions to customers across Middle East and Africa, an important, vibrant market.

"Our mission is to provide users with the most efficient and secure access to all applications in their work environment. We also aim to offer the best compromise between operational efficiency and regulatory compliance," said Christophe Corne, founder and CEO, Systancia.

Commenting on this partnership, Sayantan Dev, President, Redington Value, said: "Systancia's appvirtualisation, security access management and authentication management systems from a technology standpoint are amongst the most sophisticated. We are delighted to add Systancia to Redington's portfolio as we recognise opportunities with many complementary offerings and innate synergies.

The channel ecosystem will hugely benefit from this partnership and we are more than eager to take Systancia's solutions to our customers. Over the next few months, we will recruit new partners, while continuing to enable current ones for successfully integrating and positioning Systancia as a part of their portfolio."

Xavier Hameroux, Managing Director, Systancia, "Working with Redington is a great achievement for Systancia's expansion in the Middle East and Africa.

We believe that our innovative solutions in the field of cybersecurity, more precisely in the ZTNA and PAM field will perfectly respond to the market's needs in terms of having a secure access to the information system, whenever the end-user is, and through whatever device he is using."

PRODUCTS

PURE STORAGE ANNOUNCES SECOND GENERATION STORAGE ARRAY



ure Storage, leaders in delivering storage as-a-service in a multicloud world, has announced the second-generation storage array, FlashArray//C that helps to reduce the cost of running capacityoriented workloads so significantly it eliminates the need for legacy hybrid disk arrays. The only all-OLC storage array, FlashArray//C is built on Pure's DirectFlash technology and purity software platform to deliver enterprisegrade performance and features cost-effectively, marking another step towards realizing Pure's vision of bringing flash mainstream for any use case through its entire portfolio of products and solutions.

To meet today's challenges, enterprises must focus on both innovation and operational excellence, driving efficiency that can free up human and financial capital to invest in a landscape with new demands. Yet until now, due to the economics and performance challenges of legacy storage, IT organizations have been forced to distinguish between performance-oriented workloads and everything else. The result? Data centres mired in complexity and incompatibilities with unnecessary hardware, software, maintenance, and training costs.

With the second generation of FlashArray//C, Pure is extending its QLC advantage by delivering the first and only enterprise-grade all-QLC flash array – transforming raw QLC into a high-endurance medium while delivering new cost economics that are 30% less than similarly sized hybrid storage arrays on the market today. FlashArray//C is available with 24.7TB and, the industry's largest, 49TB QLC DirectFlash modules providing the lowest possible total cost of ownership.

Pure's FlashArray portfolio greatly simplifies and streamlines IT operations by enabling customers to house all their data on one agile data services platform - with FlashArray//C for their capacityoriented workloads and FlashArray//X for performance-intensive workloads, and in the cloud with Cloud Block Store. Common data services across the FlashArray platform make it fast and easy to access, manage, and secure data across multiple workloads, geographies, and clouds. By federating data from high-capacity use cases (i.e. backup stores and workload consolidation) and high-performance use cases (i.e. cloud-native databases) in one place, organizations can derive business value by applying powerful analytics across their platform, with common APIs, monitoring, and world class support.

"Delivering a cost-effective, highcapacity solution solves an even bigger problem for customers - removing the complexity from enterprise storage by providing a complete platform, one that addresses all their data storage requirements," said Scott Baker, Vice President of Product Marketing, FlashArray, Pure Storage. "With the second generation of FlashArray//C, we're proud to once again demonstrate our commitment to innovation and make the benefits of flash more accessible for a broader range of use cases at an economic advantage that is sure to make hybrid storage a thing of the past."

FlashArray//C is one of the fastestgrowing products in Pure's portfolio. It enables customers to consolidate workloads and simplify storage with consistent, cost-competitive all-flash performance. Replacing disk and hybrid systems with FlashArray//C lowers costs for rack space, power, cooling, operations and maintenance and the availability of high-capacity, low-cost storage enables enterprises to redirect IT resources away from routine operations and toward delivering new services.

"With FlashArray and Purity, we are able to consolidate our performance and capacity-oriented workloads on one platform, simplifying our environment and enabling us to leverage common data services and analytics across all of our data," said Sean Donaldson, CTO, Managed Services Division of NTT, Ltd, formerly Secure 24. "We are excited to be adding the all-QLC FlashArray//C to our data centers to further capitalize on the reliable, cost-effective, highcapacity, and high-density benefits the solution delivers," he added.

Pure's FlashArray//C delivers: No-compromise enterprise experience: Like all products in the FlashArray family line, the all-QLC FlashArray//C is built for >99.9999 percent availability with Pure1 cloud data management, API automation and AI-driven predictive support. Enterprisegrade QLC delivers consistent durability and sustained performance, without the need for storage class memory, wearlevel software or overprovisioning.

Seamless platform for all workloads: Organizations can deploy FlashArray//X and FlashArray//C as a complete solution across all of their performanceoriented and capacity-oriented use cases, greatly reducing staffing and training requirements and increasing IT agility by enabling organizations to use the same storage operating system for all workloads. All data, workloads, operational controls, and reports are available via a single pane of glass.

Sustainable and flexible consumption models: FlashArray//C is built from the ground up to be Evergreen with non-disruptive hardware and software upgrades and no data migrations, providing a cost-effective way to sustain infrastructure for a decade or more. With Pure-as-a-Service, customers enjoy a cloud experience with pay-asyou-go economics.

AXTEL AND ASBIS ME JOIN HANDS TO STRENGTHEN COMMITMENT TO ADVANCED AUDIO TECHNOLOGY SPACE



Asplay the region's high-quality devices, has joined ASBIS ME in the distribution space to consolidate its position in the region's high-quality professional headset market. Axtel's headset products with their supreme sound quality, reliability and an ergonomic design offering maximum comfort, are expected to add value to ASBIS's business.

Commenting on this partnership, Praveen Singh, director of sales at ASBIS ME said: "Partnering with Axtel is definitely a step in the right direction. With Axtel, we continue to transform one-time clients into trusted business partners."

Prince Gangadharan, Manager Sales, ASBIS ME said, "This year 2020 is important year for solution company, we are moving towards transformation, artificial intelligence and 5G. While the industry has been trying to perfect itself, its users' habits are changing in the blink of an eye." Mikolaj Kubiak, Global Director, Axtel, said the key to growth would be to provide cost-effective solutions to partners.

"For any company to grow, one of the key points is to have an eye on the market and its needs, that's where ASBIS comes in play in knowing the market with its expertise. One of the fastest growing VADs in the region, partnering with ASBIS will definitely help us grow as they have a diverse product range in their portfolio catering to a much larger audience who have their trust with the company. With their approach and Axtel's quality along with technology, we are sure to provide quality driven cost-effective solution to our partners. We are excited about this partnership," he said.

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R&M LAUNCHES PRIME RIBBON SOLUTION TO ENABLE 40% MORE FIBERS IN DATA CENTRE RACKS

R^{&M,} the global Swiss developer and provider of connectivity systems for high-quality, highperformance network infrastructure, has announced the launch of its new PRIME Ribbon distribution module in the Middle East., which brings several cutting-edge features. The slide-in module for the fiber optic distributor rack PRIME connects ribbon fiber cables with the flexible and proven PRIME program. With this type of cable, the number of optical fibers in a rack can be increased by 30% to 40%.

In comparison to single fiber cables, ribbon fiber cables offer a host of advantages.

They enable a higher number of fibers with the same cable diameter as well as the splicing of 8 or 12 fibers in one working step. With this technology, three to four times more fibers can be laid in a conduit or rack than usual. The PRIME ribbon distribution modules from R&M occupy a 3/4 height unit in a 19" rack. Their capacity is 96 fibers. In addition to the splice patch variant with LC duplex or SC couplings, R&M offers a pure splice variant for 288 splices.

The PRIME ribbon distribution modules are suitable for fiber to home projects in combination with the PRIME racks. They are used for network expansion in central offices, POPs and street cabinets. Data centers use them to consolidate the fiber optic cabling of meet-me rooms and zone distributors. Campus networks and backbones in large buildings are also among the areas of application.



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TAKE FIVE





YOUR IDEAL MORNING ROUTINE

I enjoy my mornings as an early riser. I usually wake up at 30-minutes. Then I get ready for work, post which I make a to-do list and read the news followed by a healthy breakfast. After that, I am head to the office

YOU'RE PROUD OF YOUR MOST **RECENT ACHIEVEMENT WHICH IS**

along. I am pleased to say that today I successfully manage two firm – with 50 employees. This has been a dream come true for me.



FIVE THINGS YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT

THE MOST UNDERRATED TECHNOLOGY TREND, IN YOUR **OPINION, IS**

and Virtual Reality (VR) technologies are yet to be explored to their complete potential. Although today we see that related headphones and a few gaming applications for these technologies are in place, the real use of Extended Reality (XR) is yet to be fully tapped. VR and AR will become prevalent for training, simulation and customer service.



FIVE GOALS YOU THINK ARE WORTH PURSUING, IN THE POST-COVID SCENARIO

 Expect the unexpected and prepare to face it

or any other crisis

- Prioritise the well-being of your

- holds the customers' trust.

RANJITH KAIPPADA

MD, CLOUD BOX TECHNOLOGIES

2020

Whole Home Security. Inside and Out.

ring



Keep an eye on your loved ones from anywhere. Spotlight Cam



Starting from AED 249 only

ring

Available at: amazon.ae

JUMBO 🛝

Watch over your entire property from anywhere. Floodlight Cam

Virgin

Sharaf DG.com



HUAWEI IdeaHub Smart Office | Easy Collaboration

All-in-One whiteboard, projector, online meeting





Build a Fully Connected, Intelligent World