MIDDLE EAST THE VOICE OF THE CHANNEL

ISSUE 294 | MARCH 2022

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SAKKEER HUSSAIN, DIRECTOR - SALES & MARKETING, D-LINK MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA, ON HOW THE COMPANY'S COMMITMENT TO INNOVATION AND QUALITY HELPS DRIVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE.



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TOP STORIES



05 Top channel headlines from around the world.

INTERVIEWS

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EDITORIAL







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Name of the Game

oday, business growth and momentum depends entirely on innovation and adaptability. The ability to keep pace with the changing market while staying focused on the consumer and their needs is paramount for survival and businesses are more than aware of this fact. As 2022 continues its relentless march, organisations, especially in the region, are scripting their own stories of endurance

and success.

As always, Reseller ME spotlights these companies and their unique journeys. Our cover story, for instance, takes a closer look at D-Link and Sakkeer Hussain, its Director of Sales & Marketing, Middle East & Africa, who describes how the company's commitment to innovation and quality helps drive digital transformation and prepare for the future.

We also take a closer look at Newcom and its CEO Sandeep Bhagtani, who shares with us how his company has chartered impressive growth ever since inception owing to its constant focus on innovation and unflinching compromise on quality and customer service.

If that's not enough inspiration, we have the success saga of Mitsumi and its strategy of robust partnerships, vendor management and end-toend services that have ensured its continued growth and expansion in the region and beyond.

From inspiration to insight. Mansoor Al Shalahi, Country Manager for Saudi Arabia at Infoblox shares his view on why educational institutions must rethink network security and modernisation.

Perhaps, the highlight of this issue is our pick of top channel and marketing personalities whose vision, determination and grit are driving the industry forward. Day after day, their courage and unfailing optimism are redefining existing paradigms and expanding growth horizons. Make sure you check this out, only a few have made it to the list!

That's not all: Your favourite magazine has the usual news roundup and review columns that you so love and enjoy. So sit back and be inspired. Happy Reading!

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Published by

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Publication licensed by

Dubai Production City, DCCA PO Box 13700

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While the publishers have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information in this magazine, they will not be held responsible for any errors therein.

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OKI MFITA PARTNERS WITH ROOKIE NINJA FOR DISTRIBUTION IN THE UAE

In accordance with OKI's strategy to focus further on industry verticals solutions, and

our commitment to the Region, OKI has announced its partnership with Rookie Ninja for their industrial verticals solutions including office products distribution in the UAE from February 2022.

Shashank Patel, Managing Director Rookie Ninja, said: "OKI's Reliability and Exceptional Quality over the last 130 years has touched countless lives and we are humbled and proud to be their distribution partner in the UAE. As the Company that Invented the LED printers, we genuinely believe that the quality



We look forward to further enhancing customer experience

with our Value-Added services and unparalleled efficiency."

Mathias Militzer, OKI VP MEITA Region, said: "Rookie Ninja is one of the fastest growing value-added Distributor for digital transformation technologies in the UAE. Their ability to provide best in class end-to-end solutions, high-quality services and support, as well as their vertical industries deep knowledge, matches OKI's vison, mission and values with great synergy, and will strengthen OKI's long term presence in the country even further."

ITALIAN ENTREPRENEUR MARIO COLABUFO AND BILLIONAIRE GIANLUCA VACCHI LAUNCH \$ELITE. THE OFFICIAL TOKEN OF TELCO ELIMOBILE



Set out to blend the potentials of blockchain, mobile communications and social media into an integrated community experience, global Telco Elimobile showcased its roadmap for the upcoming utility token \$ELITE ahead of their priority staking access in Dubai. At an exclusive event series that kicked off with the \$ELITE Crypto Whales Meeting in March, a limited number of interested investors gained insights on the roadmap.

The \$ELITE initiative was brought to life by-Milan based entrepreneur and growth hacker, Mario Colabufo, CEO of Elimobile: the first and only telco to use blockchain technology founded by Mario Colabufo himself and by the millionaire entrepreneur Gianluca Vacchi. The \$ELITE token is its official utility token based on Polygon chain with Erc20 and Binance

bridges with a total supply of four point four billion. The staking program will open to the public - with no minimum entry fee - by the end of March and will guarantee 20% annual interest with a subdivision

of 1.66% monthly and release of the capital at the end of the staking period.

Eli Mobile will not have a retail network, no physical points of sale. Subscriptions by consumer customers will take place exclusively on the company's website, establishing an innovative and informal approach from the very first steps of the user experience. Great attention has been paid to customer service: a call center with national operators, minimal waiting time and no exhausting button interaction.

The strength of Eli Mobile is that it will combine a telephone operator with a community populated by national and international celebrities. The content of this community will be partly offered free of charge to all Eli Mobile subscribers and partly released for a fee in the form of NFTs.

TOP STORIES

SAFE SECURITY **BOARD APPOINTS** MICHAEL JOHNSON TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Safe Security, a global leader in Cybersecurity and Digital Business Risk Quantification, has announced the appointment of Michael Johnson, a veteran US government and commercial industry Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), to its Board of Directors. Johnson has been advising Safe Security since December 2020. Michael joined the Board of Directors of the company on November 10.2021.

"We are delighted to welcome Michael, a veteran in cybersecurity to the Safe Security Board," said Saket Modi, Co-founder & CEO of Safe Security. "Michael's experience in managing cybersecurity for government and large organisations in the US is indispensable. His expertise in building and executing cybersecurity strategies, coupled with his deep understanding of cyber is extremely valuable for us as we grow and expand to achieve our mission to become the defacto industry standard to measure, manage and mitigate cyber risk".

Johnson currently serves as CISO, Meta Financial Technologies, Meta Platforms, Inc., and previously served in multiple cybersecurity roles leading large, complex, and dynamic information-intensive global enterprises, including as the Senior Vice President and CISO at Capital One, the CIO for the U.S. Department of Energy, and in other key roles in the Executive Office of the President (the White House), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

TOP STORIES

NEW VEEAM BACKUP FOR MICROSOFT 365 V6 PROVIDES ENHANCED SECURITY AND AUTOMATION FEATURES



Veeam Software, the leader in backup, recovery and data management solutions that deliver Modern Data Protection, has announced the general availability of the latest version of the company's fastest growing Software as a Service (SaaS) product — Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 v6. The solution enables users to securely back up to any location, including on-premises, in a hyperscale cloud, or with a service provider. Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 is the No. 1 backup and recovery solution for Microsoft 365 on the market and version 6 has some interesting and much sought-after features.

"Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 reported 73% growth YoY, with 8.5 million users relying on Veeam to protect their Microsoft 365 data, including Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, OneDrive for Business and Microsoft Teams," said Danny Allan, CTO and SVP of Product Strategy at Veeam. "Within all SaaS platforms, including Microsoft 365, the organisation owns and controls their own data, and it's the organisation's responsibility to protect it. The growth and momentum

of Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 is an indication that more organisations are realising the importance of managing and securing their data, and consistently trust Veeam with critical business assets."

Claude Schuck, Regional Director, Middle East at Veeam comments, "Probably the most anticipated launch of our highly successful Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 product. Version 6 brings with it some features to streamline processes, saving time; with the new Self-Service Portal, users can navigate and recover their data quickly and without intervention from IT. Another feature that has been requested many times from the Middle East is the ability for archiving, using Amazon and the Azure platforms. I am pleased that customers can now manage long-term archival retention with the simplicity and ease they are used to with Veeam."

SAMSUNG'S NEW GALAXY TAB S8 SERIES NOW AVAILABLE ACROSS UAE



Samsung Gulf Electronics has launched its new Galaxy Tab range, introducing the Galaxy Tab S8, S8 + and S8 Ultra in the UAE. Developed with sophisticated hardware, the new Galaxy Tab S8 series showcases a beautiful display that is both functional and sleek and allows you to experience the most powerful performance, powering you through your day and night.

Galaxy Tab S8 and S8+ offer improved

video conferencing abilities with ultra-wide front cameras, a three-microphone setup, and intelligent auto-framing1 technology for a truly professional video call experience. It offers revolutionary multitasking capabilities with enhanced multi-active Windows2 and Samsung DeX, safe and easy file sharing with password-protected Quick Share3, and powerful productivity with the new, superfast 4nm processor and a smoother than ever S Pen in the box. Equipped with the fastest processor ever in a Galaxy Tab – a 4nm chip – Galaxy Tab S8 and S8+ provide ample RAM and storage for any task.

The Galaxy Tab S8 series is available for purchase across Samsung Brand Stores and major retailers across the UAE. The Galaxy Tab S8 Ultra comes in bold and timeless Graphite, and Galaxy Tab S8 and S8+ come in three sophisticated shades — Graphite, Silver and Pink Gold.

GATEWATCHER SIGNS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH ALJAMMAZ TECHNOLOGIES



Gatewatcher, the European leader in intrusion and advanced threat detection, has signed a strategic partnership with AlJammaz Technologies, the leading value-added technology distributor and cloud aggregator in Saudi Arabia and the GCC region.

The partnership between Gatewatcher and Al Jammaz will enable the deployment of Gatewatcher's AIonIQ detection and response platform (NDR) marketing strategy in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and GCC region. Under the agreement, enterprise customers benefit from the joint expertise of both entities to confidently provide the highest level of protection, detection, and response to cyber-attacks.

"We're excited about this partnership and look forward at empowering our channel partner ecosystem to assist customers in dealing with emerging cyberthreats and mitigating them. Cybersecurity is first and foremost about innovation for the defense of customers digital Infrastructure and cyber footprint. Our alliance with trusted partner like Gatewatcher's in the detection of the most advanced threats is at the heart of addressing all of these issues," said Asim AlJammaz, CEO, AlJammaz Technologies.

"We are pleased to cooperate with the leading distributor of cyber security products in Saudi Arabia. Al Jammaz' business expertise, knowledge of the needs of organisations in all sectors of the Saudi market, and the strength of its network of over 1,200 partners and customers make it an outstanding partner for Gatewatcher," said Jacques de La Rivière, CEO of Gatewatcher.



STARLINK PARTNER SUMMIT 2022 DELIVERS EXCEPTIONAL VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE

StarLink, the fastest growing Cyber

and Cloud VAD celebrated their joint successes and growth with their channel partners at the 2022 Partner Summit held virtually, in March. The company conveyed a strong message of solidarity and empowerment to secure and transform the future.

"The event was a tremendous success especially with its esteemed channel community joining us from different geographies - that is the best part of having a virtual experience. We took the opportunity to shine the spotlight on our partners for their exceptional commitment and perseverance," said Ahmed Diab, COO, StarLink. "We are proud to be part of their growth trajectory and to see them emerge as technology experts with focus on delivering integrated solutions to enterprises which has jointly helped us become an integral part of our customers' success story."

StarLink Partner Summit 2022 was power

packed with the latest on the channel roadmap as well as new initiatives and business strategies to elevate the partnership to the next level. Three new initiatives – StarLink Cloud, StarLink Extra, StarLink Fund, were launched that has been designed from a technology adoption perspective. These initiatives will empower partners to enhance their business and grow as leaders in their relevant fields of expertise.

Nidal Othman, CEO, StarLink said, "With so much happening over the past year, what has been consistent is our focus on staying connected with our partners and nurturing our relationship which has witnessed great outcomes. What makes us unique is our ability to reinvent and together with our channel partners, we have built a solid legacy of which we are extremely proud. We will continue to align and together support customers transform their business with innovative and robust technologies to achieve greater agility and efficiency."

FORTINET, ORANGE BUSINESS SERVICES PARTNER ON SASE TO CREATE SECURE CLOUD-NATIVE NETWORK



Orange Business Services, a global networknative digital services company, and Fortinet, a global leader in broad, integrated, and automated cybersecurity solutions, are partnering to deliver a disruptive approach to Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) by integrating Fortinet's Security-driven Networking technologies into the Orange telco cloud infrastructure. This reinforces security and networking convergence, while optimising performance regardless of the user's location. Unlike other SASE service delivery offers on the market, this seamless approach – with built-in integration and automation – ensures real-time service updates and an unparalleled user experience.

"Digital acceleration and the shift to support 'work from anywhere' is driving the hybrid convergence of networking and security to enable zero trust across all edges. Expanding upon our longstanding relationship with Orange, we're pleased to further integrate our Security-driven Networking technology into the Orange infrastructure to enable a converged networking and security solution, unmatched in terms of visibility, management capabilities, resilience and user experience," said John Maddison, EVP of products and CMO at Fortinet.

DELL TECHNOLOGIES INTRODUCES A NEW GOLD STANDARD FOR ENTRY STORAGE

NEWSMAKERS



Dell Technologies has unleashed Dell PowerVault ME5, a series of three new entry storage models that are purposebuilt and optimised for SAN & DAS environments.

The storage solution is poised to address a wide range of small-tomedium business (SMB) business challenges, including keeping pace with data growth, improving operational simplicity, supporting newer and higher value workloads and delivering business outcomes much faster. PowerVault ME5 does this with a modern software design that offers twice the performance, throughput, capacity and memory of its PowerVault ME4 predecessor.

Many SMB customers, like their enterprise counterparts, want to simplify their IT operations, reduce risk and deploy faster and more scalable storage platforms to keep up with modern applications and data growth. The new PowerVault ME5 arrays remain the simplest, most cost-effective way to meet their infrastructure requirements and desired outcomes. PowerVault ME5 is set to help SMBs boost productivity and economic growth by improving their access to data and staying competitive.

PowerVault ME5 is also well suited for the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) with its OEMready design. While PowerVault ME5 can be configured as an all-flash array, SMB customers will appreciate that PowerVault ME5 is an affordable hybrid storage choice for any of these application environments that don't demand the low latencies of all-flash and NVMe – yet still necessitate important availability, reliability and security characteristics.

NEWSMAKERS

BAYZAT LAUNCHES NEW SOLUTION TO ENABLE UAE BUSINESSES TO DIGITALISE AND STREAMLINE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Bayzat, the UAE's leading employee benefits platform, has announced the launch of its new Performance Management module, which addresses the needs of regional businesses in their digitisation of the formulation and analysis of critical workforce metrics.

"With the release of our Performance Management module, we are responding to a pressing market need," said Brian Habibi, Co-Founder & Chief Customer Officer at Bayzat. "We continually listen to our customers on what they believe we should add to our HRMS platform, and we have found formal performance management to be one of the top requests we receive. And this is unsurprising. Studies show that organisations with employees who are more satisfied with their company's approach to performance management are twice as likely to innovate. Today, the use of the SMART [specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound] framework in motivating employees has become very popular, so we have integrated that thinking into the design and functionality of our module."

Bayzat's Performance Management

ESET PARTNERS WITH INTEL TO ENHANCE HARDWARE-BASED RANSOMWARE DETECTION

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ESET, the leading endpoint protection

platform vendor headquartered in Europe, has set out to integrate Intel Threat Detection Technology (Intel TDT) into its multi-layered cybersecurity technology suite.

Recognising the complex and evolving nature of ransomware, an ever more formidable threat to customers' work and personal lives, ESET will enhance its software-based detection technologies with a ransomware detection only Intel hardware can deliver. With progress in technological innovations often bringing new tools for the sustained growth and security of SMBs, the integration of Intel TDT means that ESET endpoint security software running on Intelbased PCs can deliver superior ransomware protection.

"This collaboration recognises the immediate boost in ransomware

protection that integrating Intel's hardwarebased ransomware detection technology can deliver. Tapping into telemetry at the CPU level is an effective step we can take to enable improved tracking of malicious encryption. Basically, for ESET this means exposing ransomware as it attempts to avoid detection in memory. ESET has always believed in the multi-layered approach, and by adding the silicon layer we recognise that hardwarebased security is the next milestone in battling threats," said Előd Kironský, Chief of Endpoint Solutions and Security Technologies at ESET.

CHAINALYSIS LAUNCHES SANCTIONS SCREENING TOOLS FREE OF CHARGE FOR CRYPTOCURRENCY INDUSTRY



Chainalysis, the blockchain data platform, has announced the accelerated launch of two sanctions screening tools an on-chain oracle available today and an API expected to launch next month — for the cryptocurrency industry, free of charge. Decentralised web3 groups like DEXs, DeFi platforms, DAOs, and DApp developers are searching for lightweight tools to help them and their customers comply with sanctions policies. These tools will enable users to easily validate they are not interacting with cryptocurrency wallets associated with sanctioned entities.

"Now is the time for the industry to demonstrate that blockchains' inherent transparency make cryptocurrency a powerful deterrent to sanctions evasion," said Michael Gronager, Co-Founder and CEO, Chainalysis. "In anticipation of ongoing sanctions, we've prioritised the development of these tools so that all cryptocurrency market participants have what they need to harness this transparency and conduct basic sanctions screening at no cost to them," he said.

QUALYS TO PUT CYBERSECURITY AUTOMATION FRONT AND CENTER AT GISEC 2022



Qualys, a pioneer and leading provider of disruptive cloud-based IT, security and compliance solutions, has announced it will participate at GISEC 2022 under the theme of "Securing Your Digital Transformation with Cybersecurity Automation".

"As organisations continue to accelerate their digital transformation journeys, they must adapt their threat postures to cover newly adopted technologies and methodologies such as containers, DevOps, mobility, IoT, OT and cloud, while maintaining their traditional data centers," said Hadi Jaafarawi, Managing Director, Middle East, at Qualys. "Qualys' cloud platform,

with its suite of security applications, delivers an indispensable capability to gain visibility across the entire infrastructure, and enhance remediation efforts."

At GISEC 2022, Qualys will showcase its latest innovations and offer 30-day trials to interested delegates. A key message for the company this year will be the benefits of automation within the cybersecurity function.

CULTURE SHIFTS & TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION VITAL FOR NEW DIGITAL NORM, SURVEY FINDS



Nutanix, a leader in hybrid multicloud computing, announced the findings of the recently commissioned IDC CXO Survey, outlining that while companies are building better digital habits and systems, a shift is needed from digital culture to value realisation. Surveying leaders across EMEA, the IDC InfoBrief, sponsored by Nutanix, From Digital Culture to Value Realisation showed that 84% of IT leads in EMEA are under pressure to deliver on digital transformation (DX) strategies, and 90% of organisations in EMEA recognise that having a digital-first approach is now a must-have.

"With the pandemic accelerating the rate at which companies have invested in and deployed digital solutions, IDC predicts that in 2022 more than half of the global economy will be based on or influenced by digital solutions," said Sammy Zoghlami, SVP EMEA at Nutanix.

The survey shows that translating digital investments into new revenue streams is a top priority for EMEA organisations, as is data and innovation. Yet respondents believe the onus can no longer rest solely on the shoulders of the IT department and need to be embraced by the C-suite as globally we come to terms with what a digital culture, digital infrastructure and digital-first means to an organisation.

LENOVO DELIVERS FUTURE-READY IT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MIDSIZE COMPANIES



Lenovo has introduced newly customised IT infrastructure solutions for midsize businesses, with a complete series of easy-to-use solutions and services to help them achieve intelligent transformation and grow their business. Designed to help growing businesses, the suite of edge-tocloud flexible IT infrastructure solutions includes new server, storage and service offerings that help organisations easily overcome resource limitations, optimise for remote work and accelerate innovation.

Lenovo's new purpose-built cloud and on-prem server-based solutions provide reliable infrastructure and proven expertise that improves workforce productivity and allows businesses to start small, remain competitive and grow.

"As the global digital transformation continues, the right IT infrastructure and services are at the heart of every business, unlocking intelligence that expands opportunities and fuels growth," said Kamran Amini, Vice-President and General Manager of Server & Storage, Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions Group. "Working with our broad system of channel partners and solution providers, Lenovo's new IT infrastructure solutions and TruScale services for midsize businesses are optimised to help organisations improve customer service, accelerate sales and roll out nextgeneration applications so they can grow their business now and well into the future."



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NEWSMAKERS

DHL DRIVES ENERGY REVOLUTION WITH REGION'S FIRST-EVER ELECTRIC VEHICLE & BATTERY LOGISTICS HUB IN DUBAI



President Global Auto-Mobility Sector, DHL CSI, said: "It is extremely exciting for the DHL team to inaugurate the region's first facility for EV batteries and other dangerous goods. This complements our global EV logistics

Fathi Tlatli.

The region's first-ever electric vehicle (EV) and battery logistics hub is now open in Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone. Built by DHL Global Forwarding and developed in close cooperation with the EV team of DHL Customer Solutions & Innovation, the 23,500sqm warehouse includes a dedicated EV battery storage area which will be expanded to 2,000-sqm later this year. network and reflects our global experience matched with local expertise. It supports the UAE's and Middle East's transition to the circular economy."

"Our customers benefit from integrated compliant solutions enabling EVs growth within the region, such as safe storage, returns management, defective battery management, recycling and much more."

G42 CLOUD AND TAHALUF AL EMARAT TO ACCELERATE ENTERPRISES' APPLICATION MODERNISATION INITIATIVES

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G42 Cloud, a subsidiary of G42, the

leading UAE based Artificial Intelligence and Cloud Computing provider, and Tahaluf Al Emarat, a UAE-based solution provider focused on application transformations, today expanded their strategic alliance announcing collaboration to provide next generation applications and SaaS services to the enterprises & government entities In the UAE and across key International markets.

Through the cooperation, G42 Cloud and Tahaluf Al Emarat aim to provide secure and reliable SaaS solutions to enterprises and government entities in the areas of process as well as content &

people management including "Maestro," Tahaluf's low-code/ no-code business automation platform. The cooperation will enable parties to leverage the full power of both platforms, driving innovation and building intelligent, state-of-theart customer applications. This aims to improve productivity allowing them to focus on their customers and citizens. ZEBRA TECHNOLOGIES NAMED A LEADER IN 2022 GARTNER MAGIC QUADRANT FOR INDOOR LOCATION SERVICES



Zebra Technologies Corporation,

an innovator at the edge of the enterprise with solutions and partners that enable businesses to gain a performance edge, has announced that it has been recognised by Gartner, Inc. as a Leader in the Magic Quadrant for Indoor Location Services. This is the third consecutive year that Zebra Technologies has been placed in the Leaders Quadrant.

"Zebra Technologies is proud to be recognised by Gartner as a Leader in the 2022 Magic Quadrant for Indoor Location Services for the third consecutive year," said Matt Seltz, General Manager of Location Solutions, Zebra Technologies. "Zebra provides operational visibility into the location of assets along with their utilisation and status, allowing customers to implement workflow optimisations. We believe the Gartner Magic Quadrant positioning reflects our ability to transform the physical to digital so organisations can sense what's happening in their operations, analyse that data to deliver insights, and act on those insights to make smarter decisions."

With more than 50 years of experience and innovation, Zebra is a leading provider of location solutions ranging from passive RAIN RFID tags on packages to the active tracking of athletes in real time, helping turn edge data into business value. Available through Zebra's PartnerConnect channel partner ecosystem, Zebra's location and tracking solutions empower businesses to sense what's happening, analyse or anticipate the implications, and make best next action decisions in real time. INTERVIEW // A10 NETWORKS

OUR APPROACH TO TALENT IN THE CHANNEL IS ABOUT INVESTING AND REINVESTING IN NOT JUST OUR EMPLOYEES BUT OUR PARTNERS AND AMBASSADORS, CREATING A POSITIVE FEEDBACK LOOP OF SHARED, CONTINUED EXPERTISE."

Chris Martin

PROGRESSIVE PARTNERSHIP

Chris Martin, Channel Sales Leader for EMEA & APAC, A10 Networks tells Anita Joseph that 2022 will be a great time for the channel as we regain the freedom to get out for face-to-face events and relationships are strengthened once again.

hat were the key features of your channel partner program in 2021? Our channel partner programme is designed to

harness and enhance the expertise of our partners, driving combined technology solutions that will deliver better business outcomes for customers. Our approach to channel partners values quality over quantity. We develop our channel ecosystem selectively, looking at the market for companies that could benefit from and develop our offering. All of the partners we build relationships with are very important to the success of our customers, and we value them highly.

Because of that value, we want to ensure that the partnership is a progressive journey for them with our Elevate to Elite initiative. This has been successfully enabling partners to make the transition to Elite partner status.

With hybrid working models becoming increasingly popular, how has A10 Networks been equipping its channel partners to operate in a physical-virtual environment? COVID-19's impact has been less profound for A10 Networks' channel activity because of the strength of our virtual offering. Our channel partnership programme, alongside our new technical ambassador programme in EMEA, has projected and built upon the A10 Networks brand throughout a series of virtual events and partner webinars.

Would you agree that there is a shortage of skills and the necessary technology know-how in the channel today, that supports and accelerates growth?

It is no secret that there has long been a talent shortfall in technology and cybersecurity, and the pandemic has only widened that gap. However, the channel professionals that do exist, and those who are part of the A10 Networks family, are truly valuable assets. As such, it is crucial that channel-focused businesses nurture and retain their existing talent, while investing in engaging initiatives to attract and train young people into the industry. Our approach to talent in the channel is about investing and reinvesting in not just our employees but our partners and ambassadors, creating a positive feedback loop of shared, continued expertise.

As part of this, we also invest in joint business developments within the distribution community in territories such as the Middle East, UK&I, Benelux, DACH, Africa and Scandinavia. In the Middle East specifically, we're working with partners such as Saudi Advanced Technologies, Ingram Micro, Exertis, Netex, V-Valley, 2SB, MUK and others.

A10 Networks also launched its new Affinity Technical Ambassador programme in EMEA in 2021, which enables strong technical collaborations within key partners, designed to harness and develop the knowledge level of partners and our channel professionals.

What are your plans for the channel in 2022?

Following a great 2021, we are continuing to work under the same five key pillars, encompassing building ecosystems, channel enablement, lead generation activities, deal registration and working with distribution. We devoted our efforts in the last year towards perfecting and firmly establishing our channel programme, and we are now excited to build upon it by deepening our existing partner relationships and expanding this channel strategy worldwide. A10 Networks is going into the year ahead with a real positive momentum - this is a great time for the channel and as we regain the freedom to get out to face-to-face events, our channel relationships and presence will only get stronger. 💩

FOCUS // PRESTIGIO



PRESTIGIO SOLUTIONS Launches own line of video Conferencing Solutions

restigio Solutions, an international brand of technology solutions for business and education, has announced the launch of a new category of products for video conferencing and online communications. The company's portfolio is now wide enough to create modern high-tech meeting rooms and classrooms that can satisfy the needs of any customer.

At launch, there are five devices in the category: speakerphones (Speakerphone Alpha (PVCSN0M601)), conference cameras for small, medium, and large meeting rooms (13MP UHD Camera (PVCCU13M201), Collaboration Bar Alpha (PVCCU12M601), and 4K PTZ Camera (PVCCU8N001)), and webcams for personal use (Windows Hello Camera (PVCCF2M202)).

The developers have focused on sound and image quality, ease of connection and use, and avoiding unnecessary wires in the room.

For example, the Prestigio Solutions Speakerphone Alpha (PVCSN0M601) can be connected to any device via Bluetooth, has a wireless charging function, and can operate for up to 8 IN 2022, INTERESTING NEW MODELS WILL BE ADDED TO THE PRESTIGIO SOLUTIONS LINE OF VIDEO CONFERENCING SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING SMART DEVICES WITH AI.

hours without recharging. Its array of 6 built-in microphones can pick up voices from up to 5 m away in any direction, enabling users to hold conferences with many participants without sacrificing sound quality.

All meeting room cameras have 4K UHD resolution, providing unsurpassed image quality and maximum realism. The Collaboration Bar Alpha (PVCCU12M601) from Prestigio SolutionsTM is a 4K Plug & Play camera, 6 built-in microphones, and a powerful speaker in one device. The UHD camera with people tracking and 5x digital zoom keeps track of active negotiators and follows the optimal shooting plan.

The flagship videoconferencing device of Prestigio SolutionsTM is the 4K PTZ Camera (PVCCU8N001) with Pan-Tilt-Zoom, 192x zoom, and professional-quality 4K 60fps footage. Thanks to its Power-over-Ethernet support, it can be placed anywhere, such as on the wall, with no need for direct access to a power outlet.

Devices for personal use are represented by the Windows Hello Camera (PVCCF2M202) with biometric authentication via the Windows Hello function for those who need additional access protection.

All models are available for order now. In addition, in 2022, interesting new models will be added to the Prestigio SolutionsTM line of video conferencing solutions, including smart devices with AI. All products will be in the mid-price segment, which makes modern technologies affordable.



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MAXIMIZE YOUR INVESTMENT 5 - YEAR LIMITED WARRENTY





THE UNDISPUTED LEADER

Sandeep Bhagtani, CEO at Newcom, tells Anita Joseph that the company has chartered impressive growth ever since inception owing to its constant focus on innovation and unflinching compromise on quality and customer service.

learnings of last vear? The 18 years of our existence has been a learning experience in itself. Since the pandemic hit us in 2020, the IT Industry worldwide changed drastically. Competition became strong since the "work from home" model was introduced, the demand for gadgets improved-in short, the world became digitalised and more tech savvy. 2021 was great for us, although we did have some challenges-but challenges are part of any journey. We, at Newcom, see every challenge as an opportunity and believe in turning it into victories. Our most recent milestones include awards such as Emerging Value-Added Distributor of the year, where in Feb 2022 we received The Best Distributor Award from Logitech for AMECA region. We are also the master distribution for Brand Targus, the national distributor for Brand Hikvision (IFP) and Logitech distributor for Africa (Ghana).

hat are the main

Tell us about your presence in the Middle East region. How have you positioned Newcom amidst all the competition?

Our journey of 18 years has not been an easy one but I must say it has been glorious and adventurous. We began from the UAE and gradually moved towards Bahrain, Jordan and other parts of the Middle East. Today, Newcom is present in not only in the Middle East but also in Africa.

With the growth of technology and the solutions distribution industry in the UAE and worldwide, the relationship between technology and human beings has advanced to a level where tech has become an inevitable part of human life. Here is where Newcom plays a very important role, with its philosophy of Partnership beyond Business by acting as a bridge between vendors and channel partners to make sure the product reaches the right end consumers.

We started as a small yet ambitious company seeking to fulfil the local market's need for a reliable distributor with a knack for carefully adapting its services to meet the needs of its customers. Our philosophy of Partnership beyond Business is clearly displayed on our logo, where we have the colour Dark Blue for our vendors who are the providers, Red for our channel partners who are our goal, and Light Blue for Newcom who acts as a bridge between brand partners and channel partners. Along with our expanding portfolio under PC accessories, audio video solutions and security, we also provide the best pre and post service to our customers in the industry. With technology playing a crucial role for distributors, we need to make continuous innovation an inherent part of our operating model. As a Newcom team, we position ourselves as the bridges or you can say we fill the gap between the vendors and the channel partners and make sure the product reaches the correct consumer.

Tell us about your channel partner ecosystem-what were the highlights of 2021?

We are very thankful to be able to cater to 2000 + channel partners spread across the Middle East and Africa region. We feel blessed to be able to stand where we are today. We work with almost all major IR, OR, VAR & Etail companies in the Middle East and are tapping into other markets as well. Newcom is one of the frontrunners in distribution solutions, where we not only concentrate on volume added services, but also strongly cater to value added distribution.

What are your plans for your partners in the coming year?

2021 was a learning experience which gave us a thorough understanding of how to do things differently this year. In 2022, we will be adding new categories with new brands to provide a one- stop distribution point to our customers. We are also moving ahead with more dedication and commitment to expand in the Africa region in 2022. As mentioned earlier, we see 2022 as an opportunity to take our business to different countries. Our aim is to provide the right product to the right customer and add more brands to our portfolio with our brand partners from different verticals and offer the best products,

OUR JOURNEY OF 18 YEARS HAS NOT BEEN AN EASY ONE BUT I MUST SAY IT HAS BEEN GLORIOUS AND ADVENTUROUS.



solutions and services to our customers. What is your advice for business success in a changing world? My personal understanding of business success is simple: "Mean what you say and make a mark in what you do." It doesn't matter how small or big an enterprise you are, weather you are a startup or industry leader, it is very important we make our own mark, and people take you as an example and a role-model, and not just as a company or an entity.

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Sandeep Bhagtani

SD-WAN: 5 TOP BENEFITS

Jacob Chacko, Regional Director - Middle East, Saudi & South Africa at Aruba, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company



he COVID-19 crisis has accelerated digital transformation initiatives to offer an improved customer experience and personalised services, all while tackling increasingly sophisticated cybersecurity threats. More than ever, organisations need flexibility to keep pace with business change, but they are often hindered by a sluggish and rigid network infrastructure.

Here are the five benefits of implementing an advanced SD-WAN solution:

Improve business agility while reducing overall WAN cost

To connect branch offices to the corporate data center, organisations have traditionally used expensive MPLS lines. As more bandwidth is required to support increasing connectivity demands, MPLS lines become costprohibitive, preventing organisations from fully satisfying their business needs. New MPLS circuits can take up to four months to be provisioned, greatly slowing down the ability to spin up a new branch. This hinders business changes, agility, and flexibility.

Increase security and seamlessly transition to a SASE architecture

Organisations with an MPLS routerbased architecture are not able to easily enforce security policies in branches due to the rigidity and the complexity of their network, especially in hybrid-cloud environments. The security perimeter is dissolving as users and devices now connect from anywhere. Traditional security measures are limited as a VPN doesn't support enforcement of granular security policies. Indeed, once a user has been identified and authenticated with a VPN connection, they can access critical resources inside the network even if they shouldn't.

Enable a cloud architecture

Organisations are migrating their applications to the cloud and use software as a service (SaaS) cloudhosted business applications such as Microsoft 365, Salesforce, Box, Dropbox, ServiceNow and many more instead of hosting them in the data center. However, organisations with traditional router-based WAN architectures continue to backhaul cloud-destined traffic from branch locations to the data center, mainly for security reasons, severely impacting the performance of cloud applications at the branch.

Simplify WAN infrastructure

Over the years, organisations have built their network infrastructure as their business grows. Branch offices often ended up with a stack of appliances in their facilities including routers, firewalls, VPN concentrators, and WAN optimisation devices. Updating a business or security policy such as moving an application to the cloud or improving quality of service often requires manually reconfiguring multiple devices. Not only does equipment sprawl require advanced networking skills to maintain and manage, but it also results in multiple maintenance contracts to administer.

Centrally manage network operations and get visibility

Very often, organisations must manage their network operations on a local basis resulting in a lack of flexibility. The network deployment of new remote sites can be tedious and can take several weeks to accomplish. Corporate IT departments often don't have complete network visibility to comprehensively monitor transport throughput, packet loss, latency, and jitter. An advanced SD-WAN continuously monitors network health and automatically adapts to changing conditions to always deliver optimal application performance.

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INTERVIEW // LINKSYS

DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Amanulla Khan, Managing Director – META & India tells Anita Joseph how Linksys helps companies accelerate their digital transformation journey with its cutting-edge products and strategic collaborations.



ow important is cybersecurity in today's hybrid/digital transformation context how would you describe the partnership with Fortinet?

Cybersecurity is now more important than ever, with a growing number of people working from home as well as an increasing number of devices being connected to home ecosystems. With this, enterprise-at-home security is becoming significant in the evolution of workplace technology.

This leads to an increasing need for reliable infrastructures to mitigate cybersecurity risks and

maintain efficiency. Businesses wish to replicate corporate networks by giving their employees access to the same resources as in the office. So, ensuring security has become more important than ever before.

Our strategic alliance with Fortinet enables us to offer enterprise-grade connectivity and security, with unparalleled quality of service, to organisations that need to provide seamless and secure connectivity for their employees to work efficiently from home.

How is Linksys stepping in to address the growing demand for security of remote working devices? With remote and hybrid work gaining traction, enterprise IT teams are struggling to enable their workforce to work effectively from anywhere while protecting their organisations from security threats, including ransomware, malware and phishing attacks. This has led to an increasing need for reliable infrastructures to mitigate cybersecurity risks and maintain efficiency.

The Linksys HomeWRK for Business is a solution that will deliver secure network connectivity for both corporate and personal needs in one easy-to-setup unit optimised for business applications and collaboration tools. The goal is to deliver enterprisegrade connectivity and security with unparalleled quality of service and THE LINKSYS HomeWRK FOR **BUSINESS IS A** SOLUTION THAT WILL DELIVER SECURE NETWORK **CONNECTIVITY FOR BOTH CORPORATE** AND PERSONAL **NEEDS IN ONE EASY TO-SETUP UNIT OPTIMISED** FOR BUSINESS **APPLICATIONS AND** COLLABORATION TOOLS."

also address the issue of homework gap among students as schools are also reopening with hybrid options for teaching and learning.

Initially, we expect the product to be sold through SIs, MSPs and ISPs to large and medium enterprise customers who would like to deliver enterprisegrade connectivity and security, with unparalleled quality of service to their employees. We are always looking to grow and offer premium solutions that make the most sense to our customers and the end users.

Our customers and retail partners need reliable solutions that deliver enterprise-grade performance. Businesses are now able to offer solid networking setups for their employees without compromising on security or work performance. We're extremely enthusiastic about our partnership with Fortinet. As a global leader in cybersecurity solutions, they bring in their expertise to safeguard against cyber threats introduced by home networks and automatically blocks suspicious malware, prevents intrusions, filter harmful content, and more. This, combined with our leading expertise in wireless networking products, enables us to provide reliable and secure solutions for businesses and individuals alike.

We're giving users the flexibility to prioritise the collaboration tool that they are using. Whether it is Zoom or Microsoft Teams or RingCentral, the user should be able to securely connect and collaborate. The HomeWRK device will allow users to connect to multiple operational devices, such as mobile and computer, tablet, wearables, etc. for work or study purposes. There will also be consistent speed ensured for each device.

The firewall, part of HomeWRK, will connect straight into the corporate network or enterprise network without having to connect to a VPN. It will create a tunnel that will be fully secured and this part of the network is fully managed through the company corporate IT team. Fundamentally, the enterprise network will be away from cyberthreats while each member at home access different things through the home network.

What are your thoughts about 5G adoption?

We expect 5G to drive faster connections as it becomes more accessible to the mass market through ISP infrastructures being setup across the region. A good example of this is our new 5G mobile hotspot solution will enhance connected experiences because it enables people to be more efficient as flexible working becomes more common. We expect it to be adopted by both businesses and consumers because of this. We have many 5G products for business, including routers and modems. We also offer an indoor and outdoor router as well as an industrial router which can be used on large scales. 📟

ON A GROWTH PATH

Mathew Thomas, President at Mitsumi Distribution tells Reseller Middle East how its strategy of robust partnerships, vendor management and end-to-end services have ensured its continued growth and expansion in the region and beyond.

ell us about Mitsumi's growth and presence in the region. What has the journey been like? From humble beginnings in Kenya to becoming the region's leading distributor of IT, telecommunications and enterprise solutions, it has been quite a journey. Today, Mitsumi would like to reinforce its presence in the GCC region with promising growth opportunities. We are strengthening our presence in the UAE to address all go-to markets, alongside further regional expansion plans in Qatar, Bahrain and Oman.

Even in the midst of all the disturbances in the region due to the pandemic, Mitsumi experienced significant growth and increase in share of wallet in the markets we operate. Strong support from the vendors we represent and the solid relationships we enjoy with our partners have been the main catalysts for this growth.

We have expanded our distribution portfolio with new relationships and are in discussion with synergetic brands. We are also investing in resources and infrastructure to address opportunities in all GTMs, namely retails and System Integrators.

Our efforts to grow our footprint across Africa and ME will be a continuous journey. This year, we see ourselves being able to transact locally, with in-country stocks in Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the 2nd half of the year. On the Africa side, we opened in 7 countries last year and this year we are establishing our presence in Frenchspeaking Africa, with local presence and local warehouses.

What has your strategy been, for growth & differentiation in this highly competitive market? Mitsumi provides end-to-end supply chain solutions for all IT, telecom, and digital lifestyle solutions with networking, peripherals, PCs and components products from the industry's leading vendors.

Despite the potential impacts of the pandemic, IT investments continue to grow in the region, Gartner Forecasts worldwide IT spending to grow 5.1% in 2022. Work from Home or anywhere suitable will continue to boost sales for IT products.

Our strategy has been to take worldclass brands to the deepest parts of the region. Making latest IT products available in the country, developing solid relationships with our partners and bringing in financing and local credit for our partners is our key.

We believe in partnership, micro distribution & in-country presence. Mitsumi has invested in having resources and management in over 20 countries with dedicated legal entity and local logistics capability.

We address mainly transactional channel, retail, SMB and enterprise partners in the regions we represent. Mitsumi provides end-to-end

logistics services with capabilities

of import, warehousing and stock movement across geographies to packing, labelling etc, according to the partners' requirements.

We are investing in a world class warehousing facility with WMS and optimised storage management system. This is mainly to cater to our growth aspirations for the next 5 years.

Tell us about your channel & partnership program. What's unique about it/are there any upgrades? We launched an exclusive loyalty program for our partners – a maiden partner program initiative - 'Mitsumi

BEING LEAN AND NIMBLE-FOOTED, WITH VERY STRONG FOCUS ON A ROBUST PARTNER RELATIONSHIP AND VENDOR MANAGEMENT, IS THE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS."

Gold Partner Circle'- conceptualised to incentivise and enhance value for all our customers and partners. It's a unique program which is an individual target base.

In addition, we launched the Mitsumi Gold Partner Circle App, which allows our partners to keep track of their monthly rewards, targets, achievements, gold level status and transaction history.

We are taking the digital-first approach and we have plans to launch the B2B E-commerce website for our partners- this will be another milestone in our digital transformation strategy.

What are your plans for 2022? We have ambitious plans for the forthcoming years, mainly focused on increasing our footprint and in country presence in Africa and the Middle East.

Mitsumi keeps accelerating the pan-African journey, mainly in French speaking countries, SADAC regions and further move into the North African countries by the year end.

In the Middle East, we have established ourselves in retail distribution, having a logistics facility in Dubai. Furthermore, we have established our presence in Oman, Bahrain and Qatar and will soon be present in Kuwait.

In the 2nd half of the year, we will be investing in Saudi Arabia and the Levant region to solidify our presence in the Middle east.

Being lean and nimble footed, with very strong focus on a robust partner relationship and vendor management, is the key to our success. Ensuring product availability, the right level of credit for partners and ease of transactions have ensured our continuous growth.

Mathew Thomas



nfor, the industry cloud company, is expanding its presence in Saudi Arabia as it seeks to help organisations across sectors including industrial manufacturing, distribution, healthcare and automotive, digitally transform with industry-specific cloud solutions.

Islam Elberimbal

Saudi Arabia was the highest growth region for Infor Middle East Africa in FY21, and the company is expanding its workforce in the Kingdom across various business lines. This includes the appointment of Islam Elberimbali as sales director for Saudi Arabia in January to spearhead the firm's growth, which will be key to achieving Infor's target of tripling its business in the MEA region by 2025.

Saudi Arabia's cloud market is estimated to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 35.5% between 2021-2030 to reach a value of \$10.5 billion in 2030, according to QuantAlign Research. This growing availability of cloud will be a boon for organisations in Saudi Arabia, which is encouraging digitisation efforts as part of diversification plans under Saudi Vision 2030.

But while cloud is a key pillar of digital transformation, organisations will also

need to adopt specialised, industryspecific cloud-based software solutions to maximise the potential of their transformation efforts.

"One of the reasons we're experiencing solid growth in Saudi Arabia is that our cloud ERP software is industryspecific and designed for the different needs of high-growth sectors including industrial manufacturing, distribution, automotive, and healthcare," Elberimbali said. "Our solutions are highly effective at helping companies gain full visibility of their operations and enabling them to automate their systems to increase performance and utilisation."

Infor is already working with numerous organisations in Saudi Arabia, including Saudi Bugshan, Zahid Tractor, Hafil Transportation Co., AutoWorld and a growing number of premier car dealerships, on ambitious digital transformation initiatives.

AutoWorld, which is part of SEDCO Holding, a pioneer in auto leasing in the kingdom, recently completed its deployment of Infor CloudSuite Equipment and Infor People Solutions to help spearhead its digital transformation supported by Infor Consulting Services and running on Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Zahid Tractor, a Saudi Arabia-based Zahid Group company that supplies construction machinery and commercial vehicles, successfully deployed Infor M3 for Equipment to streamline and gain visibility across all departments in 2021.

Infor also works extensively with Saudi Bugshan, a conglomerate that comprises 47 companies. The organisation, which is involved in food & beverage, distribution & trading, healthcare, real estate, hospitality, education, and automotive, deployed solutions including Infor LN for manufacturing to provide a single integrated digital platform and help it transform and automate key business functions including human capital management, customer relationship management, finance, procurement, warehouse, and supply chain management.

"Organisations across the country are keen to move on from legacy systems by migrating to the cloud to gain the agility they need to grow their business, respond to challenges in the market and tap new opportunities," Elberimbali added. "We're excited to help Saudi Arabian organisations transform and play a key role in delivering the aims of Saudi Vision 2030."



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MAXIMIZE YOUR INVESTMENT 5 - YEAR LIMITED WARRENTY





QNAP TVS-675: REDEFINING DATA MANAGEMENT

Powerful, efficient and cost-effective, the TVS-675 includes advanced features that simplify mundane tasks like file backup, restore and synchronisation, while providing cuttingedge options like hybrid backup sync and virtualisation.

DATA BACKUP AND DISASTER RECOVERY ARE KEY TO EFFECTIVE DATA MANAGEMENT, ESPECIALLY TODAY, WHEN ALL THE CRUCIAL DATA THAT IS BEING GENERATED ARE EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO THREATS AND ATTACKS.

n today's world where hybrid working models are the norm, data storage and management can be extremely complicated and everyday tasks such as file backup and restore and collaboration between 'distributed' teams, complex and cumbersome. However, with QNAP's business-class Network Attached Storage-the NAS - TVS-675, they need no longer be. Powered by the x86 architecture Zhaoxin KaiXian KX-U6580 8-core processor, the TVS-675 provides businesses with a modern 2.5GbE NAS solution to tackle tasks like seamless file backup & restore seamlessly and also boost team collaboration with higher productivity.

So, what makes the TVS-675 unique? Besides hardware advantages with built-in M.2 SSD slots for cache acceleration and PCIe expansion, the TVS-675 supports abundant business and media applications (including snapshot protection, virtual machines, cloud storage gateways, 4K HDMI display, and real-time transcoding) alongside expandable storage capacity and install-on-demand apps, making it a cost-effective and reliable data and media storage option.

In this article, let's explore two of

the software features of this one-of-akind NAS: Hybrid Backup Sync (HBS) & Virtualisation.

Hybrid Backup Sync (HBS)

As we all know, data backup and disaster recovery are key to effective data management, especially today, when all the crucial data that is being generated are extremely vulnerable to threats and attacks. This is where Hybrid Backup Sync steps in and helps you back up data from a QNAP NAS to several local, remote and cloud storage spaces. In fact, its multi-version backup also allows you to easily track changes.

That's not all: HBC consolidates backup, restoration and synchronisation functions into a single QTS/QuTS hero app so that you can easily transfer your data to local, remote and cloud storage spaces, as a comprehensive data storage and disaster recovery plan. It also features the cuttingedge QuDedup technology to deduplicate backup data at the source. So, with the overall data size reduced, the required bandwidth and backup time are also saved. With QuDedup, you can reduce the RPO (Recovery Point Objective) and RTO (Recovery Time Objective) for your backup plan. When



tested with a virtualisation solution, QuDedup reduced the backup size by as much as 75%.

Creating tasks in Hybrid Backup Sync is secure, seamless and easy. This is because it allows you to encrypt and compress files before backing up or synchronising them. Not only does this effectively prevent unauthorised access, but it also provides an extra layer of protection for personal and business files/data. Also, after backing up de-duped, encrypted or compressed data to a QNAP NAS, remote server or cloud storage, you can use the QuDedup Extract Tool or QENC Decrypter utility to easily restore and view them on your computer.

From version 14 onwards, Hybrid Backup Sync supports automated cross-NAS backup jobs. When the local NAS starts a backup job, a remote NAS automatically starts secondary backup, sync, or restore jobs. See how simple it is? all you need to do is set the backup process on each NAS, so then these multiple NAS can automatically complete all job flows. Whether migrating big data or backing up to multiple destinations (such as USB storage or cloud storage), IT teams can effortlessly streamline the entire backup workflow according to their requirements.

Virtualisation Station

A Virtualisation Station is a powerful hypervisor software on your ONAP device that allows you to create a cost-effective virtualised application environment. Not only do they bridge the ever-widening generation gap between hardware and software, but they also provide several benefits to IT professionals and developers, including cost savings, greater efficiency and better eco-friendliness, to name a few. Virtualisation Stations also make the NAS incredibly versatile. You can use the NAS as a PC by connecting a keyboard, mouse and HDMI display to create private virtual networks between virtual machines and can also use USB pass-through to provide the NAS with greater functionality and performance.

Not only that: virtualisation stations also support a variety of operating systems, including Windows, Linux and QuTScloud. With this software, you can set up and execute multiple virtual machines according to the available system resources. At the same time, the Virtualisation Station also supports a variety of resource management and acceleration functions, making it a highly efficient and valuable virtualisation application platform. QNAP's Virtualisation Station is fast and reliable. You can use it to run multiple virtual machines to meet diverse virtualisation needs while enjoying value for money and the benefits of several advanced, futuristic features.

One of the biggest advantages of the Virtualisation Station is that you can use it to run virtual machines with different operating systems, including Windows, Linux, and QuTScloud, on QNAP NAS and devices. You can also download and use various virtual devices directly from the Virtual Machine Marketplace available in the Virtualisation Station.

The Virtualisation Station also allows the QuTScloud, a virtual NAS device using QNAP's QTS operating system, to convert a single entity NAS into a multi-tenant environment, thereby saving costs and space and making the entire process more convenient and flexible.

Let's not forget QNAP's Container Station which seamlessly integrates LXC / LXD and Docker lightweight virtualisation technologies, allowing you to operate multiple isolated Linux systems on a QNAP NAS, as well as download apps from the builtin Docker Hub/LXD Image Server Registry. LXC/ LXD supports OSlevel virtualisation for Linux-based operating systems, while Docker is ideal for application virtualisation purposes.

Most NAS products in the market support only Docker containers, and as such are unsuitable for the deployment of Linux virtual machines. So you can see how, as the only NAS brand in the market supporting both LXC / LXD and Docker, QNAP NAS is the clear choice for comprehensive virtualisation solutions.

To know more about the product and to pre-order, please visit: https:// datacaredubai.com/products/qnap-tvs-675?variant=39850005692470

To know where to buy this worldclass product, please visit: https:// www.qnap.com.cn/en/where-to-buy/ middle-east/united%20arab%20 emirates/sub-distributor @ INTERVIEW // D-LINK

FUTURE-PERFECT

Sakkeer Hussain, Director - Sales & Marketing, D-Link Middle East & Africa, tells Anita Joseph how the company's commitment to innovation and quality helps drive digital transformation and prepare for the future. A Reseller ME exclusive.



hat's your take on the digital transformation journey of the region, especially in the

last two years?

Regional organisations have accelerated digital transformation agendas over the last two years. The pandemic compelled businesses to implement their long-term digital transformation strategies almost overnight. It has made companies realise how being a digital entity can ensure business continuity and help them reach their target audience. We saw that those companies who were not prepared to go digital did face drastic consequences, including going out of business. Having experienced first-hand the true benefits of embracing technologies like cloud, automation, IoT, networking and wireless, regional companies are now more receptive to investing in advanced technologies such as AI and machine learning, RPA and so on. I believe we will see this continued acceleration for digital transformation objectives during this year and see more practical use cases of advanced technologies.

Can you outline D-Link's milestones and achievements over the years? What has the journey been like? For more than two decades, we have consistently grown year-on-year and became a household name. We continue to uphold this reputation by never compromising on quality and service, truly listening to customers' requirements and ensuring each offering is integrated with innovation.

D-Link Middle East's primary focus is on two product segments – consumer and business. As a well-established

D-LINK MIDDLE EAST'S PRIMARY FOCUS IS ON TWO PRODUCT SEGMENTS - CONSUMER AND BUSINESS. AS A WELL-ESTABLISHED NETWORKING LEADER IN THE REGION, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SIGNIFICANTLY GROW BOTH SEGMENTS OVER THE YEARS. networking leader in the region, we have been able to significantly grow both segments over the years. The growth continued even during the pandemic lockdowns as businesses saw the importance of networking and cloud solutions. The journey has been incredible and dotted with exciting customer wins, new product launches and great collaborations.

We have established powerful alliances with global leaders such as Moxa, Gajshield and ZCOM to help us further cater end-to-end to the market's wireless solutions and security demands efficiently.

Over the last few years, we have had some great wins in terms of bringing ground-breaking consumer and business products to market. This ranges from switches, 4G and 5G solutions, Smart Home innovations, IoT solutions, CCTV and IP Camera solutions, Whole Home Wi-Fi routers, including novelties around Wi-Fi 6, Wi-Fi Mesh Solutions, IP Telephony and so on.

Here's a brief of each milestone launch –

A few years ago, we brought to market DIS-100G Series Industrial Unmanaged Ethernet Switches and DIS-200GSeries Layer 2 Gigabit Industrial Smart Managed Ethernet Switches. With a wide range of operating temperatures, a fan-less design, and an IP30-rated metal enclosure, the switches were designed to be robust and withstand harsh environments. Dual power input ensures consistent power and operation, and alarm relay support allows for constant power supply monitoring and diagnostics. Their reliability and compliance with various industrial standards made the switches ideal for applications in city surveillance, ITS, and factory automation.

In 2018, we introduced 'Brite-box' SDN approach for enterprises. It was at a time when using SDN to automate data center operations and maximise infrastructure flexibility was becoming essential to maintain competitiveness for data center operators and service providers. Brite-Box provided the advantages of working with a trusted brand, including proven switching technology and established support infrastructure without running the commercial and operational support risks of working directly with bulk purchased white box unbranded bare metal equipment.

Back in 2018 itself, we had introduced the initial version of Nuclias, a cloud-based network management solution. The offering enabled managed service providers and business owners to remotely configure and monitor their network infrastructures anywhere and at any time without the need for a local controller, reducing cost and complexity while streamlining network infrastructure. D-Link and our partners were way ahead of the market demand and well prepared for scenario that the pandemic brought on where businesses were moving complete workloads to the cloud.

Over the last three years, we have also brought to market our Mesh technology Covr, which provides seamless Wi-Fi solution that's a perfect fit for modern smart homes. It blankets every square inch of the home with high speed AC1200 Dual-Band Wi-Fi allowing users to enjoy Wi-Fi that's stable, consistent, and truly seamless. We have been committed to the smart home market and are well-equipped OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, WE'VE HAD SOME GREAT WINS IN TERMS OF BRINGING GROUND-BREAKING CONSUMER AND BUSINESS PRODUCTS TO MARKET.

to address end-to-end smart home requirements for our customers in the region.

We also introduced D-Fend AC2600 Wi-Fi router in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) market a couple of years ago. The wireless DIR-2680 router innovation was powered with an Intel chip and security by McAfee. It was a concurrent dual band wireless router upgraded to the latest 802.11ac standard technology, bringing the future of high-bandwidth wireless connectivity, vastly increasing the speed and coverage of smart home networks. The D-Fend smart home network protection gives home networks an extra layer of powerful and comprehensive protection. The router kicked security up a notch and helped to keep kids safe online with age-based profiles and the ability to pause the Internet when needed.

Another initiative we take pride in is our 'Green Technology' agenda, which we had introduced for our channel partners and end user customers in the region. Thirteen years ago, D-Link was the first to introduce the industry's first 'Green Ethernet' technology with a series of environmentally friendly small office, home office (SOHO) Gigabit switches that decrease energy costs by reducing power consumption without sacrificing operational performance and functionality. D-Link has continued this ethos and today, we continue to develop green networking technology, which allows our products to drastically reduce power consumption.

In 2019, we launched the Exo Smart Mesh Wi-Fi Router series, adding to our portfolio of seamless connection solutions for the home, in the Middle East and Africa market. The next-generation routers offered high-performance Wi-Fi connectivity combined with McAfee protection, providing a faster and more secure home network.

Also, in 2019, we launched the DGS-1250 Series Smart Managed Switches with 10G uplink port, PoE output, high port density, multiple management interfaces, and advanced security features in the Middle East and Africa. All models included four built-in 10G SFP+ slots, providing high bandwidth connections. It also featured support for IEEE 802.2af/ at and a higher PoE budget up to 370 watts allowed the PoE models DGS-1250-28XMP and DGS-1250-52XMP to power more devices and be installed in remote locations.

End of 2020, we introduced nextgeneration long-range outdoor wireless PTP and PTMP Bridge products, the DAP-F37xx series. The new generation of 802.11ac 2x2 bridge for outdoor applications came with built-in unique VTrans wireless technology, incorporating several industry-leading core technologies such as MIMO-OFDM, TDMA, Beam forming and Auto ACK among others. This guarantees customers with high throughput and reliable wireless signal coverage under any application scenarios. The DAP-F37xx series offers customers with stable outdoor wireless signal coverage, enabling them to do business seamlessly no matter where they are. The products packed in the performance capability of a wireless base station in compact form factors.

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We also launched our F series IP surveillance products. F Series products includes a whole new Range of IP surveillance products and solutions to meet the need of various business verticals including health care, buildings, hotels, education, shopping malls comes with easy management options. They were divided into two series - Easy and Pro, available in bullet, dome and PTZ with fixed, varifocal and motorised lenses. D-Link IP surveillance solutions are field proven and certified with leading video surveillance software solutions for sophisticated applications.

We had several big launches in 2020, from apt solutions needed for evolving market demands such as the 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. In early 2021, we also announced ground-breaking Wi-Fi 6 routers, including two of our flagship products - DIR-X1560 EXO AX AX1500 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.

In 2021, we launched several new innovations including Covr Series Wi-Fi 6 solution, EAGLE PRO AI Series, DCS-8300LHV2 Full HD Wi-Fi Camera with AI-based person detection, Outdoor Industrial AC1200 Access Point DIS-3650AP and Indoor Industrial Access Point DIS-2650AP and so on.

The market will see us continuing to deliver on our promise of quality and innovation, helping organisations achieve business outcomes during this year too.

What are some of D-Link's latest portfolio of products/solutions?

Some of our latest launches include: Covr Series Wi-Fi 6 solution - This also includes multi-pack options that are all equipped with Wi-Fi 6 and mesh technology to provide faster speeds, greater capacity, and less network congestion for the modern device-dense smart home. With next generation speeds of up to 1.8 Gbps total, these Covr AX Wi-Fi 6 solutions are perfect for simultaneous 4K streaming, VR gaming, video calling, and keeping the smart home connected. They also feature 4 Gigabit Ethernet LAN ports and 1 Gigabit Ethernet WAN port for optional wired connectivity.

EAGLE PRO AI Series - It features a comprehensive range of routers to fulfil everyone's needs for home Wi-Fi and 4G Wi-Fi. Equipped with Wi-Fi 6 Technology, the R15 AX1500 Wi-Fi 6 Smart Router, M15 AX1500 Mesh Router, and E15 AX1500 Mesh Range Extender deliver up to four times more capacity and 40% throughput increase than Wi-Fi 5. The R03, R04, and R12 Wi-Fi AI Routers are entry-level devices for emerging markets that provide the latest WPA3 security encryption for more secure connectivity. The EAGLE PRO AI series also includes 4G AI Routers

THE MARKET WILL SEE US CONTINUING TO DELIVER ON OUR PROMISE OF QUALITY AND INNOVATION, HELPING ORGANISATIONS ACHIEVE BUSINESS OUTCOMES DURING THIS YEAR TOO. G415 and G416, as well as entry-level models G403 and G412, all with two built-in external LTE antennas. Additionally, the G416 utilises Carrier Aggregation Technology to boost data speeds up to 300 Mbps. Carrier Aggregation provides the foundation for deploying 4G and 5G networks, with the capability to combine several frequency bands for higher peak rates and increased cell coverage.

Other new launches include DCS-8300LHV2 Full HD Wi-Fi Camera with AI-based person detection, Outdoor Industrial AC1200 Access Point DIS-3650AP and Indoor Industrial Access Point DIS-2650AP and so on.

D-Link has always had an innovation-first approach. Can you tell us more about this?

Innovation is critical to add value to the business as well as to our customers. It helps us to stay ahead of the market curve and offer great products and solutions that uniquely help customers address business challenges.

We have excelled at consistently introducing new innovations, exceeding customer expectations and offering intensive support and service. This has enabled us to grow across product segments and verticals. We believe having a laser focus on our core objectives while simultaneously keeping our customers at the heart of our business have helped us stay differentiated and successful in the regional market.

What is D-Link's plan for 2022 for the market?

Customers can look forward to the latest innovations in terms of technologies from us to enable them in their businesses in the digital modern era. This means that over the coming months, the market will see us announcing ground-breaking solutions within 5G, IoT, AI, cloud, applications, connected homes, Wi-Fi 6, security and networking as these technologies further develop and advance. SPECIAL FEATURE // CHANNEL PERSONALITIES

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CHANGE MAKERS: CHANNE

As we complete the first quarter of what seems like an eventful year, we bring you our pick of personalities who are responsible for driving change and transformation in the channel industry. A Reseller ME Exclusive.





Amr El Kessi Regional Channel Manager – ME at Commvault

Amr Elkessi has been in the IT industry for the past 14 years and is focused on developing the channel landscape for different IT vendors he has worked with, such as HPE, Fujitsu, Dell EMC and Pure Storage. He is currently with Commvault covering the Middle East, managing the channel landscape as well as the distribution and alliances business.

In his opinion, the last two years were challenging dur to the pandemic and customers wanted to adopt new smarter approaches to cope with the challenges. "For example, adopting cloud and making sure critical data is always secured from attacks like ransomware," he points out.

Commvault has focused on enabling data security within the platform, helping customers have the right plan and strategy against ransomware attacks starting from risk assessment, moving to protection, monitoring, fast response and restore. "The channel landscape has always been a great source and success for major IT vendors and Commvault has articulated the value we can bring to our channel partners, which can support their customers in their current transformational journey," he adds.



Guy March Senior Director - EMEA Channels at Tenable

Guy has over 20 years of experience in cyber security and running teams across EMEA. He joined Tenable in 2020, having previously worked at Symantec, and part of his role is to continuously develop and implement our strategic plan that helps drive incremental channel-led business, leveraging and growing strategic channel partnerships across EMEA.

"At Tenable, we're committed to collaborating with leading security technology resellers, MSSPs,

distributors and ecosystem partners worldwide," he says. "Together, we help organisations of all sizes manage, measure and reduce their cyber risk. Our Tenable certification program offers tailored training, based on the partner's role and core expertise. Our curriculum targets sales and technical staff with the training required for success in every step of the customer lifecycle to establish a new standard for expertise in helping organisations address the challenges they face," he adds.



John Bryceland is the Regional Vice-President of IFS's Partners, Channels, and Alliances business in APJ, ME&A. In this role, John is based in Dubai and is responsible for growing IFS's presence **John Bryceland** VP Partner Alliances & Channels – Asia Pacific, Japan, Middle East & Africa at IFS

across the region, particularly the Middle East, as a hyper-growth market. This involves building a solid customer base, expanding its network of quality partners, and ensuring IFS deliver on its "Moments of Service" to both customers and Partners and focuses on providing customer value.

"In 2021, IFS saw incredible growth across the business, delivering +22% Software Revenue, +30% reoccurring revenues, +105% Cloud revenue, and +76% in our Service Management business unit. This was against a tough Covid headwind. We are immensely proud. April 2021 also saw the rebrand of IFS. We launched this in many prominent locations across the globe and across the Burj Khalifa in Dubai. We also launched IFS Cloud and continued our acquisition strategy with the Axios joining IFS, rebranding as IFS Assyst. This will add immense value to our customers and Partners through 2022 and beyond. We also acquired Cutomervile, driving outcomes of our customers' customers to enable them to deliver on their Moments of Service," he says.

In his opinion, 2022 will see IFS continue to build on its Sustainability strategy launched in 2021 to be carbon neutral by 2025 with a positive contribution to society and environment across the Middle East and the globe.



Laurent Delattre EMEA Sales Vice President at SolarWinds

Laurent Delattre serves Europe, the Middle East and Africa regions. He is focused on strengthening the company's commitment to its customers, distributors, resellers, and managed service providers, as well as driving business development, fostering strategic partnerships and overseeing the EMEA sales teams.

"Channel partners are integral to the overall success of SolarWinds in delivering an excellent customer experience," he says. "We work closely with leading technology distributors, resellers, global system integrators, and MSPs to build momentum, develop collaborative business relationships, and grow our business together in the Middle East," he adds.

In his opinion, growing the channel business, empowering partners, and providing enhanced support to them to meet customers' growing needs for solutions that help solve today's complex IT operations management challenges is key to ensuring customers' continued success.



Maya Zakhour

Channel Director for NetApp in the Middle East and Africa, Italy and Spain

As channel director for NetApp in the Middle East and Africa, Italy and Spain, Maya's responsibility is to not only grow channel coverage across her territory, but to also build a strong partner ecosystem and leads teams' efforts in applying partner and pathways strategies. "My focus is to also develop the company's services business through partners as well as oversee the commercial and velocity business. The last year has been especially rewarding as in challenging and dynamic markets like MEA, Italy and Spain and where cloud business is booming, I played a pivotal role in driving a transformational strategy with our existing partners to adopt the journey to the cloud in a smooth and quick way," she says.

"At NetApp, we are committed to help our customer with their data and digitization strategies in a First Digital world, and for that we are collaborating with our Alliances and still pursuing to hire more specialist partners that will contribute to building stronger data fabric strategies for our customers," she adds.



Rahil Ghaffar

Director, Sales for Middle East & Africa, Virsec

Rahil heads the Middle East and Africa region for Virsec. "Virsec's mission has been to make cyber threats irrelevant, and I believe we have seen phenomenal success in a short period of time in achieving this with the help of organisations realising this fact."

In his opinion, "we have been able to make inroads with quite a few reputed banks and government entities already in the Middle Easter region and we look forward to an exponential growth in and across the region in 2022."

"We will continue with our existing strategy and focus on onboarding partners who want to make cyberthreats irrelevant. We want to grow our channel presence across the Middle East and Africa with a strong focus in KSA and Jordan, and expand our current footprint in the UAE, Qatar, and the African region. We are also hiring and ramping up our on-ground resources in the Middle East market," he adds.



Sakkeer joined D-Link as channel manager way back in 2008. In his words, "my journey with the company has been

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

full of amazing experiences, learnings and engagements with some incredible leaders from the regional ICT space."

As Director of Sales and Marketing at D-Link Middle East and Africa. Sakkeer heads the region's growth and marketing initiatives to grow the brand visibility as well as ensure that the annual target is met for D-Link's product portfolio with Y-o-Y sales growth.

Over the years, he has designed and implemented successful business models, partner programs and campaigns for distribution, channel and retail partners

across the Middle East region.

"The biggest learning from 2021 is that we need to have robust communication solutions to support the increasing hybrid work environment," he notes. "Companies must continue to offer flexible work models to attract top talent. And technologies that facilitate and enable these models will be in high demand. Channel partners must understand these changing business requirements and build their skills in the latest developments within Wi-Fi, cloud, IoT and cybersecurity solutions," he adds.



Steve has been with AVEVA for over 25 years and has led its global channel business and partner programs for distributors, specialist solution providers and systems integrators.

Steve Lewarne Vice President - Channel & Programs at AVEVA

The highpoints of his career are centered around digital transformation, as AVEVA is a pioneer in this space. "AVEVA has enabled industrial customers to leverage information technology to address operational challenges and achieve levels of productivity that were thought to be impossible before. We are supporting customers on their sustainability journey by enabling minimal waste and consumption of natural resources through cutting-edge digital solutions," he says.

"Despite a challenging year globally, AVEVA's partner network has grown. Our partners rely on our solutions to help customers transform and

become operationally agile. AVEVA technologies support remote working, collaboration, advanced analytics, and other trends, empowering customers to thrive in a digital and cloud first environment," he adds.

According to Steve, a key trend in 2022 will be the shift to flexible commercial models that allow partners and customers to dynamically reallocate investments in AVEVA software as per their requirements. "Subscription-based AVEVA Operations Control delivered through AVEVA Flex allows partners to access the complete suite of software lifecycle tools for connecting, visualising and analysing resources."



Tarek has over 18 years of experience in the Technology Media and Telecommunications (TMT) industry as well as an extensive background in marketing, sales, channel management and business development.

During his career, he held several

Tarek Kuzbari Regional Director Middle East and Turkey, at Cybereason

leadership positions in different companies and countries with regional and global responsibilities, with vendors such as Bitdefender (Romania), Group-IB (Russia), SABA Software (USA) and Kaspersky Lab (Russia), which helped build considerable global market experience, focusing on Vendor's international expansion and operations turn around and leading them to market leadership position. He is currently leading Cybereason in the Middle East and Turkey, expanding the brand presence and achieving market penetration and growth.

Tarek has also been recognized as the top "30 under 30" by Gulf Business; "The top 25 most powerful executives in the Middle East" by Arabian Computer News (ACN); and "Top executive in the security industry in the Middle East" by Network Middle East.

At Cybereason, he has focused on building operations from scratch across the Middle East and Turkey, that included the go-to-market strategy and execution, recruiting of A star players, and building key accounts and references in the region. "As a result, we have built our in-country cloud in the region to be a leading unified endpoint security vendor who delivers cloud native solution approved by local authorities," he says.

"During the last 12 months, we managed to double our distribution partners, triple our GSI and SI Partners and have grown massively with our MSSP partners," he adds.

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WALL MAGIC

Piet Vanhuyse, Segment Marketing Director of Large Video Wall Experience at Barco, tells Reseller all about the strides made in video wall technology.

Piet Vanhuyse
BARCO

a modern video wall? What are the pros and cons, and how are the technologies improving and developing?

There are three dominant technologies in the visual display game, LCD, rearprojection cubes (RPC), and direct view LED. Each of these individual technologies has their own strengths and use-cases, and it's important that potential customers match their needs to the technology. Vendors offering the full suite of solutions can cater for each customers' individual needs, and as an industry we need to begin our thought process with the customer.

LCD is the most budget-friendly of the technologies, and while not entrylevel, it is a great pick for somewhere like a workplace lobby, where you need sharp picture quality and a scalable solution. RPC is confined mostly to control rooms, and while the passing of this solution was prophesised about five years ago, we can expect resilience in the years to come. The primary reason for this is the technology's robustness. In situations where companies need to constantly monitor their network, a solution that has a very long lifetime and an absence of burn-in effects is perfect for 24/7 monitoring in mission-critical scenarios. LED is often perceived as the rising star in the visual display world, and it's the primary choice for creative processes when a seamless canvas is required and where the image needs to make an impact. While it is the most expensive technology, its colour

reproduction and viewing angles make it the de facto option in places like broadcast environments.

In terms of where video wall technology is going, LED is where the major innovations are coming from. Certain pain points throughout the customer journey are still to be resolved, with the inherent fragility of the product during handling, as well as batch compatibility requirements, high up on the innovation agenda. A continued evolution towards finer pixel pitches, thereby reducing optimal viewing distance and increasing resolution, can also be expected. In terms of LCD, we'll see the main fulcrum of innovation come from the rivalry between LCD and OLED consumer technology and that will in turn come to the industrial sphere.

VIDEO WALLS ARE NO LONGER SIMPLE SIGNAGE, THEY'VE COME TO BE THOUGHT OF AS HAVING CRITICAL IMPACT ON THE FUNCTIONALITY OF A BUSINESS.

Video walls can now be created in almost any shape and contour. How is this done?

When discussing creative applications, people are mostly talking about LED. Since the early 2000s the size of the panels that you need to mount LEDs on have become a lot smaller, and unlike LCD or RPC, LEDs are also not restricted to a rectangular shape. That has opened a whole host of creative solutions, from the types of displays you see at concert halls, all the way to flexible LEDs. As LEDs are essentially single pixels that are mounted on surfaces, that allows for a lot of creativity in the way you can approach a video wall.

It is worth noting here that the majority of application areas don't necessarily require this level of creative freedom. Next to traditional flat rectangular shapes, curved LCD and LED installations are what is most often requested of us as vendors, and we'll see these used in control rooms that want to have a specific focus on operator ergonomics for example. Aside from this, we've also been involved in multiple installations for broadcast studios and multipurpose spaces with moving LED sections and panels.

Mounting and installation can be a major task, especially for large sizes, unusual shapes, awkward locations, etc. So what's required for effective mounting and installation, in terms of technology and skills? The eco-system that comes with mounting is key, because ultimately you buy an experience, not just a technology, and when you buy a video wall you want assurance that your vision is going to come to life. When discussing effective installation, what we are really talking about is the customer need for predictable outcomes, because installation conditions will never be perfect. The way you provide these outcomes is through product design and partnerships with trusted and prevalidated third-party installers, mount providers, and system integrators, as skilled labour is a big part in minimising risk.

Mechanically and optically, you can build in systems which can finetune the installation process. With our LED video walls for example, you have optical seam compensation, whereby you take a picture with a camera within the video wall and an algorithm can calibrate and steer the LEDs at the edge of the wall to get a perfect picture. On a mechanical level, you can build in physical adjustment points so you can give the installer the freedom to cue XYZ in the way that they see as perfection.

Post-installation maintenance and support can pose challenges, e.g. with awkward positions, 24/7 operation, etc. So how are maintenance and repairs carried out, and how is this changing? And how do operators ensure the video wall continues to look its best without deterioration? Firstly, quality deterioration is not

simply a post-care issue. Deterioration is not simply a post-care issue. Deterioration has a lot to do with the product design process, and it's something that begins with the quality of the materials you choose. Deterioration is particularly important in mission critical 24/7 applications. If you have any deterioration in the video wall of a power company monitoring the grid, you might not know when a neighbourhood loses power. That's why component selection, strict quality processes and embedded redundancy are key in designing and bringing products to market.

When service interventions do need to be made, you want to make them as safe and quick as possible. Service diagnostics can now be run from the cloud for an entire fleet of video walls, so by the time a maintenance expert needs to go on-site, the issue has already been diagnosed. In terms of physical servicing, you want to minimise the potential disruption to any operation. Being able to access the inside of an LED video wall from the front and back, as well as motorised extraction for the quick and safe removal of parts is one way this is already being done. In less than a minute an engineer can safely swap an LED module out in a way that is as unintrusive as possible.

Looking further ahead, what new developments can we expect to see in video walls in the future, and what advantages will they bring? One of the most exciting things that we're seeing around video walls is peoples' changing perceptions towards them. Video walls are no longer simple signage, they've come to be thought of as having a critical impact on a business' functionality. Barco worked with a London-based company a few years ago who wanted to develop an internal meeting space that would facilitate cross collaboration and drive employee engagement across 120 countries. Through the installation of a touch screen 18-panel LCD video wall in collaboration with our partners, we created a centrepiece for the organisation and radically transformed the space the firm inhabited. In so doing, the video wall became a part of that company's overall business journey and became reflective of their brand. Video walls are no longer a place to put the lunch menu, but a centrepiece around which workplaces and work cultures can be redesigned.

Anything else that you think our readers should know?

One of the key challenges in this market is articulating value and helping the end user make the right choice in a crowded field. It's not enough to just talk about the brightness or the pixel pitch of a video wall - the investment being made by the customer is too high for that, and often the investment is cyclical as the lifespan of a video wall comes to an end. We as an industry need to be able to understand consumers' requirements and guide them to a choice informed by their own needs, not just buzzwords. That's the area where we'll see real partnership.





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SPECIAL FEATURE // MARKETING PERSONALITIES

CHANGE 210.95 149.16 149.16 NARERS: 23.26

We're completing the first quarter of 2022, and as businesses pick up pace post the pandemic-induced slack, we've decided it's time to acknowledge the change makers in the marketing world-the ones who keep the business momentum going against all odds. So here's our pick of the top marketeers to watch out for this year.

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Céline Gajnik Global Marketing Director at ThreatQuotient

As the Global Marketing Director for ThreatQuotient, Celine is responsible for handling the company's marketing affairs around the world, lead, and work with a team of marketing specialists in developing and executing strategies in the different areas in which ThreatQuotient operates. "To the surprise of many, I didn't start out in marketing, I landed my first role in marketing when I was 22 years old and prior that time I was working in a sports shop," she says.

"We cannot be everywhere and the digital presence is such an important component to our marketing strategy today, but we need to re-evaluate the best way to market our solutions and continue to strengthen our accountbased marketing approach in alignment with a more traditional approach," she adds.

"Finding the right balance between what we had and getting back to meet people is one of our key goals to leverage ThreatQuotient in our key markets which are TIP, SOAR and XDR. We feel this need around several services at ThreatQuotient and also with our customers and partners," Celine points out.



Dolly Solanki

Head of Marketing, Emerging Markets at CyberRes-A Micro Focus Line of Business

Dolly has been a marketing professional since 2007-that's almost 15 years, with over 7 years at Micro Focus. She describes herself as someone who plays by the book, but also plays by the ear when needed. "It's not only required to be innovative in my role, but also allows me to unleash the creative thinking, it's what I enjoy the most about my role," she says.

Dolly heads marketing for emerging markets for CyberRes – A Micro Focus Line of Business.

In her words: "Creating resilient marketing strategies in that past couple of years has been both, vital as well as game changing. Vital for obvious reasons, and game changing because it brought a shift in perspective. An overnight change from F2F to virtual scenarios was not just the need of the hour but it also opened up a lot of untapped opportunities. But just like every successful strategy, it needs to be blending in the marketing mix that also incorporates other flavors such as media, physical events, tele marketing, digital marketing etc."

SPECIAL FEATURE // MARKETING



Leandra Meintjes Head of Marketing at Proven Arabia

As Head of Marketing at Proven Arabia, Leandra leads a creative global team across six countries, offering marketing solutions to the company's internal group of companies and external clients. For her, the key learnings of the past two years were to accept that nothing is for certain and that one has to be ready to face any challenge. In fact, "the past year has shown that businesses have come back even stronger post-COVID," she points out.

"We live and work in a digital world, even more now than before. Access to marketing tech tools has become easier and more accessible, allowing us to offer new and innovative ways to attract and retain clients. The shift to a virtually limitless virtual world is drawing near. However, the need for real-life interaction is genuine. We now have the opportunity to push the boundaries online and offline, and nothing is impossible," she adds.



Lena Halbourian Senior Head of Marketing SEEMEA at Commvault

A passionate marketer, Lena began her career in 2004 when she moved to the UAE. She is currently the Senior Head of Marketing SEEMEA at Commvault. Her track record includes major multinationals such as HP, IBM and Citrix.

In her opinion, the pandemic changed everything for everyone around the world. "We noticed how vulnerable we are as humans and how much we took for granted, we had to reassess our priorities and adjust to the new normal."

Lena says that from a business perspective, her company had to "revisit its strategy and approach by reshuffling plans by relying heavily on digital and virtual platforms to ensure we stay connected with our customers and partners by keeping the momentum going and ensuring we have minimal disruption to business."



Tushar Chawla Group Business Manager - Marketing and Renewals at Westcon-Comstor Middle East

Tushar heads Marketing and Renewals for Westcon-Comstor for the Middle East region. He looks after developing the overall local marketing strategy and running initiatives that drive growth for the company and its channel partners.

One of the key highlights of his career has been the successful development and rollout of our Marketing as a Service (MaaS) program in the Middle East region. "We were one of the first Value Added Distributors to launch MaaS that is aimed at helping resellers generate new end user demand by leveraging the power of digital marketing. Another key highlight of my career has been winning Cisco's Global Marketing Velocity Award of the Year for 3 years in a row," he says.

"I strongly feel that in order to successfully harness the power of digital marketing, companies will have to make continuous investments towards having the right data intelligence and digital capabilities. Overall, I feel that these are interesting times for a marketeer to be alive," he adds.



Vildana Karalic-Avdić Head of Marketing MENA at Infobip

Vildana calls herself "a marketer in permanent beta." In her opinion, that's the only way to exist in the marketing ecosystem – being ready to continuously learn and change as the technology and the world around us changes.

"As a head of marketing for MENA in Infobip, that operates remotely, the previous period has undoubtedly required a bit of innovation and resourcefulness. Our team boasts a variety of mindsets and diverse backgrounds and getting our ideas to come together seamlessly and effectively is one of our proudest accomplishments," she says.

"I have always been a great advocate of data-driven marketing strategies and approach. I think data will continue to take the lead in all marketing strategies. We are in a huge part identifying ways to create more effective communication that really resonates with customers, and this is the result of careful segmentation and profiling of our various audiences. This is imperative for becoming customer centric and providing the real value to the customer," she adds.

WESTCON-COMSTOR COMBINES MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA REGION UNDER LEADERSHIP OF RAKESH PARBHOO



estcon-Comstor, a leading global distributor, has announced that the company will be combining

its Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa (MEA) operations as part of a group-wide strategy to improve efficiency, drive profitability, and streamline engagement with partners and vendors. Effective 1 March 2022, the new structure will be headed by Rakesh Parbhoo, who has been appointed Senior Vice-President whilst maintaining his role as Group CTO.

"The combined operations will represent nearly 14% of Group revenue and boasts close to 500 staff members, making Westcon-Comstor one of the most formidable distributors in this market", said David Grant, CEO at Westcon-Comstor. "The expanded operation headed by Rakesh provides the perfect platform for us to scale our services while giving partners and vendors with multiple geographies a seamless experience, no matter where their customers are".

The company has made further strategic appointments to support the new combined entity. Steve Lockie, the Group Managing Director for the Middle East, is joined by his recently appointed counterparts Louise Taute, Managing Director for Southern Africa and Vincent Entonu, Managing Director for Rest of Africa, all reporting directly to Parbhoo. The new structure will allow Lockie to focus on the opportunities presented by the company's recent expansion into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Elmien du Toit, current Chief Operating Officer (COO) for Sub-Saharan Africa, has been with the group since 2006 takes on the role of COO for MEA. Forming part of Parbhoo's executive leadership team, du Toit will be responsible for all supply chain and sales operations, including oversight of back-office business functions aligning these to companywide global best practices while ensuring their local relevance.

Another strategic appointment is that of Catherine Mwololo who will take the role of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for MEA. As a member of the regional executive team, Mwololo, the current CFO for Sub-Saharan Africa, will consolidate her responsibilities for finance across the entire MEA region.

"I am excited about what we are building in the MEA region. By combining operations, we are creating an entity that has cross border reach while providing our teams room to grow. My new executive team know this industry, understand the region, have extensive knowledge of distribution, and most importantly they are entrenched in the Westcon-Comstor DNA. Looking ahead, we want to take our unique brand of digital distribution to ever corner of MEA, expand our business, and show our partners and vendors that we will always ensure a local focus while delivering global best practices," said Parbhoo. 👳

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TREND // CANYON

CONQUERING NEW FRONTIERS

Ilona Alieksieieva, Business Development Manager at ASBIS Middle East on Canyon and its leading role as a consumer electronics brand.



ow would you describe Canyon as a brand? Canyon is a fastgrowing brand of highquality and stylish, yet affordable mobile accessories, computer gadgets, wearables, and gaming tools. Founded in 2003, it has grown to a full-scale consumer electronics brand with launching a massive change in Gaming Accessories category. Canyon is sold in more than 26 countries across the globe and now we are coming to Middle East

After a thorough analysis of today's trends and in-depth research of the audience, Canyon design and marketing team has decided to open a completely new page in the brand's 19-year history.

How does Canyon keep up with the needs of customers in the accessories and smart gadgets market?

We constantly study trends, needs and behavior of our target audience.

Nowadays, the young generation is fully into gadgets, and we are aiming to provide mobile, computer accessories and wearables using which the youth can express their personality and style. Together with this, we offer experience of using high-quality products by affordable price.

Canyon people strive for everything that's new and unique, they always want to be amazed. At the same time, they are overwhelmed with trends of mindfulness, smart consumption, eco-activism, diversity, and body positivity.

What is Canyon's plans for the GCC market?

Canyon is new to Middle East market and we believe we will be

able to meet customers' needs and expectations. We started from UAE, some products you can already find in Virgin Megastore in Dubai Mall and online shop and soon you will see Canyon at all big retailers and e-commerce. From March we are also launching in Oman and will conquer other markets in GCC starting from Q2.

How has Canyon taken care of gamers during the pandemic?

The pandemic period showed us how important is to set up a home office to be productive and comfortable to work from home. Canyon has all items in portfolio needed to do it: from super comfy gaming chairs to web cameras and headsets.

Gamers are one of the biggest target audiences for Canyon and you can find all features in our products which gamers value the most.

Try Canyon gaming keyboards with full customisation software, red or black switches, macros assignment, dual core IC chip, NKRO anti-ghosting and anti-jamming function following with 22 types of backlighting can leave nobody indifferent.

What is Canyon's role in supporting an eco-friendly lifestyle?

As a brand, Canyon strives to support environment and we switched our packaging to fully eco-friendly materials. Its motto says YOU CAN! It shows that brand identity combines youthful carelessness with a smart way of thinking. You can now be yourself without aiming to impress others, you can join the tribe of mindful consumers, you can throw away imposed body standards - your body is your business, you can care about the environment and live an ecofriendly life.

CANYON IS NEW TO THE MIDDLE EAST MARKET AND WE BELIEVE WE WILL BE ABLE TO MEET CUSTOMERS' NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS.

NEWCOM AWARDED BEST DISTRIBUTOR 2021 -2022 BY Logitech for Ameca Region

WITH 18 YEARS OF SOLID PRESENCE, NEWCOM COMPUTER SYSTEMS IS ONE OF THE LEADING IT AND VALUE-ADDED DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES OFFERING BOTH BUSINESS AND CONSUMER SOLUTIONS."



ewcom computer systems has been awarded Best Distributor for the 3rd time in a row. At the "Rise Logitech partner summit" organised on February 22, 2022, Newcom was awarded for being the best distributor for 2021 – 2022. Newcom is Logitech's authorised partner for the AMECA region and it has outnumbered its performance for FY 2021.

Logitech, a world leader in professional video collaboration (VC) solutions had invited 100 + tier 1 partners, distributors and solution integrators to outline its business strategy. The full-day event was filled with learning, fun and team bonding activities, beginning at the Grand Millennium and rounding off at Top Golf Dubai.

With 18 years of solid presence, Newcom Computer Systems is one of the leading IT and Value-Added Distribution companies offering both business and consumer solutions. "We are adhering to our vision and mission to become a trusted including Nancy Thomas, Brooke Ellingworth, Loubna IMENCHAL, Mohammad Ali, Azeem Mohammed and Mohammed Iqbal. All the credits for the awards go to our partners along with the Newcom squad who made this possible," he added. "With our presence since mid-2021 in the Africa region, we have opened our doors for new brands under new categories to associate with our growing team," Bhatia pointed out. partners spread across the Middle East and Africa region, along with the support of valued partners that include sub-distributors, wholesalers, power retailers, online retailers, system integrators and value-added resellers and distributors (VAR/VAD).

Along with Logitech, Newcom provides an enterprise IT solution with renowned brands such as Samsung, Hikvision, Targus, Rapoo,



distributor for every potential partner in the entire Middle East and Africa region and also to meet our customers' expectations with innovative products and impeccable services," said Jai Bhatia – Director Sales and Marketing.

"As Newcom, we would like to thank the entire Logitech team,

The company came about as a belief in the need for a robust distribution system and has prevailed in creating and maintaining the trust of the largescale customers in the Middle East and Africa region.

Newcom has a strong distribution network with 2000+ trusted

ViewSonic, Norton, J5create, Tucano, HP and ESET, which establishes it as one of the leading distributors in UAE. Its range of products spans monitors, gaming accessories, video conferencing devices, docking stations, cables and adaptors, cybersecurity products and much more.

OREGON SYSTEMS, CYBERRES - A MICRO Focus line of Business Join Hands For Distribution Partnership

The strategic agreement will bring enhanced OT capabilities and diversity to the security offerings in the region.

regon Systems, the leading OT security distributor in the Middle East region and CyberRes-a Micro Focus line of business, have signed a strategic distribution partnership for the Gulf region. This collaboration combines the excellence and expertise of both companies and creates unparalleled opportunities for a stronger and more diversified portfolio of products and services in the region.

Commenting on the partnership, Manu Nair, General Manager, Oregon Systems, said:

"Being one of the frontrunners in ICS-cybersecurity in the region, Oregon Systems is committed to providing the right solutions to our channel partners and customers. We have been known to bring in new and specialised technologies to this region, especially in the OT/ICS Security domain. This collaboration will bring in greater value and add more depth to our product portfolio. The demand for OT SIEM is at peak and with Micro-Focus's current and future offerings, especially with the kind of references they have with regard to critical infrastructure clients, we're confident that we will be able to position the solution with multiple customers in the regions and fulfil the requirement."

With the collaboration agreement, Oregon Systems, with its extensive channel network and technical teams across the MEA region, will work closely with vendor expert teams to explore new opportunities and generate more brand awareness for Micro Focus.

Ibrahim Azab, Regional Sales Director, MEA, CyberRes – A Micro Focus line of business, said this partnership signifies a turning point in OT & cybersecurity.

"OT & cybersecurity are matters of national security, which mean greater responsibilities and commitment to our customers. Therefore, getting someone deeply specialised in the OT domain, like Oregon, adds excellent value for our customers and we expect this to add momentum to our growth and diversification," he said.

Naman Taldar, Regional Channel Manager at Oregon Systems, said the company's USP is its specialised niche and highly experienced team.

"Ours is a purely channel-driven organisation and does not do business directly with the customers. Oregon Systems is purely an OT security distributor and our focus is mainly on ICS-cybersecurity. Our domain is very



well-defined and we are the masters of it. Eight out of ten critical infrastructure clients in the region are already our customers because of the vendors in our portfolio. All these vendors complement each other. At Oregon Systems, we have developed a Zero-Trust architecture which has already been approved by most of the OEM vendors. Also, it has already been implemented in most of the critical infrastructure clients in the Middle East."

"Our technical team is highly skilled at what they do. Our engineers are the backbone of our business and they are IEC 62443-certified. They are well aware of the day-to-day challenges which a customer faces in the organisation in order to comply with industry standards. Hence, Oregon Systems is a frontrunner in the ICS/OT systems space," he added. THIS PARTNERSHIP SIGNIFIES A TURNING POINT IN OT & CYBERSECURITY. Arun George, SecOps Sales Lead, Emerging Markets, CyberRes – A Micro Focus line of business, stated that customers in the OT space can greatly benefit with a partnership with them.

"At CyberRes – A Micro Focus line of business, we strengthen our customers' cyber resilience by delivering insights, protection, and compliance combined with security analytics. Specific to the Operational Technology space, which supports the critical infrastructure of the nation, we already have existing customers and we help them prepare for, respond to and recover from cyber threats - thus ensuring both cyber and business resiliency. OT/ICS has five levels of critical infrastructure and our technologies monitor each of these levels to provide real-time information to customers as well as integrate natively with other OT/ ICS security solutions," he added.

ROLLING FORECASTS: AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERMEASURE TO VOLATILITY FOR MIDDLE EAST BUSINESSES

Andreas Simon, Director Sales MEA at Jedox

rab Gulf nations weathered the turbulent economics of the Covid era with vision and grace. Swift action on stimuluses, decisive actions taken on pandemic management, and a range of other guidance and encouragement supported economic continuity.

PwC predicts robust economic growth in 2022 for the GCC, with non-oil activity, including FSI and construction, being huge elements of the postpandemic recovery. Fitch Solutions also predicts growth in the region.

Increased competition is poised to separate enterprises by those who are prepared and those who aren't. Even traditionally stable markets have become volatile, and accurate planning will be ever more important as a result. Risk management tends to spark debate among business stakeholders. Forecasts, some argue, have long been the standard for success. They form the backbone of budgets and strategy, putting hard data into spreadsheets for thorough digestion by decision makers. Apart from automating the data input itself, these traditionalists ask, "What else is there to do?"

A change in culture

Instead of being guided by year-end numbers and forecasts that lead to the setting of targets for the following year, what about being able to take the pulse of the market more frequently and adjust your business accordingly? Rolling forecasts offer an invaluable tool to the region's enterprises. Volatility is managed by reporting throughout the fiscal year, either as supplementary information to yearly reports or as a replacement for them. The timing of rolling forecasts are easy adaptable to the unique needs of the organisation and allow easily establishing custom reporting intervals that make sense to specific markets and operating models.

Rolling forecasts still predict performance metrics and deliver the same information as that found in year-end projections, plans, budget proposals and other standard company reports. But they do so more frequently, meaning enterprises become more predictive by nature. In this new culture, business functions other than finance are able to benefit from forecasts. Sales, HR, warehousing, and IT can all make more strategic decisions with confidence. Amid the uncertainty of the pandemic itself, and the volatile side-effects felt in all industries both regionally and globally, rolling forecasts have significantly increased in usage.

Technology, of course

The successful adoption of rolling forecasts is underpinned by technology. And as with many digital replacements for legacy methods, they frequently run alongside traditional forecasts, meaning more work for the finance team. This situation can quickly become untenable. A specialised solution that automates processes, and unifies them where possible, is a vital component of embracing rolling forecasts. Centralisation and unification of data is

another important aspect of introducing rolling forecasts, to ensure uniform standards are applied to collection, storage, and usage. Another element



is the stakeholders themselves. Open communication channels that allow department heads to have input into the design of reports, and how and when they should be delivered, is instrumental in ensuring success and part of successfully advancing the digital transformation journey and enabling rolling forecasts.

Enter AI

For rolling forecasts to be an effective countermeasure to volatility, it all starts with replacing the manual with the automated. Spreadsheets may still play a part in some aspects of the process, but they are no longer a source of manual labour for the finance department. Embracing higher frequency forecasts that offer higher accuracy and reliability are attained by technology more advanced than spreadsheets. Increased speed, accuracy, and reliability are all things that Artificial Intelligence delivers with ease. And modern solutions have evolved so much in recent years that advanced skills are no longer required to harness the power of AI.

Prosperity ahead

Markets are unpredictable, but wherein there is challenge, also lies opportunity. The region's businesses will face many obstacles as they vie for top positions in their post-COVID industries, but with the right technology and embracing a forward-thinking culture, rolling forecasts can enable accurate, actionable information in real time. Weathering turbulent times gets much easier with sustainable improvements to long-term business performance.

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INSIGHT // AVAYA

AVAYA STUDY FINDS HALF OF Mena Businesses deliver a 'Good' Total experience

STANDARD CUSTOMER SUPPORT TOOLS AND PLATFORMS



vaya, a global leader in solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration, has announced results of an online market research survey conducted by IDG Communications, indicating that just over half of businesses in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) believe they offer a "good" Total Experience.

Total Experience is the interconnection between Customer, Employee, User, and Multiexperience. While companies often develop the right strategies, the best customer outcomes occur where tools and strategy intersect and focus on this interconnection to deliver a superior Total Experience. Total Experience has been described by Gartner as one of the top strategic technology trends for 2022.

The global research polled business and technology leaders from a range of industries across the globe, including 80 from the MENA region, to explore the journey of enterprises as they evolve customer and employee experience from individual channels or applications towards a more interconnected experience. Respondents worked at firms with a minimum of 500 employees, and were manager-level and above.

It found that, despite rating themselves 'good' when offering a Total Experience, many MENA firms are struggling to deliver on the individual facets that enable them to become truly customer-centric. Exactly half believe that they deliver a good Employee Experience, and just 33% say they offer a good Multiexperience. Just over half of MENA companies (54%) agree that they deliver a good User Experience, but only 43% say they offer a good Customer Experience.



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INSIGHT // AVAYA

DESPITE RATING THEMSELVES 'GOOD' WHEN OFFERING A TOTAL EXPERIENCE, MENA FIRMS ARE STRUGGLING TO DELIVER ON THE INDIVIDUAL FACETS THAT ENABLE THEM TO BECOME TRULY CUSTOMER-CENTRIC.

"Regional businesses rightly place a high premium on customer experience, so it comes as no surprise that the majority are expanding their strategies to uplift the experiences that they deliver to their customers. To be truly customer-centric, organisations need a cohesive CX strategy that gives employees the tools to wow every customer on any device. The good news is that MENA firms realize this, and are already working towards it – 74% say they have a cohesive customer interaction strategy," said Nidal Abobu-Ltaif, President, Avaya International.

The vast majority of MENA firms (93%) say that customer experience is an intrinsic part of their brand value. However, those who scored higher in Total Experience empower employees with newer tools and platforms only used by some MENA firms - messenger platforms (44%), video chat (33%), chatbots (43%), and AI-based virtual assistants (31%). The organisations that support these newer tools have found that they simplify support, transform customer experiences, and benefit from more complete analytic tools.

Avaya OneCloud[™] CCaaS makes it easy to connect everything—voice, video, chat, messaging, and more to deliver effortless experiences for

TOTAL EXPERIENCE RANKINGS

Poor (1-6) 🛑 Average (7-8) 💮 Good (9-10) **Total experience** 6% 35% 59% User experience 9% 45% 46% Customer satisfaction 90 38% 53% **Employee experience** 12% 42% 46% Multi-experience 10% 44% 46% SOURCE: IDG

customers and employees at every touchpoint, enabling businesses to provide a Total Experience.

"A monolithic, one-size-fits-all approach doesn't meet the wide range of needs that businesses have as they look to compete in the experience economy," said Abou-Ltaif. "When companies combine customer, employee, user and multiexperience thinking, they elevate everything these approaches can achieve on their own. This enables them to deliver exactly what's needed at every interaction. Avaya OneCloud is a Total Experience platform that lets you compose the experiences that each moment demands—for both customers and employees."



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SPOTLIGHT // TENABLE

INVESTING INPEOPLE

Bridgett Paradise, Chief People Officer, Tenable, tells Reseller ME all about its award-winning workplace.



enable has been recognised for its award-winning workplace. Tell us more about it-what are some of the exciting features that make it the workplace of choice?

Tenable lives by the mantra 'what we do matters' and we recognise that it is our people that allow us to deliver on this promise. For that reason, in July 2021, Tenable announced that we would adopt a hybrid working environment. It's our company posture and is based on a relationship of trust. Where local mandates allow, our offices are open for those employees who choose to come in, but we don't force, cajole or "strongly encourage" our colleagues to return to the office. We trust our people to perform wherever they choose to work and we're all accountable. The last eighteen months have proven that we don't have to be in the office to attend meetings, submit reports, or contact our customers. Our people care and they work diligently to get the job done.

We also make sure we invest in our people so each employee has access to professional development activity funding and tuition bursary that can be used to further their careers, including development days that can be taken to support these. We have a mentor scheme, giving every employee the opportunity to connect as mentors and mentees, leveraging their combined knowledge and experiences to further develop skills, broaden perspective, and make progress toward career and professional development goals. We also have a number of other training resources available -- both for live courses and on-demand content.

Another initiative is Tenable Cares — which promotes 'doing good' for our communities and other causes we care about. Every employee is given one day's paid leave per year to participate in volunteer activities or to support a charitable organisation of their choice. Tenable also matches employee donations to eligible causes pound for pound.

With hybrid & remote work gaining traction, how can workplaces prioritise teams as people, not just employees?

We actively look for ways to create bonding and unifying experiences in purposeful ways through ongoing team building events and activities. For example, at the height of the pandemic, we recognised that some employees were isolated so there were regular virtual coffee chats. For several months we held weekly companywide All Hands meetings to make sure our employees felt connected to the company, and for our senior leadership team to share information so we were all on the same page. We've held company-wide virtual fun events and many teams have hosted their own team-building events for their workgroups, including a virtual murder mystery event and a virtual escape room.

Last year, we recognised the extraordinary dedication that our team

THE IDEAL WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE IS ONE WHERE EMPLOYEES FEEL SEEN, VALUED, WELCOME AND HAVE A SENSE OF BELONGING. THEY HAVE THE FREEDOM TO DO THEIR BEST WORK." had shown to the company's mission, to our customers, our partners and to each other during the pandemic. We wanted to do something meaningful, and so we altered our office hours to a four-day week in August so employees could spend the time doing something they loved - be it a hobby, spend time with family, or just be away from their screens. It was so successful that we've now permanently adopted this initiative, plus added birthdays off.

What are some of the challenges in adapting to a people-first workplace culture? How can companies overcome them?

There could be some that think, allowing employees to determine their own working environment or even hours, will mean a drop in productivity. For Tenable, our experience has been the reverse. By allowing employees to have the flexibility to work wherever, whenever, as long as they meet their commitments, we've actually seen an increase in productivity.

One of the hurdles is a change in mindset for managers. Particularly those who previously had their team physically around them. To help, Tenable ran sessions for our leaders so they could hone their skills in managing hybrid teams.

How would you describe the ideal 'workplace of the future?'

I think the ideal 'workplace of the future' is one where employees feel seen, valued, welcome and have a sense of belonging. They have the freedom to do their best work, unhindered by the confines of a physical office or desk.

It's one where inclusion is at its core. At Tenable we recognise that diversity empowers us to achieve greater creativity and innovation, allowing us to think outside the box, and driving innovation that allows us to grow closer to our customers, partners, and communities.

LINKSYS ATLAS PRO 6 -PROVIDING A FAST, SEAMLESS DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

that the most important gadget to keep your hybrid workspaces and entertainment devices running seamlessly, is the Wi-Fi. A cutting-edge, intuitive Wi-Fi is an absolute must if you wish to do away with frequent disruptions to your digital experience.

Most devices today, be it your phone, laptop, streaming boxes or TV, support Wi-Fi 6. Basically, Wi-Fi 6 is the latest generation of Wi-Fi technology, which helps you connect to the Internet easier and faster. To support this, it is always better to use a good mesh router than a regular router since it connects multiple devices working together and provides a strong and stable connection even in large spaces. It works by connecting to your current router from your Internet Service Provider (ISP) and then connecting wirelessly to the devices in use.

LINGY

The Linksys Atlas Pro 6 is superfast and super easy to install. In fact, it only takes a few minutes to set up in a four or five-bedroom home and what's more, its mesh network is capable go handling over 90 separate devices, so clearly, you connect as much as you want, without any hassles.

That's not all: It uses a channel width of 160MHz on the 5GHz network so you get peak data rates much faster without any significant reduction in overall bandwidth. Sounds good, doesn't it?

The Linksys Atlas Pro 6 has three nodes which are more than sufficient for a large house. However, it does give you the option to attach extra nodes if you need to and thus extend the network even further. The nodes are white and equipped with an LED light to let you know what state it is in. They also feature four Gigabit Ethernet ports, and one of them is a WAN port, so you can plug in your broadband router or modem cable into it. Think about it this way: the device is completely capable of surrounding your house like an umbrella the moment you install it, thus providing a stable, reliable connection that lets you work in peace.

Let's look at the setup for a minute: All you need to do is identify the nodes



FEATURING THREE SUPER SMART NODES, THE LINKSYS ATLAS PRO 6 HAS BEEN PROVEN TO PROVIDE STRONG SIGNALS EVEN AT LONG RANGE AND EXTREMELY FAST, RELIABLE SPEEDS ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.

and give your network a name and a password. The connected app that you install on your phone will be able to tell you whether the nodes are too far away or close to each other. That's pretty much it, and you're good to go. Once it is set up, you can even turn off the wireless function on your home router, since you'll only be using its modem to access the Net. This will also give the nodes more wireless spectrum to toy around with.

With the Wi-Fi 6, you can now send and receive several data streams at the same time, with enhanced wireless capacity. Although you'll need Wi-Fi 6-enabled devices to use this technology, chances are that most modern devices will already be equipped with this feature.

What's most exciting about the Linksys Atlas Pro 6 is that once it's up and running, you can forget all about it. What's more, its top speed of 5.4Gbps technically means that you can watch your favourite 4K movies without any buffering, even if the other members in your family are streaming their favourite shows in another room.

In short, the Linksys Linksys Atlas Pro 6 is a wonder machine that offers great value for money, is easy to use, provides a fast, stable and reliable connection even in large spaces and comes with sophisticated optimisation protocols. So, if you're looking for a cutting-edge, hassle-free router that provides great speeds and undisrupted Internet access time that looks great in any home, look no further! SPOTLIGHT // NETAPP

NETAPP AND CISCO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCING NEW FLEXPOD XCS TO EXTEND CONVERGED INFRASTRUCTURE INTO THE HYBRID CLOUD

THIS NEW OFFERING LAYS THE GROUNDWORK FOR CONTINUED JOINT INNOVATION THAT WILL BRING NEW SOLUTIONS TO MARKET FOR HYBRID CLOUD, CONTAINERS AND MODERN WORKLOADS. etApp, a global, cloudled, data-centric software company, together with Cisco (NASDAQ: CSCO), has announced the evolution of FlexPod with the introduction of FlexPod® XCS, providing one automated platform for modern applications, data and hybrid cloud services.

FlexPod is composed of prevalidated storage, networking, server technologies from Cisco and NetApp. The new FlexPod XCS platform is designed to accelerate the delivery of modern applications and data in a hybrid cloud environment. FlexPod XCS is the first and only hybrid cloud solution natively integrated across all three major public cloud providers. Additionally, organisations will have the option to use FlexPod-as-a-Service, a pay-as-you-grow pricing model for financial and operational flexibility.

"For years, FlexPod has been helping Presidio customers increase app performance, save software Capex, and decrease unplanned downtime incidents," said Raphael Meyerowitz, vice president, Engineering at Presidio. "With FlexPod XCS, NetApp and Cisco are providing more flexibility, accessibility and scalability to our customers to deliver a seamless hybrid cloud experience."

FlexPod XCS simplifies hybrid cloud operations by increasing accessibility and scalability, extending the infrastructure from an on-premises and edge standard to the hybrid cloud. This new offering lays the groundwork for continued joint innovation that will bring new solutions to market for hybrid cloud, containers and modern workloads.

FlexPod XCS provides a new set of capabilities to the FlexPod platform:

Hybrid Cloud Connectivity: By extending organisations' data fabric, customers gain the operational certainty of putting the right apps and data in the right place at the right time.

Automation: Comprehensive infrastructure automation across all lifecycle phases using Cisco Intersight[™] Cloud Orchestrator and NetApp automated scripts and workflows to simplify day-to-day IT operations including configuration, deployment, expansion, and infrastructure consumption and optimisation.

Visibility: Providing an enhanced and unified view of all FlexPod components through Cisco Intersight, enabling organisations to respond to their business needs more quickly with more intelligent resource decisions

FlexPod-as-a-Service: Lowering initial costs for flexibility and tailoring purchasing options based on budgets and usage

New Reference Architecture with NetApp Cloud Volumes ONTAP® (CVO) instances in AWS: FlexPod XCS and ONTAP integration with automation via Cisco Intersight

FlexPod® XCS is in preview for partners and customers and is expected to be generally available globally in mid-2022.



FlexPod Datacenter

NetApp

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CISCO

UNDERSTANDING KUBERNETES

Michael Cade, Senior Technologist Product Strategy at Veeam Software

ne of the ever more popular topics in information technology (IT) are container systems, such as Kubernetes. Increasingly, decision-makers at companies of all sizes cannot avoid asking themselves whether containers should be integrated into their own IT infrastructure. At the same time, VMware's Kubernetes Report 2021 says that Kubernetes is already being used more widely, but at the same time there is a lack of expertise and the necessary security. Reason enough to take a closer look at important questions around Kubernetes - especially from a data protection perspective.

Integral part of hybrid and multicloud infrastructures?

In the networks of many corporations and long-established companies, containers do not vet exist, or have only existed for a short time. They were not part of the traditional network structures based on a data center. However, neither are they an integral part of modern multi-cloud environments or hybrid solutions - they just fit in very well. It is similar to virtualisation: this also started as a trend that not every company had to take up and therefore not all did - only early adopters integrate technology from the beginning. But 20 years later, it seems, a large proportion of all companies have virtualised a high number of workloads.

Kubernetes is now acting as a management platform for containers and interestingly, established and regulated industries like banking and financial services show greater interest and are early adopters of this technology, while other industries are still observing and evaluating the pros and cons.

Compatible with the runtime environments?

Of course, the question immediately arises as to whether Kubernetes and the virtualisation software are compatible. First, let's set the record straight about exactly what we are talking about: Kubernetes is an orchestration system for containers; Docker for example, is for now the most common container runtime. The containers created in Docker can each exist and be worked on separately. Developers can manage them individually and do not necessarily need a higher-level solution to manage them. But with the number of containers, the complexity grows,

KUBERNETES IS NOW ACTING AS A MANAGEMENT PLATFORM FOR CONTAINERS AND INTERESTINGLY, ESTABLISHED AND REGULATED INDUSTRIES LIKE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES SHOW GREATER INTEREST AND ARE EARLY ADOPTERS OF THIS TECHNOLOGY.



and the overview is lost. To keep this effort small and as clear as possible, a central administration point must be set up - and this is where Kubernetes comes into play. The software keeps an eye on everything and ensures, for example, that payloads are distributed dynamically and sensibly to the containers to guarantee the availability of a service and ensure that it can meet all requirements.

Kubernetes on the rise?

The analysts at ESG published a report in September 2020 called Data Protection Trends and Strategies for Containers, which summarises the results of a survey of 334 enterprise IT professionals from the United States and Canada. When asked about their use of containers, 67 percent said they use them for production-related applications. This statement underscores the increasing adoption and integration of containers into systems and networks, and this trend will continue over the next two years.

With the rise of containers, Kubernetes will then also increasingly enter the scene to manage the new environment well. Kubernetes will probably start this triumphant march with startups and large corporations first, because the former can build their networks and accordingly incorporate the new technology immediately, while the latter have the necessary money and personnel to successfully incorporate the new technology. So, for most entrepreneurs, the question is no longer if they should use containers and orchestration tools, but which one, because the advantages of this new technology are now easily seen.







Video Conferencing Systems

New level of online collaboration



EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MUST RETHINK NETWORK SECURITY AND MODERNISATION

Mansoor AlShalahi, Country Manager for Saudi Arabia at Infoblox



he pandemic has forced many industries, including educational organisations to transform the way that they operate. Educational institutions need to ensure that online or emergency remote teaching and learning doesn't fall short of expectations or negatively impact the desired academic outcomes, and must therefore keep their businesses running even during a pandemic. With malware and other disruptors becoming an increasing threat to the network infrastructure of educational institutions, it is important to look

at the essential steps that these organisations need to take to make the internet a safer and better place for students and faculty.

COVID-19 resulted in shift from physical learning to digital learning, and this is the ideal environment for cybercriminals to wreak havoc. Educational institutions need to act now to implement strategies and technologies that will enable them to both protect their students and staff and maintain an uninterrupted and safe learning environment.

Implementing a strong layer of foundational security is the first step. As a start, DDI (DNS, DHCP and IPAM solutions sheds light on previously undetected network activities wherever a device might sit. This allows educational organisations to take back control by plugging visibility gaps that other tools miss and extends security from the core of the network to the edges. To add to this, over 90 percent of malware touches DNS - the first D in DDI - when entering or leaving the network. This makes DNS a critical detection tool that can pinpoint threats at the earliest stages and identify compromised machines. Ultimately, DDI enables IT teams in public sector organisations to quickly detect and fix vulnerabilities, no matter where they originate.

While cybersecurity has traditionally been seen as a "nice to have" by many of these organisations, it has swiftly and undeniably become a necessity. With the advent of hybrid infrastructure, our new borderless environment requires a strong approach to security. Security strategies need to be baked into any network architecture and embedded into any project. Cybersecurity in higher education is more challenging than in a typical corporation because universities have a long heritage of an open, collaborative culture. In addition, as many educational institutes are sustaining their IT infrastructure with limited staff and resources, getting an end-to-end security team can be an enormous task. This is where starting with network modernisation for better visibility can help.

As the battle against COVID wages on, educational organisations still have to cover a lot of ground to overcome the challenges of remote learning. But, the sad truth is that cybercriminals don't pause their activity because of a global pandemic. Instead, as the last year has evidenced, they take advantage of the chaos to target new victims and make a profit. No organisation is immune. With schools' IT networks now stretching far beyond the campus grounds, cybersecurity needs to scale.

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Multi-site cloud managed Wireless Access Points purpose built for business networks.

IN-WALL 1300AC WIFI 5 MU-MIMO Cloud Managed Wireless Access Point LAPAC1300CW Outdoor 1300AC WiFi 5 MU-MIMO Cloud Managed Wireless Access Point LAPAC1300CE

- Dual-Band 802.11AC Wave 2 MU-MIMO (2.4GHz + 5GHz)
- 3 Gigabit Ethernet Ports
- 802.3af PoE and 802.3at PoE+ Compliant
- 802.3af PoE Passthrough (requires 802.3at PoE+ Input)
- Two-Factor Authentication for Cloud Account Login
- Reduce time on-site with Zero Touch Provisioning
- Limited Lifetime Cloud Management

- Dual-Band 802.11AC Wave 2 MU-MIMO (2.4GHz + 5GHz)
- 2x2:2 for AC1300 Speeds (400Mbps + 867Mbps)
- Four (4) Removable Antennas (SMA)
- IP67 Rated for Outdoor Applications
- 802.3af/at PoE or PoE+ Support
- Limited Lifetime Cloud Management
- TAA Compliant



CHOOSE SPEED >>>> ADD VALUE

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Fast Track Promotion

Available Products:

Wi-Fi 6 | LAN Switches | Routers | DC Switches Relevant to all Enterprises

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