Reseller
MIDDLE EAST

CELEBRATING
Women Power
IN TECHNOLOGY

THE VERY FIRST EDITION OF THE WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY FORUM & AWARDS WAS HELD IN JUNE, CELEBRATING WOMEN POWER AND HONOURING THE REMARKABLE LADIES WHO INNOVATE, INSPIRE AND TRANSFORM THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR AS WE KNOW IT.

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Celebrating Excellence

Excellence has become the byword in the technology industry. And when women are at the forefront of change and progress, excellence is a given. And it is this excellence that we celebrated recently at the Women In Tech Forum & Awards at the Taj Exotica Resort & Spa in Dubai.

Women currently make up over 25% of the global technology workforce and according to official estimates, this number is growing fast. The varied experiences of women in this field, the diversity in their roles with their experience demonstrating a range of skills such as people management, team building, communications and technology consulting, was the focus of the first-of-its-kind event in the region.

While the awards aimed to enhance the visibility of women in the technology space, recognise their outstanding contributions and enable the next generation of women to aspire for it, the forum and panel highlighted the exceptional efforts made by women to break digital boundaries and create a more inclusive global workforce. This year, the focus is on growth, continuity and results driven by women– particularly how they've emerged stronger despite the socio-economic challenges over the past two years.

In this issue, we bring you the list of award winners, as well as a pictorial representation of the whole event. In addition to this, we also bring you the panel discussion held on the sidelines, where some of the women frontrunners in the technology space opened up about the glass ceiling they faced at work and how they survived the storm using their grit and mettle.

We've also lined up a series of special interviews with channel industry veterans and analysts who minutely examine the trends that are shaping the industry. We have Mohammed Riaz - General Manager at GBM Dubai, who tells us in an exclusive interview, how GBM is supporting customers in their AI journey. We also managed to catch up with Alex Thurber, Senior Vice President, Global Partners and Alliances & Ghassan Abou Rjeily, Regional Channel Sales Manager – META at Riverbed, who spoke to us about the power of observability.

In addition to all of this, we also have our usual roundup of news, views and perspectives from the channel industry. So make sure you read every page, HAPPY READING!

LINKSHADOW EXPANDS FOOTPRINT IN MIDDLE EAST

LinkShadow has announced the launch of a massive set up in the UAE as part of its Middle East growth plans. With more locations to follow, this initiative is aimed at accelerating LinkShadow's regional operations to meet with the growing cybersecurity needs of enterprises in the region.

This sprawling 12000 sq.ft office located in Jumeirah Lake Towers, Dubai will accommodate upto 100 plus employees, making LinkShadow one of the largest cybersecurity vendors based out of the UAE - in terms of space and resources. These core teams would be integral to LinkShadow's innovation and market growth as they focus on developing cutting-edge cybersecurity solutions through continuous R&D and support customers and partners on-ground. The Company also plans to tap into the local talent and expand staffing with R&D expertise to accommodate the rising demand from enterprises to achieve cyber resiliency with an invincible cybersecurity infrastructure.

"LinkShadow is growing exponentially and this is the right time to grow our footprint and build on our strategic plans to facilitate our Middle East roadmap," said Fadi Sharaf, Regional Sales Director, LinkShadow. "Our presence in the region will assist in establishing closer ties with our business partners and most importantly the robust expertise provided by our R&D teams positioned in Dubai will enable us cater to the customised cybersecurity requirements of our customers, ensure quick turnaround time and faster implementation."

TENABLE INTRODUCES NESSUS EXPERT WITH EXTERNAL ATTACK SURFACE MANAGEMENT & CLOUD SECURITY CAPABILITIES

Glen Pendley

Tenable, the Cyber Exposure company, has announced the addition of Nessus Expert to its portfolio of trusted vulnerability assessment solutions, giving security consultants, pen testers and security practitioners extended external capabilities and expanded visibility into cloud native environments.

Building on the Nessus brand's reputation as the industry's most recognised and widely deployed vulnerability assessment solution, Nessus Expert is the first to address both of these pain points head on. Nessus Expert applies a smarter and simplified approach to DevSecOps, enabling users to gain an understanding of an organisation's external attack surface that could be exposed to threat actors and to assess infrastructure as code (IaC) for vulnerabilities before runtime.

"Nessus is the gold standard for vulnerability assessment. We've enhanced capabilities to address cloud instances that are constantly updating and connecting to various sources. We're upping the ante with Nessus Expert," said Glen Pendley, Chief Technology Officer, Tenable. "Nessus Expert delivers modern vulnerability assessment capabilities that cover everything from internal and external assets to code and cloud configurations before anything is ever deployed. This is a game changer for both assessing DevSecOps and infrastructure security."

SOLARWINDS UNVEILS NEW SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

SolarWinds, a leading provider of simple, powerful, and secure IT management software, has unveiled its new next-generation build system, a transformational model for software development. The new software build process is a key component of the company's Secure by Design initiative to make SolarWinds a model for enterprise software security.

The software development and build process improvements were made in an accelerated timeline over the past year in response to the highly sophisticated SUNBURST cyberattack, which targeted SolarWinds and other technology companies. The Next-Generation Build System includes both new software development practices and technology to strengthen the integrity of the build environment. This consists of the first-of-its-kind "parallel build" process, where the development of SolarWinds® software takes place through multiple highly secure duplicate paths to establish a basis for integrity checks.

"Communicating transparently and collaborating within the industry is the only way to effectively protect our shared cyber infrastructure from evolving threats," said Sudhakar Ramakrishna, president and CEO, SolarWinds. "Our Secure by Design initiative is intended to set a new standard in software supply chain security via innovations in build systems and build processes. We believe our customers, peers, and the broader industry can also benefit from our practices."

Sudhakar Ramakrishna

SOPHOS ZTNA WINS FROST & SULLIVAN'S GLOBAL NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION AWARD

Sophos, a global leader in next-generation cybersecurity, has announced that Sophos ZTNA has been named Frost & Sullivan's Global New Product Innovation Award winner. The Zero Trust network access (ZTNA) offering is recognised for its superior protection, industry-first integrations, innovative capabilities, and ease of use.

"Today's cyber threat landscape is constantly evolving, and organizations need to prioritise modernised cybersecurity defenses to effectively protect against emerging threats," said Raja Patel, senior vice president of products at Sophos. "Sophos ZTNA introduces a transparent and scalable security model for connecting users and devices to only the applications and data that they need. Through years of innovation, we've engineered a practical, easy to deploy and manage solution that answers an incredibly complex challenge."

This integration "allows Sophos to reduce friction and simplify administrators' jobs: there is a single management console for all the products (Sophos Central), a single agent deployment, and a very simple licensing scheme," according to the report. Sophos ZTNA "matches customer needs for simplification in every aspect, ranging from design to purchase and service experience; therefore, clients appreciate the solution and the brand behind it."

Raja Patel

IFS ACQUIRES ULTIMO

IFS has announced it has signed a definitive agreement to purchase Ultimo Software Solutions, the Netherlands based provider of cloud Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) software. ULTIMO has been widely acknowledged for building a strong reputation for the completeness, flexibility, and configurability of its SaaS EAM solutions.

IFS boasts a deep and long-standing heritage in asset management and provides end-to-end industry specific EAM software to companies with complex needs and looking to manage their assets' efficiency from cradle to grave. ULTIMO complements the IFS Cloud EAM offering with a proven track record of delivering faster time to value within the industries they serve, and providing an EAM point-solution widely accredited for its rapid deployment and ease of use.

Darren Roos, IFS CEO, said: "This acquisition puts IFS in a uniquely strong position as we now offer the most complete set of EAM capabilities in the market. The flexibility and configurability of ULTIMO is a great complement to the end-to-end capabilities of IFS Cloud". Roos added:

Darren Roos

"Helping our customers deliver on their Moment of Service goals by turning assets and the services they require, into a business differentiator has been central to IFS's success in EAM, and this is something that we know resonates equally well with ULTIMO customers."

WSO2 COMPLETES $93 MILLION SERIES E-GROWTH FUNDING ROUND WITH INVESTMENT FROM INFO EDGE

WSO2, leaders in digital transformation technology, has announced that the company has completed its Series E funding round with the addition of RedStart Labs (India), a subsidiary of Info Edge Limited. The move brings the total growth capital raised to $93 million. Info Edge joins lead investor Goldman Sachs Asset Management Private Credit ("Goldman Sachs"), which completed the first tranche of the Series E in November 2021. Info Edge, through its RedStart subsidiary, will contribute strategically to WSO2's accelerated business expansion across India.

"Across India, we're seeing growing demand for our uniquely integrated approach to uniting best-in-class API management and integration with identity and access management as more organisations embrace digital business models," said Dr. Sanjiva Weerawarana, WSO2 founder and CEO. "RedStart, as part of Info Edge with its deep market understanding, extensive network, and success in investing in digital businesses like Zomato, will play a strategic role in helping us accelerate our growth and customer adoption in India."

Dr. Sanjiva Weerawarana

BEYONDTRUST REMOTE SUPPORT EXPANDS INTEGRATIONS WITH MICROSOFT TEAMS

BeyondTrust, the leader in intelligent identity and access security, has announced the release of BeyondTrust Remote Support 22.2. This release builds upon the existing Microsoft Teams integration, introducing 1:1 screen sharing from a Teams chat, multi-portal support, custom greetings, and instance customisation for Remote Support users. In addition, a new Remote Support External Jump Groups integration with BeyondTrust Password Safe provides users with a simple workflow that extends access capabilities via SSH and RDP.

This new release extends the capabilities of Remote Support further into the systems and processes that service desks uses every day. BeyondTrust Remote Support 22.2 improves support

technicians' and admins' ability to conveniently and securely access systems, while furthering the goal of least privilege, to strengthen an organisation's security posture.

Tal Guest

"With the sustained increase in remote and hybrid working, Microsoft Teams has become a critical connection and collaboration tool for many organisations," said Tal Guest, Senior Director of Product Management at BeyondTrust. "Recognising this new reality, BeyondTrust set out to bring Remote Support functionality to the Teams chat function where many interactions with customers occur on a constant basis. The enablement of key use cases in BeyondTrust Remote Support allows service desk representatives to save time and resources by generating sessions directly from the Teams interface with one click. This streamlines the process for customers, to ensure they receive help faster."

GIGAOM NAMES COMMVAULT 'FRONTRUNNER' & 'OUTPERFORMER' IN HYBRID CLOUD DATA PROTECTION

Commvault, a global enterprise leader in intelligent data services across on-premises, cloud, and SaaS environments, has announced that GigaOm has named the company a "Frontrunner" and an "Outperformer" in its most recent reports: GigaOm Radar for Hybrid Cloud Data Protection: Large Enterprises and GigaOm Radar for Hybrid Cloud Data Protection: Small and Medium-Sized Businesses.

Each GigaOm Radar Report weighs and rates vendors by execution, roadmap and ability to innovate. The Commvault Platform and Metallic SaaS portfolio scored the highest possible ratings in Key Criteria of cyber resiliency, data management and governance, Kubernetes support, BaaS and breadth of solution.

"Commvault's data protection solution can manage and protect a broad ecosystem of workloads across physical

servers, VMs, the cloud, containers, SaaS, and more. The solution goes beyond data protection and extends into security and data management," said Max Mortillaro, Analyst, Data, Analytics and AI, GigaOm. "Organisations can choose either an on-premise, self-managed consumption model, or a full BaaS approach with Metallic SaaS. The portfolio also includes storage capabilities with HyperScale X appliances or Commvault Distributed Storage."

BIOS ACHIEVES CERTIFICATION FROM CLOUD SECURITY ALLIANCE

BIOS Middle East (BIOS), the GCC's local cloud and managed services provider, has achieved the Cloud Security Alliance (CSA) Security Trust Assurance and Risk (STAR) Level 2 certification, a stringent third-party assessment of the security of a cloud service provider.

Dominic Docherty

BIOS owns, operates and manages its own cloud called CloudHPT, with datacentres in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah and Muscat. It offers fully managed IaaS and Gartner-recognised DRaaS for over 500 customers in the GCC and beyond.

Dominic Docherty, Managing Director, BIOS said, "Achieving CSA certification is a testament to BIOS's continuous investment and improvement in security practices, services and products. We are always ensuring the highest levels of security for our customers."

CONFLUENT RELEASES HASHICORP TERRAFORM PROVIDER TO SIMPLIFY & ACCELERATE MULTI-CLOUD DATA STREAMING

Confluent, Inc., the data streaming platform to set data in motion, has announced the Confluent Terraform Provider as part of its Q3 '22 Launch. Developed in partnership with HashiCorp, a leading provider of multi-cloud infrastructure automation software, the Terraform provider exposes Confluent Cloud APIs for simple, consistent, and automated management of mission-critical data streaming resources, including cloud environments, Apache Kafka® clusters, networks, topics, connectors, and more.

"The need to stay ahead of customer demands is fueling the shift to technology stacks powered by data streams and cloud technologies," said Ganesh Srinivasan, Chief Product Officer, Confluent. "With our HashiCorp Terraform integration, organisations get the power of data streaming across all major cloud providers with the simplicity of infrastructure as code and automation. This means developers have safe, reliable access to the infrastructure resources they need, so they can focus on building applications that truly move the needle for their businesses."

Ganesh Srinivasan

KELON SIGNS UAE-BASED AVATAR TRADING LLC FOR BRAND EXPANSION

Kelon, a consumer electronic brand, part of Hisense' global brand portfolio, has signed Avatar Trading, a UAE-based distribution company for its product distribution in the UAE. As a step towards this partnership, a partner's event was hosted in Dubai to showcase the product range as well as the business strategy.

Through this agreement, Kelon outlines to strengthen its footprints in the UAE. Both the companies, with a unified objective of expansion, work in force to meet the increasing regional demand of consumers. Avatar distribution will include Kelon product range – Refrigerator, Washing Machine and Air Conditioning in the UAE. Its impressive distribution network in channels, logistic facilities and expertise will be leveraged to enhance the business as well as provide better and efficient service to our channel partners and end consumers. Avatar will also push KELON on all the popular online platforms in the UAE.

Hisense Kelon Electrical Holdings or famously known as Kelon, is one of the largest Chinese white goods manufacturers producing refrigerators, air conditioners and freezers.

FINTONIA GROUP AWARDED PROVISIONAL VIRTUAL ASSETS LICENSE IN DUBAI

Fintonia Group (Fintonia), an entrepreneurial financial services company based in Singapore, announced that it has secured a provisional virtual asset license granted by the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority (VARA). The license allows Fintonia to participate in Dubai's fast-growing digital assets ecosystem by operating crypto native services under full regulatory supervision, enabling it to deliver top-tier financial solutions to a new geographical pool of clients and serve the regional market more effectively.

"Dubai is making significant strides towards establishing itself as a virtual assets hub and creating a conducive environment for the industry's growth and we are very pleased to be part of this rapid growth. The virtual asset license marks an important milestone in our aspiration to have a presence in every region where there are innovative Web 3.0 and crypto companies, enabling us to connect and collaborate with members of the crypto native ecosystem and the traditional financial services industry," said Adrian Chng, Founder of Fintonia Group.

CUPOLA PARTNERS WITH AVAYA TO ROLL OUT REGION'S FIRST AI-POWERED ENTERPRISE LEARNING PLATFORM

Cupola Teleservices, the Middle East's pioneer in outsourced contact center services, has rolled out the first AI-powered enterprise learning platform in the region, using technology from Avaya. The platform delivers advanced enterprise learning and training capabilities customised and personalised to the needs of Cupola's growing pool of customer service agents, enabling it to build a strong talent pipeline and keep pace with its customers' ever-evolving demands.

Cupola is headquartered in the UAE and offers technology-enabled outsourced business support solutions to some of the region's largest public and private sector organisations, including multinational banks, well-known technology brands and local public utilities.

"Thanks to the progressive strategies to grow and diversify the region's economies, coupled with nationalisation drives, the business outsourcing industry is seeing a considerable increase in demand for customer experience services as well as national customer service agents. For us as a major source of employment opportunities, our goal is to not only exceed nationalisation quotas, but also, train and upskill our team in the fastest way to ensure we are ahead of the demand curve," said Sajjad Hamid, Chief Commercial Officer at Cupola.

"For this, we partnered with Avaya to custom-build an intelligent enterprise learning platform that allows us to not only stay ahead of the demand curve, but also maintain and grow our excellence in delivering superior customer experience to our clients."

FICO & NETWORK INTERNATIONAL BUILD ON PARTNERSHIP TO HELP MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA LENDERS EXPAND DIGITAL ECONOMY

Global analytics software provider FICO and Network International, the leading enabler of digital commerce across the Middle East and Africa (MEA), announced that they have expanded their partnership to bring lenders the most powerful fraud protection and credit management solutions. These solutions, available in hosted mode from Network International, will help financial services providers expand the digital economy across the region.

The two companies have been working together since 2017, when Network International began offering its customers FICO Falcon Fraud Manager, the world's leading credit fraud solution, which protects more than 2.6 billion payment cards worldwide. Now lenders can use Falcon at Network International to protect all retail banking accounts.

Hany Fekry, Group Managing Director, Processing at Network International, said: "We are delighted to expand upon our partnership with FICO to further strengthen our credit management value proposition to our MEA clients. Over the last few years, we have witnessed the accelerated transition to digital payments in the region, making credit controls for real-time decisions more crucial than ever. As a leading enabler of digital commerce, we continue to anticipate, adapt, and advance upon evolving trends with the global gold standard for fraud decisioning and prevention. We are confident that FICO's innovative technology-led solutions combined with our local expertise will enhance our solutions portfolio and help cement our leadership position in the market.

AL-FUTTAIM ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGIES SIGNS MOU WITH REDINENT TO SUPPORT THE UAE'S SECURE IOT ECOSYSTEM

Al-Futtaim Engineering & Technologies (AFET) has announced that the company has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Redinent to support the UAE's secure IoT ecosystem. The MoU aims to facilitate future alliance for protecting the CCTV networks across the UAE. With the rapid deployments of CCTV cameras and IoT devices and increasing rate of cyber-attacks, there was an urgent requirement for an automated Enterprise Grade CCTV camera threat scanning tool.

Murali Serpakkam, Managing Director of Al-Futtaim Engineering & Technologies (AFET) said: "At AFET,

we are known for our strength in the high technology industries and signing the MoU with Redinent will offer even stronger support for our business. Redinent has delivered one of the world's first Enterprise Grade Threat Scanners for CCTV and with this agreement, we aim to be leaders in the cybersecurity space, help organisations stay on top of security threats and support organisations bring digital futures to life."

SAS ACQUIRES KAMAKURA TO PROPEL RISK TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AS FINANCIAL SECTOR BRACES FOR VOLATILITY

Global AI and analytics leader SAS has acquired Honolulu-based Kamakura Corporation. Privately held Kamakura provides specialised software, data and consulting that helps financial organisations across the spectrum – banks, insurance companies, asset managers, pension funds and more – manage a variety of financial risks.

SAS' investment decision comes as post-pandemic optimism is shadowed by war, unyielding supply chain disruption, and the end of many pandemic-era financial and social safety-net programs. Rising inflation and recession rumblings have emerged as dark clouds on the global economic horizon, signaling

potential turbulence ahead – a time for financial services organisations large and small to closely examine the liquidity risk and other risks in their portfolios.

"This acquisition is an extension of tremendous investments already made in SAS' cloud-ready risk management platform and integrated solutions," said SAS co-founder and CEO Jim Goodnight. "It signals our intent to advance market-changing risk solutions to solve the most pressing challenges our financial services customers face. We foresee that the resulting strength of SAS technology, paired with Kamakura's risk analytics and credit models, will prove far greater than the sum of its parts."

AVEVA UNIFIED SUPPLY CHAIN INFUSES REFINERY SCHEDULING WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY

AVEVA, a global leader in industrial software, driving digital transformation and sustainability, has elevated refinery scheduling with the addition of the AVEVA Unified Supply Chain, Schedule AI Assistant. Using the power of artificial intelligence (AI), Schedule AI Assistant analyses hundreds of scenarios within seconds to provide a choice of optimised schedules, doing away with the need to manually run repetitive tasks.

"Schedulers' strategic capabilities will be transformed by the latest

Harpreet Gulati

offering as they will be supported by an AI-powered system that recommends the most practical course of action, saving time and enhancing productivity by allowing schedulers to focus on value-added tasks and encouraging them to exceed objectives. This can be a huge enabler of enterprise agility, allowing operations to respond faster to market changes or disruptions in the supply chain," said Harpreet Gulati, Senior Vice President, Planning, Simulation and Optimization Business, AVEVA.

FAST TRACKING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Mohammed Riaz - General Manager, GBM Dubai, tells Anita Joseph in an exclusive interview, how GBM is supporting customers in their AI journey.

The company recently brought together key executives for an exclusive Artificial Intelligence event, to discuss and share key solutions, findings and best practices for incorporating AI and data analytics into organisations. The event delved into how organisations can get started on their AI journeys, how turning data into insights has never been more critical to business success, and how organisations can give their data the real purpose and value with a unified data and analytics strategy.

What was the purpose behind holding the GBM AI and Data analytics event?

Over the last few years of working with our customers, we've seen how they've had to digitally transform almost overnight with the digital disruption and shifts that happened. We've had the chance to help them embark on their AI journeys, and what we've seen is that a lot of organisations have large amounts of data coming in through various channels, but their challenge is trying to find the best way to make use of that data. So, we thought it

MOHAMMED RIAZ
General Manager
GBM Dubai

this market, and they are empowered to make the right decisions. Second, as they embark on their journeys, we advise them in making sure they get access to the right tools, skills, technologies and other customers so they can learn from each other. Third, incorporating AI is a long continuous journey, and for enterprises to be successful, it is important to have a partner along the way to help overcome challenges and drive new inspiration and this is also where we play a key role. GBM helps their clients across the entire data and AI life cycle, from advising and designing to building an information architecture where advanced AI uses can be built, implemented, and operated.

was important to have this event and share some of the best practices and experiences we have, and from some of the leading enterprises that have embarked on the AI journey, and talk about the solutions and trends that are visible in the market.

Based on your experience, do you think customers are on the right track of maximising the value of AI and their data?
According to IDC, 37% of organisations surveyed in the UAE are planning to significantly increase their spending on artificial intelligence over the next 12–18 months. Organisations are trying their best to embark on or engage with AI initiatives, but it is a very demanding undertaking. Many UAE organisations are now recognising that AI is a foundational technology that requires organisation-wide transformation to realise its full potential. It's not as simple as just implementing the technology and everything is up and running. AI is one technology that touches every key stakeholder, from top management to the people who are going to make use of it, and that is why it requires a combined effort across the enterprise, as well as the help of a partner, like GBM, to make these projects successful. Collaboration as well as building trust around AI and Data are crucial elements in making sure adoption and willingness to engage with AI continues successfully.

How is GBM supporting organisations on their AI journeys?
Being an end-to-end digital solutions provider, it is our obligation to make sure we provide 3 key things. Firstly, that we continuously educate our clients so that they understand what is happening in this industry and in

GBM HELPS THEIR CLIENTS ACROSS THE ENTIRE DATA AND AI LIFE CYCLE, FROM ADVISING AND DESIGNING TO BUILDING AN INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE WHERE ADVANCED AI USES CAN BE BUILT, IMPLEMENTED, AND OPERATED.

What are the opportunities available in the UAE market now?
In the UAE specifically, the government has been spearheading digital transformation, and developing future ready-infrastructure, with UAE businesses also speeding up their digital transformation to achieve their goals. We are increasingly seeing AI/ML, Big Data & Analytics being incorporated to prepare for the digital future. As the UAE seeks to diversify and digitise its economy, numerous ICT projects and smart city initiatives are already underway, and ICT spending in the country is forecast to reach US$23bn in 2024, according to research from GlobalData.

With the UAE working towards becoming a hub for innovation and technology, there are various opportunities for organisations to re-imagine how AI can improve their businesses. However, although most organisations are undergoing digital transformation, they are not all at the same level of maturity, and many are looking to AI to help derive meaning out of their data. While navigating this journey, businesses will need to overcome significant organisational and technology barriers, and identify and work with the right technology partners that not only possess suitable technology capabilities and skills but also have sufficient understanding of their industry and business. ⓡⓜⓔ

ZERO TRUST, CLOUD & REMOTE WORKING DRIVE DIGITAL RESILIENCY

Paul Nicholson, Sr. Director of Product Marketing at A10 Networks

Today's enterprises have faced many challenges with the pace of change over the last few years because of digital transformation, and the need for that transformation to be resilient and secure. These challenges have been amplified by the disruption of the global pandemic.

There have been massive global macro-economic shifts that have fundamentally changed the way companies operate, from the rise of remotely working employees to the adjustments of customer engagement strategies. Remote work was in full swing before the pandemic and it already had an impact on IT strategy and the shift to cloud, including hybrid cloud. This trend has only accelerated due to the ease of remote deployment and accessibility for software, SaaS, and cloud options. With all these changes, the specter of security breaches is high. This explains the rise and popularity of Zero Trust as a framework for securing networks in these new realties, and as an effective tool to drive cybersecurity initiatives within the entire enterprise.

Analysing the events of the last two years, it is an ideal time to explore enterprise perceptions about the future. To gain these insights, we surveyed 2,425 senior application and network professionals from across ten regions around the globe. Not surprisingly, we found high levels of concern around all aspects of digital transformation solutions

and resilience with a strong focus on business continuity. The top findings we uncovered included:

PRIVATE CLOUDS ARE THE PREFERRED ENTERPRISE IT ENVIRONMENT

Even though we witnessed a rapid pivot to cloud in the last couple of years, plenty of on-premises environments remain. Twenty-three percent of respondents have retained an on-premises environment and this is unlikely to change in the future. Private clouds were the preferred environment for 30 percent of respondents, while just under one quarter said their environment was in a public cloud with a similar percent in SaaS environments.

NEW WORKING PATTERNS AND DIGITALISATION PROMPT RETHINKING THE STRATEGY

Resilience is a board-level discussion as senior leaders look to ensure that the business can cope with any future disruption. Our enterprise respondents said that digital transformation solutions, business continuity (technically and organizationally) and stronger security requirements have all become paramount. This puts tremendous pressure on IT professionals to rethink their architectures and IT strategies to meet the challenge.

TOP CYBER THREAT CONCERNS FOR ENTERPRISE IT

Without a doubt, the escalating threat landscape is causing a broad array of concerns from respondents. Chief among them is the loss of sensitive assets and data followed by the disruptive impact of downtime or network lockdown. In response, there was an evident shift to a Zero Trust security approach. One-third (30%) of enterprise organisations said that they had already adopted a Zero Trust model.

> **TWENTY-THREE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS HAVE RETAINED AN ON-PREMISES ENVIRONMENT AND THIS IS UNLIKELY TO CHANGE IN THE FUTURE.**

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It's simple to set up and lets you manage your network or prioritise devices from anywhere, all with the free Linksys app.

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ADDING VALUE TO DISTRIBUTION

Abdullah Qaisi, GM, EVAD, tells Reseller ME about the company's mission and partnership with Efficient IP.

vendors themselves. We focus our technicalities and the team to be representing the vendor as much as if they were here. This is true value and we can achieve our mission by working progressively with all parties and close the between the gap between the vendor, the channel partner & the customer.

Tell us about your partnership with Efficient IP

Efficient IP is an amazing vendor. When we signed up with them, we thought it would be just a vendor within the profile we have. Slowly, we found out that they became the profile and the entire ecosystem we have in EVAD. They focus with us, they enable us, they give us the trust that a Value-Added Distributor requires. So we took that advantage and we work progressively toward that. We build a support centre for them. We do the implementation for them. Why Efficient IP? Because we like challenges and Efficient IP is a very big, technically sound DNS security and DDI solution, but they were not well known in our region. So when we signed up with them we went to the market and no one knew about them, but they knew that EVAD does not bring any random vendor to the table. Even the vendor themselves now they have established themselves within the

Tell us about the company's mission

Let's start with the name of EVAD-this stands for Evolved Value-Added Distributor. Our mission is to be the VAD of choice-Value Added Distributor that everyone strives to work with partners, customers and vendors. Value Added Distributors have sales and technical teams that can go to the customers and deal with them. But there's another type which is Evolved Value Added Distributors that add value to the vendors, customers and the partners. We enable channel partners on behalf of the

OUR MISSION IS TO BE THE VAD OF CHOICE.

Middle East here because they saw the potential of their market toward their technology.

You're the only VAD that has ATC certification

There's one other vendor in the USA and we are the second. We may have got it together, we may have got it before them I'm not too sure, but yes, we are the only two distributors who have got the highest certificate, one in the US and one here in Dubai.

How will this certification impact resellers?

I believe it will give them the ability to look from both angles from commercial perspective-they see that such certification is not only reserved for the US or European market people from our region also could get this certificate. Second, they will be assured that since EVAD is certified on behalf of the vendor, then if there is a deal on the table, we need not wait on the vendor schedule and availability-the distributor can handle it and if there is any trouble during installation or post-installation, EVAD is here and they are certified, so they can fix it. So, that will give resellers the confidence to talk about this technology, with EVAD's backing and support.

You recently concluded a fabulous event with a vendor. How did it go?

It was an amazing event. The interaction between all the attendees was great.

The vendors whom we invited here to be part of this event provided a very good presentation about their technologies. But the takeaway from this event was that we had the chance to tell everyone who EVAD is, what our business is, what our focus is. It's all about our mission-what we strive to be, the VAD of choice. 🔵

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CHALLENGES FACED BY SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS POST COVID

Osama Qadan, Technology panelist at CPI, shares his on the challenges faced by SIs in the post-COVID ERA.

System integrators have been the catalyst driving the digital transformation initiatives in our region over the past three decades. They have adapted their business models and expertise over the years to fulfill a growing number of projects with technologies as diverse as the countries they operate in. System integrators work in a continuous mode of techno-commercial operational activities to fulfill the promises and commitments made during their sales cycles. That's the nature of the business and the successful ones have perfected this over the years.

The COVID era has presented a new environment for system integrators. This era is marked by a clear push by governments and enterprises to adopt digital as a standard method of doing business. Many technology companies coupled with their channel partners have pushed forward to comply with the direction of their clients and the explosion of FinTech services is the clearest example of the success in this field. Governments and customer-facing businesses had to change their operating models to allow clients to do what they used to do and even more with little or no human interaction. To many companies, the COVID era presented an opportunity to grow and expand into new business lines to cope with these new requirements.

However, there is another side to this coin. System integrators have suffered during the COVID era with a number of challenges that have persisted even after the decline in the impacts of the COVID period. These challenges cast a long shadow on the profitability of these companies and can risk their sustainability over the long term.

Global shortage of chips: regardless of the reasons for the chip shortage phenomenon, technology vendors have been hit for the first time ever by the reality that their equipment are not manufacturable anymore. Lead times for standard and regularly ordered equipment running in the months (or even more) is now a common response by most vendors. This presents a challenge to system integrators that their designs are not implementable anymore. Substitute models are now mandatory either from the same vendor or from other vendors. Sacrifices in performance and functionality are normal byproducts and there's no way around it.

an experience that many of us are now facing on daily basis and surely no one is enjoying it.

Long lead times to deliver equipment: in addition to the above reasons, logistical lines have been plagued with over stocking in ports and airports and clearing this backlog is a process that will take time. Customers have to adapt that their projects will no longer finish on time for reasons that are beyond the control of their suppliers. Nonetheless, no one can argue that this comes with frustration and anger in some cases. However, little can be done here for the foreseeable future.

Cost of money: global federal reserve banks have resorted to the tactic of increasing interest rates as a way to combat inflation. This means that system integrators relying on banks to finance their businesses are faced with the fact that their bottomline on projects will suffer. This problem gets compounded, of course, with the project plans running over budget.

Overhead cost over-runs: this is where the CFO's come into play. Salaries and rents continue to be a requirement that need to be paid on time to sustain the business. However, when a project takes twice or more time to get implemented, staff have to stay longer on the bench before they are called upon to implement and project managers to raise invoices to clients. The overhead becomes a sizable budget line item that will only show its ugly head at the end of the year when all is said and done.

All of the above factors demand that clients and their long-term partners have to work closely together to weather this storm. Flexible payment terms and more room for price negotiations are important not for system integrators to make more money but rather to survive. Ultimately, the ecosystem will survive this crisis but some casualties will result. Hopefully, survivors will outnumber the casualties. Let's keep our fingers crossed. 🔴

Volatility of prices: supply and demand is now part of the technology supply chain landscape. What we used to hear about in the commodity business has become part of our tech industry that has fought for so long to be different and niche. System integrators face the reality that their price proposals are outdated by the time they get awarded. Arguing with vendors to stabilize prices given the chip shortage and long lead times is

REGARDLESS OF THE REASONS FOR THE CHIP SHORTAGE PHENOMENON, TECHNOLOGY VENDORS HAVE BEEN HIT FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER BY THE REALITY THAT THEIR EQUIPMENT ARE NOT MANUFACTURABLE ANYMORE.

8 COMMON FACEBOOK MARKETPLACE SCAMS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Phil Muncaster, guest writer at ESET

Last year, Facebook Marketplace passed one billion global users. In so doing, it's become a giant of the consumer-to-consumer space, allowing individual Facebook users to buy from and sell to each other seamlessly. It has surpassed the popularity of Craigslist for several reasons. It's also free and simple to use, as most people already have a Facebook account. It allows users to search for listings from their local area, making pick-up much easier. And because people can view sellers' profiles, they feel more assured of safety and security on the site. Unfortunately, this is often a false sense of security.

Here are the top eight scams to watch out for on Facebook Marketplace and how to spot the red flags:

1. DEFECTIVE ITEMS

Sellers may advertise a product that looks fine from the photograph they posted. But once it has been delivered, or you get it home, it turns out to be broken. It's particularly tricky when buying electronic items, because you usually can't toggle through every bit of functionality before handing over the money. This is as likely to happen due to an unscrupulous seller as a professional fraudster.

2. COUNTERFEIT ITEMS

If it's not broken, then it may be a fake product. Designer clothes, perfume, jewelry and cosmetics are particularly common targets for counterfeiting. Like defective item scams, it's difficult to ascertain whether they're genuine or not

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CYBEREASON WARNS GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE RANSOMWARE ATTACKS FROM BLACK BASTA GANG

Cybereason Assesses the Threat Level as HIGHLY SEVERE.

Cybereason, the XDR company, has issued a global threat alert advisory warning global organisations about a rise in ransomware attacks from the Black Basta gang. The Black Basta gang emerged in April 2022 and has victimised nearly 50 companies in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Organisations in English speaking countries appear to be targets. Cybereason assesses the threat level of ransomware attacks against global organisations today being HIGHLY SEVERE.

"Since Black Basta is relatively new, not a lot is known about the group. Due to their rapid ascension and the precision of their attacks, Black Basta is likely operated by former members of the defunct Conti and REvil gangs, the two most profitable ransomware gangs in 2021," said Lior Div, Cybereason CEO and Co-founder.

Black Basta has been using the double extortion scheme on their victims and some of their ransom demands have exceeded $1 million. Double extortion works when attackers penetrate a victim's network, steal sensitive information by moving laterally through organisations and threaten to publish the stolen data unless the ransom demand is paid.

Ransomware attacks can be stopped. Cybereason offers these recommendations to organisations to reduce their risks:

- **Practicing good security hygiene** like implementing a security awareness program for employees, assuring operating systems and other software are regularly updated and patched.
- **Assuring key players can be reached at any time of day** as critical response actions can be delayed during holidays and when attacks occur during off hours and on weekends and holidays.
- **Conducting periodic table-top exercises and drills** and including those beyond the security team like Legal, Human Resources, IT Support and all the way up to the Executive Suite is also key to running a smooth incident response.
- **Ensuring clear isolation practices are in place** to stop any further ingress on the network or spreading of the ransomware to other devices. Teams should be proficient at things like disconnecting a host, locking down a compromised account, and blocking a malicious domain, etc. Testing these procedures with scheduled or unscheduled drills at least every quarter is recommended.
- **Evaluating lock-down of critical accounts when possible.** The path attackers often take in propagating ransomware across a network is to escalate privileges to the admin domain-level and then deploy the ransomware. Teams should create highly secured, emergency-only accounts in the active directory that are only used when other operational accounts are temporarily disabled as a precaution or inaccessible during a ransomware attack.
- **Deploying EDR on all endpoints.** The quickest remedy to the ransomware scourge for public and private sector businesses is deploying EDR on endpoints according to Gartner's Peter Firstbrook. Yet Firstbrook says that only 40 percent of endpoints have EDR. **RME**

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CHALLENGES IMPACTING IT CHANNEL

Amer Khreino, Technology Panelist at CPI.

In a new era where technological innovation is defining new ways of thinking, living, socialising, and working, it is inevitable to consider its positive impact on business. Digital transformation has been instrumental in driving customer experience, improving profitability and operational excellence, aside from other aspects that affect business success!

Digitalisation is helping all types of businesses transform and evolve. Collaboration and unified communication had enabled companies during recent lockdowns to stay alive and operational, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is helping doctors diagnose diseases and treat patients, and cyber-security is inventing secure ways to protect sensitive data and ensure compliance.

Having said that, digital transformation came with its own challenges, especially for the IT channel who are responsible for driving the transformation journey with the customers. The top 5 challenges that are shaping the current IT channel are:

1. CROWDED SPACE

Gone are the days where a bunch of hi-tech companies dominate the tech space. Today, there are thousands of startups and unicorns across emerging technologies who are trying to demonstrate value and seize market share, including cyber-tech, BI/Analytics, AI & ML, IoT, 5G, VR/AR, Digital Twin, amongst others. This rapid pace is exerting tremendous pressure on the IT Channel to make right product selections, create market awareness, and generate recurring sales.

2. LACK OF IT SKILLS

With such accelerated rate in innovation across so many technologies, a growing skill-shortage is developing globally. The lack of

that cover IT software, infrastructure, and platforms. However, this business model has created concerns for conglomerates and other regulatory bodies regarding data breach and compliance to international regulations such as GDPR and PCI, besides other business concerns related to business continuity and disaster recovery.

5. FINANCING SOLUTIONS

The emergence of modern technologies requires a modern and progressive financing model that can support IT Channel and their respective customers. Pay-per-use model, everything-as-a-service, and equipment leasing are only few examples. Unfortunately, access to such flexible financing solutions is not available in all markets, thus limiting the growth potential of the IT Channel.

Despite that all above challenges are not under the direct control of the IT Channel, they are certainly well-known issues that can be mitigated. IT Channel needs to drive the right strategies when it comes to digital transformation and change management. They need to present clear product roadmaps that can satisfy the needs of their customers and drive effective execution plans that can ensure success. 🅡🅜🅔

> **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION CAME WITH ITS OWN CHALLENGES, ESPECIALLY FOR THE IT CHANNEL, WHICH HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR DRIVING THE TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY WITH ITS CUSTOMERS.**

expertise in specific key areas such as programming, s/w development, technical architecture, advanced analytics, and project management are causing delays in driving the digital change and losses to IT Channel profitability.

3. CHANGING CUSTOMER NEEDS

The last two years have been dramatic, showing us how things can swiftly and instantly shift. Remote connectivity and hybrid access to corporate resources were the name of the game during the past pandemic. This period had also accelerated the online e-commerce economies and had flipped the classic retail model in favor of online shopping and smart touchless self-checkouts. This has forced IT Channel to change their business structures and GTM to accommodate new business models that rely on cloud subscriptions and everything-as-a-service business models.

4. REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Cloud Platforms led by Microsoft Azure, AWS and Google Cloud were Game-changers and provided IT Channel with new revenue streams through easy and fully integrated subscription business model. Platforms include a wide spectrum of services

CELEBRATING

Women

POWER IN TECHNOLOGY

The very first edition of the Women In Technology Forum & Awards was held in June, celebrating women power and honouring the remarkable ladies who innovate, inspire and transform the technology sector as we know it.

Women currently make up over 25% of the global technology workforce and according to official estimates, this number is growing fast. The varied experiences of women in this field, the diversity in their roles with their experience demonstrating a range of skills such as people management, team building, communications and technology consulting, will be the focus of the Women in Tech (Pride of Tech) conference and awards.

While the awards aim to enhance the visibility of women in the technology space, recognise their outstanding contributions and enable the next generation of women to aspire for it, the forum and panel will highlight the exceptional efforts made by women to break digital boundaries and create a more inclusive global workforce. This year, the focus is on growth, continuity and results driven by women–particularly how they've emerged stronger despite the socio-economic challenges over the past two years.

Following is the list of winners of the Women In Tech Awards 2022

Star of the Year in Information Technology - Sherifa Hady, Aruba, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise Company

Marketing Personality of the Year - Lena Halbourian, Commvault

Influential Sales Personality of the Year - Konica Khandelwal, Yellow.ai

Channel Chief of the Year - Kinda Baydoun, Veeam Software

Senior Marketing Leader of the Year - Diana El Kara-Infor

Technology Frontrunner of the Year - Mansi Shah-Gandhi, Rackspace Technology

Channel Performance Pioneer of the Year - Tarannum Saqib, Ingram Micro Gulf

Change Maker of the Year - Sonali Basu Roy, Bulwark Technologies

Brand Awareness Marketeer of the Year - Sanchari Roy, Barco

Strategic Leader of the Year - Selina Bieber, GoDaddy

Influential Marketing Personality of the Year - Widad Abdalhadi, CISCO

Marketing Rising Star of the Year - Tatiana Makarova, Hikvision MENA

**Woman Executive of the Year -
Maya Zakhour,
NetApp**

**Brand Marketeer of the Year -
Nichola Banerjee,
ESET Middle East**

**Technology Leader of the Year -
Ekta Puthran,
BARCO**
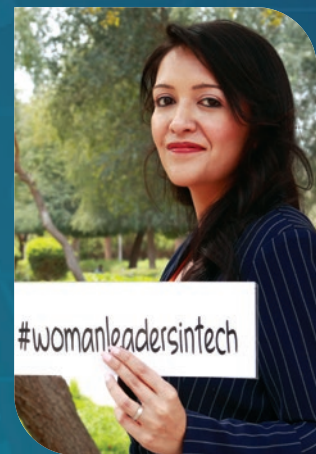
**Marketing Transformation Pioneer of
the Year - Mallika Sharma, Aruba,
a Hewlett Packard Enterprise Company**

**Sales Executive of the Year -
Nandini Sapru,
EMT Distribution**

**Innovative Marketeer of the Year -
Sandy Issa,
Intelligent Security Systems**

**Marketing Trendsetter of the Year
- Nevine El Tanahy,
Alpha Data**

**Brand Strategist of the Year -
Maleeha Riaz Khan,
NMK Electronics Trading LLC.**

**Technology Visionary of The Year
- Loubna Imenchal,
Logitech**

**Most Innovative Go-To-Market
Strategist of the Year - Nikita
Kandath, Commscope**

**Above and Beyond Award -
Kiara Israni,
Secureworks**

**Senior Sales Leader of the Year -
Faten Halabi,
Avaya**

Marketing Executive of the Year -
Mareva Koulamallah,
Acronis

Sales Personality in Channel Growth -
Shaista Ahmed.
Nutanix

Brand Activation Pioneer of the Year -
Aparna Chaturvedi,
Newcom Computer Systems

Innovator of the Year -
Dolly Solanki,
CyberRes a Micro Focus Company

Female IT Business Leader of the
Year - Joumana Karam,
Acer

Marketing Influencer of the Year -
Nilu Kamkarfar,
Rackspace Technology
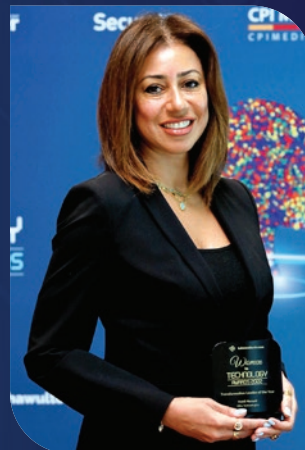
Transformation Leader of the
Year - Haidi Nossair,
DELL Technologies

IT Trailblazer of the Year -
Hailey Yoon,
IO21

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller ME, Security ME & Tahawultech.com, moderated a panel discussion at the Women In Tech Forum & Awards held recently.

The discussion, titled ***Driving Change With Purpose & Impact***, featured four frontrunners of the technology space: **Maya Zakhour**, Director-Partner Sales Organization Area Lead- Eastern Europe, Middle East, Africa, Turkey (META), Iberia, & Latin America, **Kinda Baydoun**, Regional Manager - Channel & Distribution at VEEAM Software Middle East, **Mansi Shah-Gandhi**, Regional Technology Lead, MEA,

Rackspace Technology & **Joumana Karam**, Head of Marketing & Product Business Unit, ACER.

While the panelists all agreed that while being a woman in the technology space was exciting, it was by no means easy. Still, they agreed that it was a dream in their hearts, passion for a cause and determination to stick it out no matter the odds, was what kept them going in a career space that is intensely competitive and dynamic.

The discussion focused on how women have been driving change with their natural, inborn qualities

> **THE PANEL UNDERSCORED THE EXCEPTIONAL EFFORTS MADE BY WOMEN TO BREAK DIGITAL BOUNDARIES AND CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE GLOBAL WORKFORCE.**

of empathy, vision, detailed planning and balanced decision making. It also highlighted the need for exceptional mentors at an early career stage, the willingness to experiment and the need to think out of the box.

In short, the panel underscored the exceptional efforts made by women to break digital boundaries and create a more inclusive global workforce. The spotlight was on growth, continuity and results driven by women–particularly how they've emerged stronger despite the socio-economic challenges over the past two years.

SOLARWINDS AWARDED FOR PRODUCT AND INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE IN FIRST HALF OF 2022

Awards include wins from TrustRadius, The Stevie Awards and The Govies.

SolarWinds, a leading provider of simple, powerful, and secure IT management software, today announced it has received recognition from customers, IT professionals, and industry leaders for its suite of IT operations management products and corporate achievements in the first half of 2022.

"We're honored and delighted to be recognised by customers and the wider IT community for our strong industry knowledge and breadth of technology products spanning from security and database to IT-managed services," said SolarWinds Chief Product Officer Rohini Kasturi. "The awards are a testament to our efforts over the last six months and our unwavering commitment to deliver best-in-class IT management software."

SOLARWINDS CORPORATE AWARD:

President and CEO Sudhakar Ramakrishna was recognised for driving meaningful cyber innovation across the IT industry and for the company by the 2022 MeriTalk's Cyber Defenders Awards.

SOLARWINDS INDUSTRY AWARDS:

SolarWinds won three Stevie® Awards, which honor and generate public recognition of the achievements and positive contributions of organisations and working professionals worldwide. The company won in the following regions and categories:

Sudhakar Ramakrishna

Rohini Kasturi

THE AMERICAN BUSINESS AWARDS®

- SolarWinds Next-Generation Build System won Bronze in the Technical Innovation of the Year category.

ASIA-PACIFIC STEVIE AWARDS

- SolarWinds won Bronze in Innovation and Achievement in the Product Innovation category for Database Performance Analyzer (DPA).
- SolarWinds won Bronze in the Excellence in Innovation in Technology Industries category for DPA.

Database Trends and Applications (DBTA) named SolarWinds to its DBTA 100 2022: The Companies That Matter Most in Data. The DBTA 100 showcases forward-looking companies improving and expanding upon existing technology and processes to help their customers use data more effectively. Additionally, SolarWinds was awarded Data Monitoring Solution of the Year at the Data Breakthrough Awards.

The Cyber Strategists Summit & Awards hosted by CXO Insight ME, one of the Middle East's most prestigious IT industry events, awarded SolarWinds Best Network Security Vendor.

Security Today® recognised SolarWinds with two Govies Government Security Awards: SolarWinds® Network Configuration Manager (NCM) won Platinum in the network security category, and SolarWinds Network Performance Monitor (NPM) was awarded Gold in the monitoring solutions category.

SolarWinds won a gold award for Serv-U® File Transfer Protocol Server in the FTP, Email, and Network Connectivity category of the 2022 Visual Studio Magazine Readers Choice Awards.

SOLARWINDS USER AWARDS:

Since 2016, the TrustRadius® Top-Rated Awards have become the industry standard for unbiased recognition of B2B technology products and are based entirely on customer feedback. TrustRadius named nine SolarWinds IT operations management (ITOM) products across 21 categories as 2021 Top-Rated award winners. RME

APPOINTMENT // VECTRA AI

VECTRA AI APPOINTS NEW CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

Tommy Jenkins, new Chief Marketing Officer at Vectra AI

Vectra AI, the leader in AI-driven cyberthreat detection and response for hybrid and multi-cloud enterprises, has announced the appointment of Tommy Jenkins as Chief Marketing Officer (CMO). With more than 20 years' experience in technology, Jenkins has a proven track record of developing successful go-to-market strategies and scaling global demand generation engines. Jenkins joins Vectra following a period

AS CMO, JENKINS WILL OVERSEE ALL OF VECTRA'S STRATEGIC MARKETING INITIATIVES.

of exceptional growth and will play a pivotal role in continuing to increase the company's global footprint.

"As the volume and scale of cyberattacks continues to grow, most organisations are rapidly increasing their investment in threat detection and response controls to protect themselves from malicious actors," said Hitesh Sheth, president, and CEO at Vectra AI. "This has resulted in the rapid expansion of our global operations in recent months. We are excited to welcome Tommy to our executive leadership team as he will be instrumental in driving Vectra's next phase of growth. His vast marketing experience will take our global go-to-market strategy to new directions and deepen our engagement with existing and prospective customers."

As CMO, Jenkins will oversee all of Vectra's strategic marketing initiatives: increasing company growth, driving global brand recognition through creative storytelling, and serving as an innovation catalyst, implementing robust marketing technology capabilities. Jenkins most recently served as Acting CMO at Veeam, a leading provider of backup, recovery, and data management solutions, where he devised innovative marketing strategies to drive revenue and pipeline growth as well as strong global brand recognition. He has also held executive leadership positions at Red Hat, AvidXchange and SevOne, where he led the companies to sustained growth.

"As organisations shift more of their applications and data to the cloud, cyber attackers have refined their tactics and techniques, finding new avenues of entry and more ways to move discreetly inside an organisation's environment," said Jenkins. "In fact, how, when and where most attackers get in remains largely unknown. As a company, Vectra is uniquely positioned and recognised as a leader in solving this problem. I am thrilled to join the team during a critical point in the company's growth and looking forward to expanding our global operations and furthering our successful market penetration." **RME**

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BUILDING PROFITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

Anita Joseph caught up with Adam Tarbox, Vice-President Channel Sales EMEA at Nutanix to find out more about the company's partnership strategies and growth plans for the region.

Can you talk me through some of your main responsibilities in your new role?

I lead all routes to market in EMEA. I'm responsible for the go-to-market strategies with resellers, distributors, OEM platform partners, system integrators and technology partners to support Nutanix expansion in the EMEA region.

What are some of your immediate priorities in your role?

The key priority at the moment is on building on the existing deep relationships we have with partners.

We are also focusing our efforts on being even easier to do business with by investing in the simplification and automation of our processes to allow partners to transact faster. Another area of focus is enabling each partner's differentiation with a platform that enables partners to build not only traditional deployment services, but also stand up new practice areas. When it comes to DevOps or AI, this can provide sources of competitive differentiation as well as faster time to market of new offerings.

What is Nutanix' mission or goal in EMEA?

Our mission in EMEA is the same as our overall corporate mission which is to 'Delight customers with a simple, open, hybrid, and multicloud software platform with rich data services to build, run, and manage

any application'. Our vision is to 'Make clouds invisible, freeing customers to focus on their business outcomes'.

Do you have any plans to expand Nutanix's presence in any particular EMEA region?

There are lots of areas for expansion for partners with the key use cases for Nutanix. Our intention is to help partners to get scale, operational efficiencies and engineering support for building and sizing multi-vendor solutions. Our distributors are now fully driving the digitization of the

> **WE'RE FOCUSED ON BUILDING PATHS FOR PROFIT AND GROWTH FOR ALL OF OUR PARTNERS ACROSS SOLUTION AREAS OR SIZE OF ORGANISATION SO THEY CAN BUILD THEIR SERVICE PROGRAMS AND ACCELERATE THOSE OFFERINGS.**

selling process for partners. They've been consolidating, acquiring new technology, and building out cloud marketplaces to help partners enable their customer purchasing cycles with less friction. Distributors are making use of AI/ML to bring analytics and market intelligence for partners to drive business faster, which is critical in bringing together the partner and distributor ecosystems. We're in the age of ecosystem solutions, and the Distributors are becoming relevant again in enabling the aggregation of all of this for partners.

As such, we're unveiling our new Elevate Distributor program so that partners can better identify distributors that they can work with who have the skill sets and capabilities to drive velocity and growth in their businesses. The new tiered Elevate Distributor program provides benefits and resources to help support Distributor operational efficiency, sales velocity and profitability. This means that partners can use the Nutanix partner portal to identify proven Nutanix distributors that have the knowledge, resources and operational capabilities to drive new growth. A distributor's Elevate program level will help partners identify the right distributor to work with who has competencies that will support their own sales & technical teams, as well as the digital distribution capabilities to ensure they are transaction as quickly and friction free as possible

What are some of your key strategies for this year?

Hybrid work, subscription, and everything-as-a-service will continue to shape partner growth opportunities ahead. Nutanix is continuing to evolve our go-to-market to enable partners to capture those opportunities in a number of ways.

Being even easier to do business with is something that is always at the back of our minds. As such, Automation is a big area of focus for our partners as they aim to spend less time on certain operational IT pieces and more time on solution selling. We're investing in Nutanix back office automation and platform integrations at our major Distributors - to massively speed up the transaction process for our partners, by up to 60%. The initial results from the first wave rollout at a few key partners have been very encouraging.

At the end of the day, everything that Nutanix does has to work within an ecosystem of technologies that customers have in their data centres. That's the reality for our partners. The whole industry is realising this - that's why distribution marketplaces will become even more important in this new world, as well as new partnerships with companies that find common ground at the customer.

Profit sustainably is another key objective. We're focused on building paths for profit and growth for all of our partners across solution areas or size of organisation so they can build

their service programs and accelerate those offerings. This means shifting to a partner profit continuum from land, into expand, adopt and renew; focusing on being even easier to do business with by investing in the simplification and automation of our processes to allow partners to transact faster; and enabling each partner's differentiation with a platform that enables partners to build not only traditional deployment services, but also stand up new practice

And finally, we aim to Compete uniquely – Partners can build their differentiation on the Nutanix Cloud Platform to continue to delight customers, support unparalleled freedom of choice in hardware, hypervisor, OS, and applications supported, and enable increasing Services and Solutions led businesses.

What are some of the main challenges facing you and the business today?

The past year has brought many changes to the channel partner ecosystem and subscription and consumption is on everyone's mind. This is creating uncertainty for the channel ecosystem as it looks for new ways to sustain profitability. Many vendors have announced that they are moving towards subscription but haven't provided insight to partners on what this means aside from some new incentives. As many vendors have taken renewals 'direct' - we have not and will not, we have always and

will continue to be committed to the channel and our distribution partners.

Vendors like Nutanix who want to stay in a leadership position with the channel will be providing partners with organic customer demand and a clear path to building recurring profit over the new purchasing cycle (over the customer lifecycle, not just at point of sale). In this shift, we've been working to build a transition path for our partners into this new way of doing business.

What is your advice to the regional channel community?

Partners need to expand their skill sets to focus on new technologies. What's more, in addition to the transformation required for subscription - the next wave of data centre architectures will be transformed by AI/ML, low-code/no-code approaches to application development, and more of those applications starting in cloud rather than moving to the cloud. Partners need to find new ways to diversify their solutions and drive new revenue streams. We see that partners are looking to vendors to help build up their skills bench to provide services that drive things like AI digitisation through low code, no code DevOps methodologies.

The next wave of innovation in how applications get developed and deployed will drive new opportunities for partners. Platforms that can reimagine how to achieve infrastructure as code will be the platform of choice for customers and partners. We're seeing our leading-edge partners working on this already. Recently a partner helped a customer (large European financial institution) deploy applications using a low code no code solution on their existing Nutanix platform and with existing people/skills - in a quarter of the time. This is a use case that has limitless possibilities for our partners to develop a new practice line that can deliver huge customer differentiation and value, and highly attractive profit margins quickly.

I've already mentioned that the importance of partners adopting automation tools and technologies so that they spend less time on certain operational IT pieces and more time on solution selling. ◉

PREPARING BUSINESSES FOR THE NEXT WAVE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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

The C-Suite and business leaders understand the value of technology and the benefits it can bring to their bottom line, but there is one key technological shift on the horizon that they can't afford to ignore. Networking at the edge.

Over the next few years, organisations in every industry will experience change on an unprecedented scale as people, digital devices, smart technologies, and an ever-expanding network come together to transform commerce, work, education, healthcare, recreation, and more. A whole new range of possibilities emerges when we can engage with literally every device and build intelligence and connectivity into physical objects such as office furniture and clothing. The path to 2030 will spawn new customer-centric businesses, enable entire new industries and reinvent existing ones, challenge us to adapt and evolve, and facilitate greater access, equity, and inclusion across every aspect of society – this is the potential of the Edge.

We define the Edge as the new experiences being enabled by edge technologies for customers, employees, students, patients, and any users of network services. Edge technologies allow the processing of data by devices at the edge of networks, which is where users and devices are. It is where things connect to the network, whether they are wired or wireless. The Edge is where actions take place. Over time, these actions at the edge will become smarter.

Smart meets digital at the Edge – smart conference rooms, smart assembly lines, smart menu ordering, smart stadiums, and a range of technology-enabled smart experiences. The opportunity at the Edge is driven by many things, including smart applications powered by artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), mobile devices, Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, data analysis, next-generation Wi-Fi, 5G communications, and "edge-to-cloud computing."

The new edge network combines AI, ML, and automation to continuously learn, predict, and adapt to changes, needs, and threats in real time. The new edge network utilises technologies and software to make sense of the resulting insights, enabling businesses to act and respond, optimising the experience for the customer or

user wherever they are. Pushing intelligence out to the edge will drive change in the design of our products, services, processes, and organisations, and transform how decisions get made – giving greater autonomy to the devices at the edge.

TRANSFORMATIONAL ASPECTS OF EDGE-BASED STRATEGIES

Edge-based strategies are driving five critical shifts shaping the future of business and work:

1. *User Empowerment* – The technologies are enabling a fundamental redesign of the user experience – be they customer, student, patient, or employee – giving users the tools to define what they want, how they want it, and even how they want to pay for it.
2. T*ransformational Leadership* – The scalability and rapid capability enhancements of exponentially advancing technologies such as AI, ML, IoT, and cloud computing are enabling leaders to pursue and deliver experiments to drive 2x to 10x greater improvements across their businesses.
3. *The Pursuit of Digital Innovation and Excellence* – The increasingly central role of digital technologies demands that we raise digital literacy across the organisation and prioritise the rapid evolution of our digital capability to accelerate the adoption of a digital mindset and speed up the creation of digitally based products and services based on insights generated from data collected.
4. *Embracing and Embedding Smart* – The Edge is helping organizations embrace the true power of smart devices to deliver mass customisation and deep personalization of a range of user experiences. Rapid advancements in AI and ML are enabling the establishment of smart spaces and creating the opportunity for smart personalization, adaptation, and continuous learning in the applications offered to users.
5. *Emergence of New Businesses and Industry Sectors at the Edge* – The focus on solutions tailored

to customer needs is driving opportunities from the creation of new businesses to the birth of new trillion-dollar industry sectors.

CALL TO ACTION

Capturing the Edge opportunity requires radical shifts in strategic thinking, an investment in developing deep digital experiences, experimentation with new business and revenue models, and evolution of the IT function. This change needs to be owned and driven from the C-suite. Such initiatives clearly require a vision, defined goals, and a robust delivery plan. However, before an organisation can start to articulate these, most need to go through a preparatory phase to ensure they are ready to embark on a transformation of this scale.

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EDGE-BASED STRATEGIES ARE DRIVING CRITICAL SHIFTS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS AND WORK.

SEVEN KEY ENABLERS OF THAT PREPARATORY PROCESS ARE IDENTIFIED BELOW:

1. *Leadership Awareness* – The starting point is rapid immersion in the top team to ensure they understand the opportunity, are aware of the associated risks, know what it takes to succeed, can prioritise what's to be done, and maintain a clear dialogue with all stakeholders.
2. *Open and Flexible Technology Options* – Ensuring the adoption of open, agile, and secure technology choices that allow teams to pursue future options that may not have been considered initially.

3. *IT Alignment* – Making sure the IT function can lead and deliver the journey to the edge and has the capabilities to manage the demands, security challenges, and risks of an edge-based technology ecosystem.
4. *Mindset and Digital Literacy* – Driving organisation-wide awareness of the shifts taking place in the marketplace and the new business paradigms being pursued, and building high levels of digital literacy and capability to deliver on the opportunity.
5. *User Dialogue* – Understanding expectations and concerns to ensure solutions genuinely meet the requirements of their intended users.
6. *Business Case and Investment Funding* – The true potential of the opportunity at the Edge will only reveal itself once solutions are in the field – the business case and investment funding strategy need to evolve in line with the evidence from the projects delivered.
7. *Focused Project Approach* – The pilot projects and experiments undertaken should be meaningful, should have clear goals, leadership, and dedicated resources, and should be delivered rapidly to ensure business focus, with rapid sharing of lessons learned to drive subsequent projects.

The opportunity at the Edge represents a new way of conceiving business – designing from the outside in and putting the organisation's focus on what happens at the edge to maximise value for customers and employees, while also driving operational efficiency. Although it may seem that the concept is in its infancy, the nature of competition and the exponential rate of advancement in the underlying technologies mean that the pace of adoption will accelerate. This will lead in turn to transformational shifts in the experiences created and the business and revenue models adopted across every sector. For the C-suite, the call to action is clear. The only question is: how quickly can you respond to start building the future? 🅡🅜

PROVIDING SEAMLESS DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

Alex Thurber, Senior Vice President, Global Partners and Alliances & Ghassan Abou Rjeily, Regional Channel Sales Manager – META at Riverbed spoke to Anita Joseph, Editor, Reseller ME, about the power of observability.

Riverbed recently launched a broad strategy to bring industry-leading unified observability to customers worldwide and accelerate growth. Front and center in the company's strategy is the development of an expanded unified observability portfolio, which will unify data, insights and actions to solve one of the industry's most daunting problems: how to provide seamless digital experiences that are high performing and secure in a hybrid world of highly distributed users and applications, exploding data and soaring IT complexity. Riverbed also launched a new brand identity, including the introduction of Alluvio by Riverbed (for Unified Observability), reflecting the evolution of the company and technology, and strong market momentum as evidenced by over 30% year-over-year bookings growth for its visibility and observability solutions in the last three quarters.

How is Riverbed investing in innovation to support partners and customers?

Alex: The investment in the innovation strategy is all around this idea of unified observability. So we're bringing together Alluvio and that brand name that really brings together all of the different current components that we have. We have NPM for networks, we have APM for applications and we have Aeternity for desktop and endpoint experience management. And with Alluvia, we are bringing all of those solutions together and then continuing to innovate under that, so that you will see other products down the road, other solutions later this year, that again, continue to build on that foundation. And that investment is really around not only the technology side, but also the go-to-market side-our investment in the channel is the reason that I joined the company. We've created a new group within Riverbed called the Global Partner Office. My job is to work with those key system integrators, key partners, key alliance members around the world, to ensure that we have the best overall solution for the end user customer.

Talking about unified observability-how is this strategy different from everything else? Now what is the approach the company is taking to disrupt the visibility-observability marketplace?

Alex: The strategy is an add-on, a natural continuation to our current work and the work we're doing-where we went from accelerating the network, to really understanding and explaining the network, to helping to fix the network. So it really is a natural progression in our strategy.

Tell us about the market opportunity that this will bring for partners and how the channel will need to adapt and embrace new disruptive solutions that deliver value to customers.

Alex: We're very confident, very bullish about the market opportunity. I think the latest reports have it at about $19 billion by 2024, globally. And so we obviously want our unfair share of that. That's what we're going to be building on, and I think it's important, since our route to market is through the channel.

We're very focused this year on enablement, on helping our partners understand this story. One of the things that I'm working on is actually enhancing our current enablement. So today, we do a very good job of technically training our partners on how to use the technology. Of course that matters a lot. One of the things we're also doing is we're adding enablement around to how to sell the technology and what their value proposition is for the customer. Because at the end of the day, enterprises, of course, buy a solution.

Alex Thurber, Senior Vice President , Global Partners and Alliances

Ghassan Abou Rjeily, Regional Channel Sales Manager – META at Riverbed

They don't just buy flashing lights. And so it's important that we arm our partners and help them understand what are the selling models and the selling methods so that at the end of the day, we're both more successful.

Can you tell us about the evolving partner landscape in the Middle East & a view into the IT trends that Riverbed is currently seeing with the channel.

Ghassan: Partners in this region are excited about digital transformation. Again, customers these days are no longer looking for a solution or a technology. They're looking for measurable outcomes-particularly with the lack of resources these days, whether it is human resources or technological resources, they are looking for solutions that will help them to simplify and get an easy way to properly measure the investment or the outcome of the investment that they're making. So they're really looking for measurable outcomes. So our partners don't want to be just a simple partner that will go to the customer and propose a specific technology-they want to become solution providers. They want to sit with the customer to ensure that whatever technology the customer is going to invest in, is going to be used to the maximum possible extent to

ensure the business continuity and enhance the customer experience. As far as the partners are concerned, the users and the customers that are transacting with them are very important and they need to make to ensure that they experience that those users are facing is reliable and understand that that enhancing the productivity of the employees is key. It is really essential for the partners to ensure that the customer is able to maximise the outcome of that investment that they make.

Can you tell us about your plans for the channel?

Yeah, definitely. So currently the Middle East, Turkey and Africa, which is the region I'm handling-we're trying to segregate them. Some of the channel partners are interested in accelerating services while others are more interested in visibility. So the Alluvio and the acceleration they come together in reality, however, it will be very hard for a specific partner to focus on both technologies at the same time. I'd say, though, that some of the global system integrators would have the capability to tackle both technologies. But in reality, the way that we are putting the strategy for our partner ecosystem in our region-we're trying to direct them on their favourite area, according to their

expertise, and their interest. So what we are doing with them is making sure that they have all the technical expertise. So, we're putting a lot of effort to ensure that our partners are fully capable of listening to the customer and proposing the right solutions for them.

By doing that, we're not really just giving theoretical information. Rather, we're trying to put real life scenarios, provide use cases that they will be able to leverage in order to sit with the customer and while listening to them, relate with them and propose the right solutions.

Not only that, we are helping partners to ensure that they do enough sessions with their customers, so that they educate them about what is available, how the solution will be will be able to help them enhance their productivity, provide them all the observability required so that they can see everything that is happening on the network-from the minute that a transaction leaves the user computer-all the way until it reaches the cloud. So we don't just do sampling, we're looking at everything at the same time. This is a huge value for our customers and our partners. I believe that with this kind of approach, our partners will be able to act like consultants to our customers, rather than merely sell a technology. 🔵

AOC LAUNCHES
AGON PRO AG274FZ
GAMING MONITOR

Gaming display specialist AOC has launched the premium gaming Monitor AGON PRO AG274FZ in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The new monitor equipped with features designed for the latest e-sports professional standards for gaming, including an incredible refresh rate of 260Hz and 0.5ms response time. 27" AGON PRO display is built for serious gaming enthusiasts, it comes packed with features to fully optimize your gameplay such as customizable gaming settings, G-sync Compatible certified, and VESA Certified DisplayHDR 400.

Hisham Tolba, Sales Manager-MEA at AOC, said: "We are proud to introduce the unbeatable and

effortlessly powerful AGON PRO AG274FZ to the Saudi gamers. Our e-sports monitor is state of art designed. Geared with the latest technology that will surely bring your team into victory. It's time to game like a champion".

DESIGNED WITH WIDE VIEWING ANGLES

IPS displays deliver 178/178-degree viewing angles while maintaining consistent image quality and colors from all viewing positions.

THE E-SPORTS PROFESSIONAL STANDARD FOR GAMING

With a 260Hz refresh rate and 0.5ms response time, you're the display will be equipped to perform at the pro gaming standard. Enjoy an ultra-smooth experience with no visible screen blur to ensure you're always prepped to win.

G-SYNC COMPATIBLE

NVIDIA's trusted "G-Sync Compatible" certification recognizes displays that can deliver high quality variable refresh rate (VRR) in line with the VESA DisplayPort Adaptive-Sync standard and more. Enjoy tear-free, lag-free gaming at the highest level – now with more flexibility and customization potential than ever before due to the wider range of available monitor options.

CONNECTING YOUR EYES WITH YOUR HANDS

Unleash your reflexes by switching to AOC Low Input Lag mode. Forget graphical frills: this mode rewires the monitor in favor of raw response time, giving the ultimate edge in a hair-trigger standoff.

UNIVERSAL RESPECTED STANDARD FOR DISPLAY VISUAL

VESA-certified DisplayHDR 400 delivers a significant step-up from normal SDR displays. With Global dimming and peak brightness up-to 400 nits, images come to life with notable highlights while

featuring deeper and more nuanced blacks.

FRAMELESS DESIGN MONITORS WITH ADJUSTABLE SCREEN IN ALL WAYS

Break away from the shackles of bezels with AOC's 3-Sided Frameless Design monitors. This virtually frameless monitor has extremely narrow bezel around a stunning screen. When used as part of a multi-monitor setup it offers a near-seamless and elegant transition between screens.

An adjustable stand allows for tilt, rotation, swivel and height adjustment do dial-in a comfortable and ergonomic viewing experience.

FLASH YOUR COLORS

AOC Light FX offers an immersive gaming experience by emitting ambient light during gameplay. Choose 14 default modes or customise the technology to flash team colors at e-sport events. Furthermore, you can even pulse colors along to music.

YOUR CUSTOM BUILT-IN CROSSHAIR

The DialPoint feature provides selectable custom crosshair options, helping gamers to play First-Person Shooter (FPS) games with more accurate and precise aiming.

OPTIMIZE YOUR GAME SETTINGS

Enhances color and sharpness for different game styles. Six modes to select: FPS, Racing, RTS, Gamer1, Gamer2, Gamer3 and Off.

PROTECT YOUR EYES

Flicker-free technology reduces flicker to give you a more comfortable gaming experience.

Also, AOC Low Blue Mode setting ensures a healthier viewing experience for prolonged computer use without compromising the naturally vivid colors of the display.

CONNECTABLE WITH OTHER DEVICES

AGON PRO AG274FZ provides multiple options for connectivity, including 2 DisplayPort interface, and 2 HDMl port. The HDMl connecter provides high-quality video and audio, perfect for watching videos or viewing high-detailed images. DisplayPort offers an alternate option for high-definition resolution as well as the capability to output to multiple displays when using compatible notebooks or desktops.

"Tolba" Concluded: "We can't wait to bring this new gaming monitor to Saudi. Its feature set is sure to satisfy the needs of e-sports gamers in the country, which has seen a significant increase in interest in the past few years. This is just the start - we are looking to bring more gaming monitors to the country that would any type of user."

The AGON PRO Monitor AG274FZ will be available through the authorized distributor for AOC Monitors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, The AGON AG324UX comes with a 3-year warranty. 🔴

NEW CLASS OF POST-PANDEMIC TECHNOLOGY LEADERS EMERGES TO TACKLE THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

Cisco AppDynamics, a leading provider of Observability and Application Performance Monitoring technology, has published findings from Agents of Transformation 2022, the fourth annual report that analyses the skills and attributes of elite global technologists.

In the wake of the pandemic, it reveals the emergence of a new class of technology experts stepping up to meet critical challenges that are blurring the lines between business strategy and IT operations. The report also cites the demand to make all products and services digitally available in the

> **THE BAR CONTINUES TO RISE, AND OVER THE LAST YEAR WE HAVE SEEN A REDEFINITION OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AGENT OF TRANSFORMATION. THESE LEADERS ARE LOOKING TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW ISSUES IN THEIR RESPECTIVE DOMAINS IMPACT THE TOTAL EXPERIENCE OF USERS AND APPLICATIONS, ADAPTING TO CHANGE WITH SOLUTIONS THAT POSITIVELY AFFECT THE OVERALL BUSINESS.**

Experience Economy amid heightened security threats, increasing complexity, and the accelerated shift to hybrid work and the cloud.

"The bar continues to rise, and over the last year we have seen a redefinition of what it means to be an Agent of Transformation. These leaders are looking to better understand how issues in their respective domains

impact the total experience of users and applications, adapting to change with solutions that positively affect the overall business," said Liz Centoni, EVP, Chief Strategy Officer, GM of Applications.

Respondents cite a fundamental change in the role of technologists, including the skills and resources required to operate effectively and proficiently. At the same time, they say they now contend with soaring complexity and volumes of data from across the technology stack and must integrate a massively expanding set of cloud-native services with existing on-premises systems and tools.

- 88% believe that what it means to be a technologist has changed
- 84% say the skills and qualities that define an Agent of Transformation have evolved
- 66% indicate that it is now more difficult to be an Agent of Transformation
- One in four say their organisation remains stuck in reactive, "fire-fighting mode"

"The new Agents of Transformation recognize a need to reimagine applications not just in response to post-pandemic challenges, but also, to create flawless, reliable digital experiences that address some of the world's greatest problems—from meeting critical human needs to giving people the skills and resources to succeed in the digital economy," Centoni said. ●

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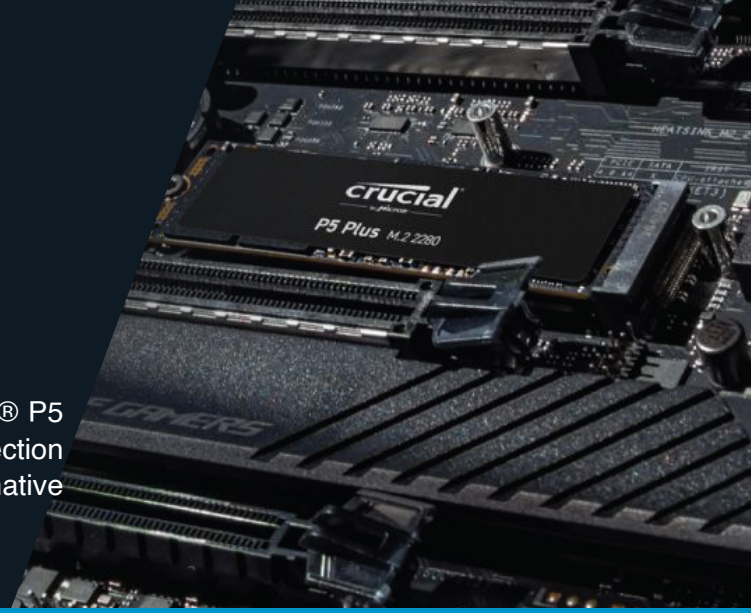**Rocco Best A2P SMS Vendor** 2018, 2019, 2020

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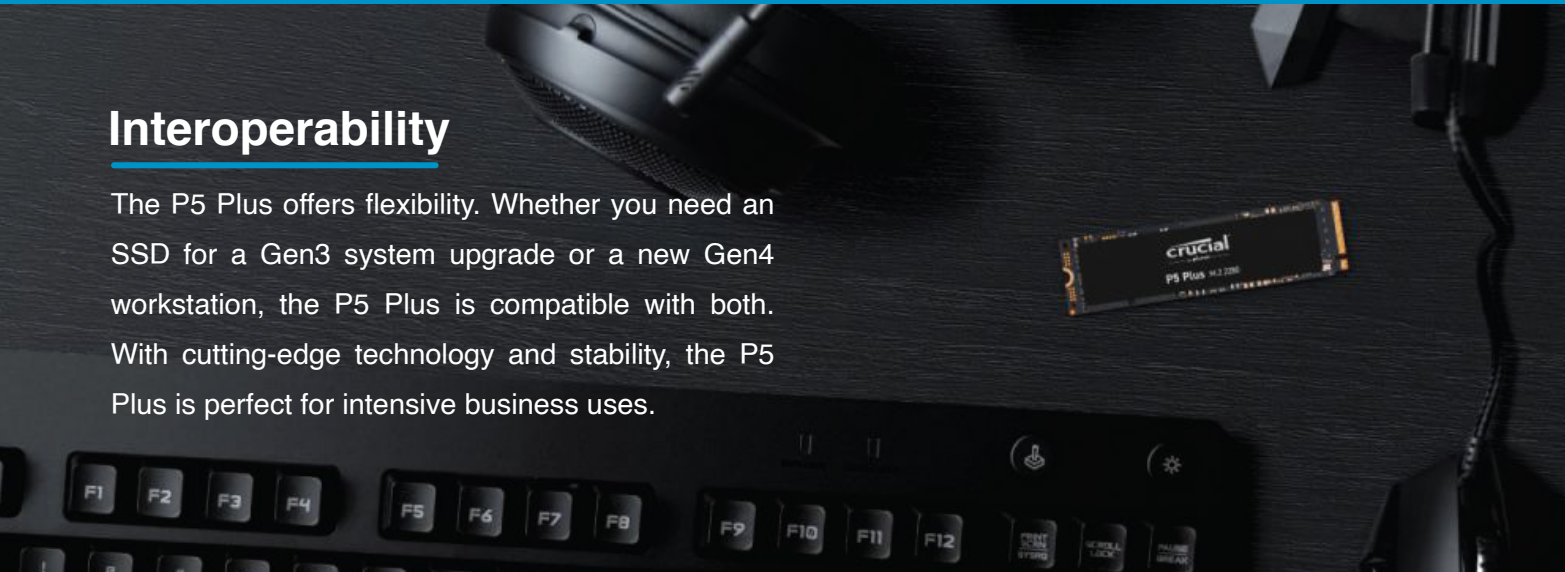
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