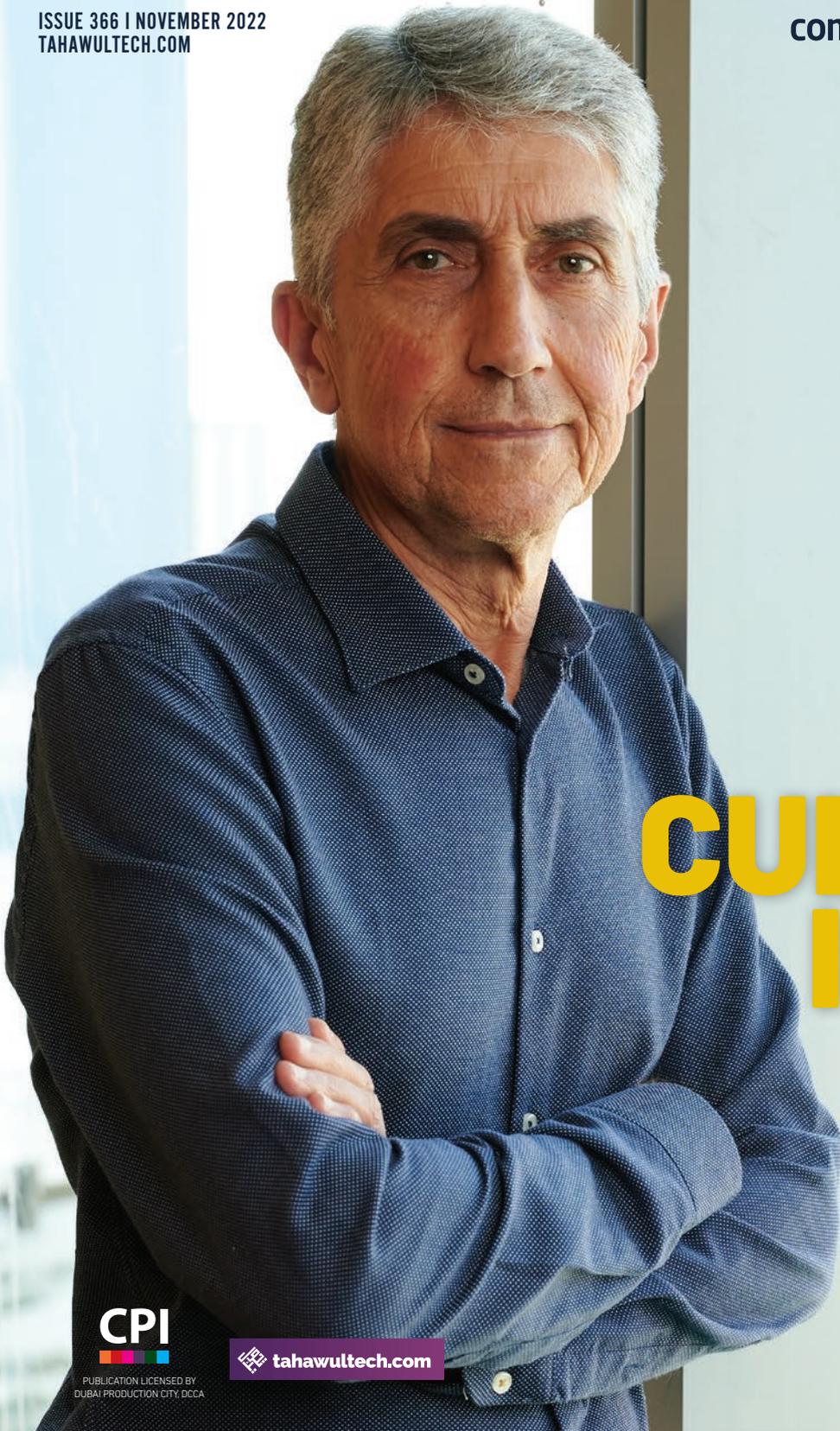


cnme

ISSUE 366 | NOVEMBER 2022
TAHAWULTECH.COM

computer news middle east
WHERE TECHNOLOGY MEANS BUSINESS



DELL TECHNOLOGIES
SENIOR MARKETING DIRECTOR

ACCEDIAN'S
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER

FUTURE ENTERPRISE
AWARD WINNERS

CULTURE IS KEY

FAYEZ IBBINI, CEO OF ALPHA
DATA TELLS CNME HOW THE
COMPANY'S 'CULTURE' HAS
ALLOWED THE IT LEADER TO
FLOURISH AND ENJOY
NEW GROWTH.

CPI

PUBLICATION LICENSED BY
DUBAI PRODUCTION CITY, DCCA

 tahawultech.com

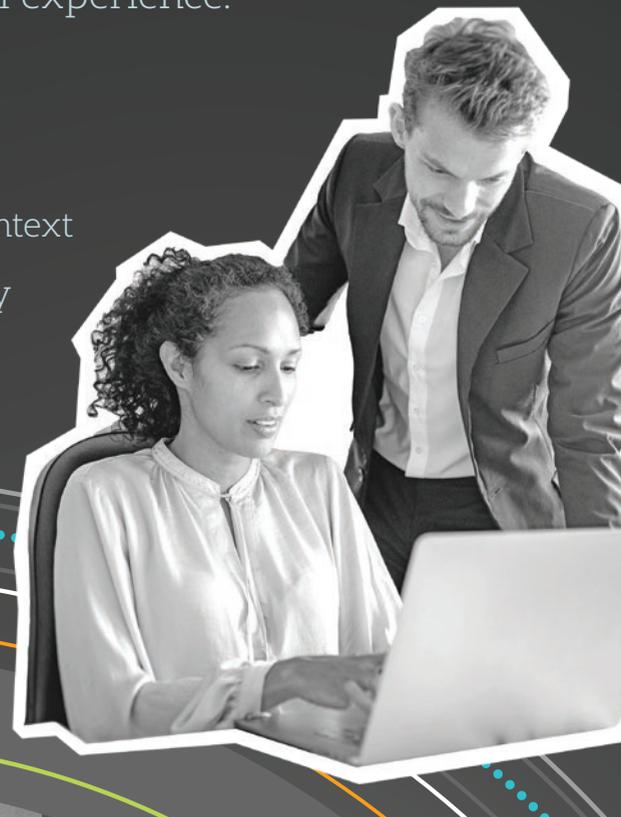
Download on the
App Store

ANDROID APP ON
Google play

Today's IT agility is built on observability.

SolarWinds® Hybrid Cloud Observability helps ensure services and online applications are available, operate cost effectively, and deliver a fantastic and predictable digital experience.

- » Modernize IT agility
- » Accelerate cost savings and time to value
- » Resolve issues faster with deep visibility and context
- » Improve user experience and service availability
- » Value across IT Ops, Dev Ops, and security



Learn more about Hybrid Cloud Observability and how we're re-envisioning the solutions you need to drive business results.

Visit solarwinds.com to learn more.

Our events



tahawultech.com
CIO100 Awards



tahawultech.com
TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP
Awards 2022



tahawultech.com
FUTURE ENTERPRISE
AWARDS



tahawultech.com
GovTech
Innovation Awards



Your
VOICE
with tahawul tech

Our online platforms



tahawultech.com

Our social media



facebook.com/tahawultech



twitter.com/tahawultech



linkedin.com/in/tahawultech



Talk to us:
E-mail:
mark.forker@
cpmediagroup.com



Alpha Data are an IT leader with a watertight record for success, and it has culture firmly embedded in its DNA as a company."

CULTURE CLUB

Over the last few years, we have witnessed seismic changes to the way we live, work and learn.

In the IT ecosystem, we have heard countless business leaders inform us that in order to survive and thrive in the turbulent and constantly evolving digital economy then businesses needed to be agile and resilient.

However, another term that is frequently coined by industry experts is the importance of instilling 'culture' within an organisation.

But what is culture?

The word culture can have different meanings to many enterprises across multiple industries, but it's fair to say that any company who wants to excel in their field needs to foster and cultivate a 'culture' that allows their workforce to flourish.

The company on the front cover of November's edition of CNME certainly achieves that objective when it comes to culture.

Alpha Data are an IT leader with a watertight record for success, and it has culture firmly embedded in its DNA as a company.

Fayez Ibbini, CEO of Alpha Data, has long been seen as a visionary leader by his industry peers, and in a fascinating, candid, and frank interview he documented how its culture has laid the foundations for the company to emerge as a stronger entity in a post-pandemic world.

In a brilliant conversation, he eloquently articulates how Alpha Data has managed to sustain its success over such a long period of time, and is constantly striving to reinvent itself to remain relevant to its loyal band of customers.

Cryptocurrency, NFTs and blockchain are very much under the microscope following the FTX debacle, but CNME spoke to John Woods, CTO of Algorand, to find out more about how the unique technology it provides truly differentiates itself from its market rivals.

Richard Piasentin, Chief Strategy Officer at Accedian, explains how the high-performance network specialist has enjoyed phenomenal growth over the last 12 months in the Middle East region, citing that the fact it was born in the 'guts of carrier networks' give the company a real edge over its competition.

Ben McDonald is a dynamic marketing executive leader at Dell Technologies, and he highlighted how the fundamentals remain as important now as they did when he first entered the field over 20 years ago.

Shure have been in business for almost 100 years, and its unwavering commitment to developing and delivering high-quality audio solutions has never waned.

Jose Rivas, Vice President of Global Sales told CNME that the company is 'obsessed' with producing high-quality products to its customers.

Mohammed Owais, Sales Director at Western Digital spoke to us at GITEX Global, and explained how the global data storage leader is well-positioned to capitalise on the swathe of opportunities emerging out of the KSA as its leadership looks to reduce its dependency on oil and become a hub of technology and innovation.

We also have coverage from our Future Enterprise Awards 2022, held on Day 1 of GITEX.

The awards are the flagship awards ceremony in the IT calendar in the Middle East, and we'd like to once again congratulate all our winners, who are continuing to push the boundaries as to what is possible when it comes to technology.

Enjoy November's edition of CNME. 😊

Mark Forker
Editor



Works with all modems and ISPs.



Multi-gigabit WiFi 6 speeds

Make the most of WiFi 6.

Linksys Atlas Pro 6 with Intelligent Mesh™ is a dual-band WiFi 6 system that delivers next-level streaming, data traffic and uninterrupted video conferencing to more than 30 devices per node simultaneously.

Access to 160 MHz – the least congested channels available on the 5GHz band – unleashes WiFi 6's incredibly fast connectivity.



Atlas Pro 6
Dual-band Mesh WiFi 6 system

Up to 3,5X faster speeds than WiFi 5*.

Mesh WiFi 6 delivers true gigabit speeds—up to 5.4 Gbps with 6-stream connectivity—throughout your entire home or business, inside & out.

160 MHz capable.

Access to the least congested channels on the 5 GHz band unleashes the true power of WiFi 6, allowing work-from-home, online learning, streaming & gaming devices to operate simultaneously without reduced bandwidth.

More WiFi Channels.

Dynamic Frequency Selection (DFS) provides access to more channels, reducing interference from neighbouring networks.

Industry-leading technology.

The Qualcomm™ Immersive Home 216 Platform transforms home & business WiFi to wired-like stability & speed.

Easy setup & control.

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

30+ devices
Capacity per node.



AX5400

Accumulated speed up to 5.4 Gbps.



Covers homes with up to **2-3 bedrooms** per node (±230 m² / 1 floor).



Model# MX5500

Available in 1-, 2- or 3-Pack: MX5501, MX5502, MX5503



**Alpha Data –
Cover Feature**

26



10 ALGORAND

6 News

CNME rounds up the biggest regional and global developments in enterprise technology, which includes the news that Nutanix has launched NC2 on Microsoft Azure, Cloudflare takes steps to democratise spoof-proof security - and Everdome’s Metaverse rocket to Mars is officially launched.

10 John Woods, CTO at Algorand, highlights how the technology on offer from the blockchain company is unrivalled amongst its industry peers.

16 Richard Piasentin, Chief Marketing and Chief Strategy Officer at Accedian documents how the global leader in high-performance networks has enjoyed exponential growth across the Middle East in the last 12 months.

30 Selina Bieber, Commercial Strategy Senior Director at GoDaddy, outlines how the e-commerce behemoth is leveraging its expertise to empower the startup ecosystem in the UAE.

34 Jeff McCullough, Vice President Global Partnerships at SolarWinds, explains why the IT company felt the time was right to completely ‘transform’ their global channel partner program.

38 Ben McDonald, Senior Marketing Director at Dell Technologies, has claimed that despite the evolution marketing has undergone in the last number of years, some of the core principles will never ever go out of fashion.



16 ACCEDIAN



30 GODADDY



SOLARWINDS
34



38 DELL TECHNOLOGIES

FOUNDER, CPI
Dominic De Sousa
(1959-2015)

Published by **CPI**

ADVERTISING
Group Publishing Director
Kausar Syed
kausar.syed@cpimediagroup.com

EDITORIAL
Editor
Mark Forker
mark.forker@cpimediagroup.com

PRODUCTION AND DESIGN
Designer
Ulysses Galgo

DIGITAL SERVICES
Web Developer
Adarsh Snehajan

Publication licensed by
Dubai Production City, DCCA
PO Box 13700
Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 5682993

webmaster@cpimediagroup.com

© Copyright 2022 CPI
All rights reserved

Publishing Director
Natasha Pendleton
natasha.pendleton@cpimediagroup.com

OnlineEditor
Daniel Shepherd
daniel.shepherd@cpimediagroup.com

Sales Director
Sabita Miranda
sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.com

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

Etiihad Airways launches data-as-a-product ecosystem

Etiihad Airways announced the launch of a new, modern analytics & intelligence platform allowing the global carrier to implement a data-as-a-product ecosystem.

Etihad's Enterprise Data Platform team worked closely with Microsoft on the UAE national carrier's digital transformation, which heavily leveraged Azure's innovative intelligent data platform.

"By leveraging Microsoft's suite of services, we will be able to democratise our data consumption by creating data products for all of our business units that serve their specific needs", said Frank Meyer Chief Digital Officer, Etihad. "A large part of our efforts focused on the formulation of a robust data governance framework which will give us a solid foundation to push a data-driven culture that fuels innovation at every touch point".

Etihad Airways worked towards modernising its Enterprise Data Platform, with a view to serving current and future needs while reducing costs and increasing agility. This resulted in implementing data-as-a-product, shifting from its legacy data-as-an-asset approach.

Enabled through Microsoft's UAE-based cloud regions, Etihad's modernisation project leverages Azure's cloud-native data services, such as Azure Databricks, Azure Synapse, Azure Data Factory, Azure Data Lake, Event Hub, Azure Cosmos DB and Microsoft Purview.



Insights from SAS Innovate on Tour



Bryan Harris, Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at SAS.

As a new era of business emerges out of transformative times, the event that took place at the Four Seasons Hotel emphasised analytics-driven innovation that can move the world forward. Dubai was an important stop for SAS Innovate on Tour since it completely aligns with the UAE's vision of becoming a frontrunner of sustainable growth and innovation.

From the rising expectations around analytics and customer case studies, to responsible innovation and ethical data practices, SAS Innovate on Tour offered a glimpse into an exciting future. Speakers and thought leaders from various industries shared their perspectives on the potential that innovative mindset and technology can bring to accelerating and ensuring the prosperity of businesses and the country.

Bryan Harris, Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at SAS,

noted: "Right now, we are at a unique moment in time. Organisations and people around the world continue to experience disruptions from geopolitical risk, climate change, supply chains and economic inflation. Simultaneously, the increasing adoption of the cloud and digital transformation is creating a speed and scale of data that is outpacing human capacity. As a result, organisations are feeling disoriented and hesitant to take the next step. So, the general question becomes: how do we scale human observation and decision-making? You must be proficient in analytics, machine learning and AI. It is the only way to gain an information advantage and move the world forward".

SAS also gave the attendees a sneak peek at some of the company's newest developments, including integrations with open source, cloud, and other emerging technologies. Organisations must rely on innovation to find new revenue streams and business models, and Cloud is emerging as the main enabler of AI initiatives and fundamental to digital transformation. Besides its partnership with Microsoft, SAS is working closely with local cloud service providers to accelerate innovation within the government sector.

NMK Electronics confirms distribution agreement with LG

NMK will distribute LG's digital signage segment across the UAE, whereas Edge Electronics will handle this market in Qatar.

This partnership is an advancement towards NMK's objective of strengthening its video portfolio, in-line with offering complete AV solutions whilst distributing leading brands across the Middle East.

"We are excited to add LG into our portfolio and focus our energy on growing LG's display business within the territory. LG will be a key steppingstone in expanding our offering", commented Lloyd Platt,

Business Manager at NMK Electronics.

Commenting on the partnership, Mr Jinyong Jang, Information display Team leader from LGE Gulf added, "Bespoke solutions with excellent pre and post sales service requires specialist partners. NMK, a specialist audio visual distributor serving a spectrum of customers provides the value-added services we are looking for, they are an excellent fit and aligned with LG Electronics ethos of providing cutting edge technology and customised solutions. We look forward to working with the NMK team across the region".

www.nmkelectronics.com

Nutanix launches NC2 on Microsoft Azure

Nutanix, a leader in hybrid multicloud computing, announced today the general availability of Nutanix Cloud Clusters (NC2) on Microsoft Azure, extending its hybrid cloud environment to Microsoft Azure dedicated bare metal nodes.

NC2 on Azure offers a seamless hyperconverged infrastructure and unified management spanning private and public cloud environments to accelerate hybrid cloud adoption. NC2 on Azure enables customers to deploy and manage their workloads in their own Azure account and VNet enabling them to keep the operating model simple and consistent between Azure and on-premises.

With license portability of Nutanix term-based software and the ability to leverage all Microsoft Azure benefits,



Rajiv Ramaswami, President and CEO of Nutanix.

NC2 on Azure provides customers the investment protection and choice to run their workloads in a hybrid cloud environment. NC2 on Azure is now generally available to customers on Azure dedicated bare metal nodes in North America Azure regions, with additional global Azure regions to follow in 2023.

“Organisations are embracing

hybrid multicloud to easily scale from on-prem to the public cloud, optimise costs for performant and secure workloads, and tap into a flexible subscription model”, said Rajiv Ramaswami, President and CEO of Nutanix. “NC2 on Azure gives our customers a frictionless on-ramp to Azure with consistent management of apps and data across their hybrid multicloud environment”.

Customers can now run workloads on NC2 on Azure and manage Azure instances from Nutanix’s management interface. This enables customers to run hybrid workloads seamlessly across private clouds and Microsoft Azure without needing to re-architect their applications. The expected result is simplified and consistent IT operations across clouds, hybrid cloud adoption in hours, and lower total cost of ownership when compared to other cloud deployment solutions.

LinkShadow to showcase immersive feature at Blackhat 2022



LinkShadow, a leading Cybersecurity Analytics Platform, is set to make a presence for the second time at Black Hat KSA, organised by Saudi Federation of Cybersecurity, Programming, and Drones (SAFCSP), and Informa Tech. There, LinkShadow will demonstrate its newest feature, the Attack Surface powered by Metaverse.

This specialised feature allows



security teams to monitor, discover, and recommend the best security practices for various infrastructure components to gain a thorough understanding of the attack surface for all assets, at any given moment.

LinkShadow’s participation at Black Hat MEA allows the company to broaden its brand recognition across the region and showcase innovative features at a large-scale. Black Hat proves to be an excellent opportunity for LinkShadow to foster relationships with partners, customers, and alliances in the region.

The importance of cybersecurity is becoming more apparent as Saudi Arabia moves towards Vision 2030, and businesses must stay ahead of the latest threats to protect their data and network. LinkShadow works towards this common vision by striving to provide its customers with a robust cybersecurity solution.



Ahmed Al Fahim, CEO and Founder of Spot.

'Spot' disrupts food truck industry with new app

Spot, the leading F&B operator in

Abu Dhabi has launched a drive-thru application to revolutionise on-the-go dining. Customers and food operators at Spot food truck parks can take advantage of the convenient, cost-effective app that charges no fees. Customers can locate their nearest food trucks through an in-app map service, pre-order meals and get them delivered to their cars, providing an efficient alternative to long queues and waiting times.

Within the 'Spot- Drive Thu Pickup' app, users can simultaneously browse options, offers, and order from multiple chains at once, with rewards of up to 20% off at several of the food trucks. The app is available to download on iOS and Android.

CEO and Founder of Spot, Ahmed Al Fahim said "With Spot, we are committed to creating an integrated ecosystem that offers a combination of food, community and entertainment, bringing the best F&B experiences. Our brand fosters a thriving and supportive environment to enable the local food truck industry and drive its sustainable economic growth. Leveraging digitalisation and the desire for convenience, the Spot- Drive Thu Pickup app is a win-win solution for both consumers and operators".

Protecting smart cities with the right security infrastructure is critical

In commemorating World Cities

Day today, the focus must turn to implementing effective cybersecurity measures designed to keep infrastructure safe from increasing targeted attacks, especially as smart cities are no longer a futuristic dream but indeed reality. Such attacks not only have a financial impact but also threaten the lives of citizens. Considering that the adoption rate of Internet of Things (IoT) technology in smart cities across the META region is at 71% according to Kaspersky research, and accelerating fast, compromises in these implementations can have potentially devastating consequences.

Today, one of the most pervasive risks is ransomware attacking various government services. Moreover, smart cities are also susceptible to attacks on network equipment and items, such as CCTV cameras, which attackers can gain access to. Websites and applications connected to IoT are also at risk of exposure. And targeted attacks on infrastructure facilities are serious incidents.



Cybersecurity practices for smart cities should include basic measures, such as encryption and strict password policies, vulnerability management, network segmentation and a Zero Trust model, as well as firewalls and dedicated protection for any cloud infrastructures that the smart city's systems and applications are connected to. On top of this, dedicated IoT security solutions, such as security gateways, need to be in place to connect IoT devices with business applications while ensuring the security of the communications and data transferring through them. In organisations where the IT infrastructure is connected to smart city objects and systems, endpoint and network protection with the ability to detect and respond to diverse threats should be used.

Infor to highlight smarter manufacturing and distribution at KSA summits

Infor, the industry cloud company, will

reveal insights on trends, challenges and the need for continuous innovation in the industrial manufacturing and distribution sectors in Saudi Arabia, at dedicated events in Khobar on November 8, and Riyadh on November 9.

Experts including Kerry Koutsikos, VP & GM, MEA Infor, Harish Dunakhe, Senior Director Research, IDC, Ahmed Tayel, Sales Manager, AWS, and Khaled AlShami, VP Solution Consulting, Infor will share insights through keynotes and panel discussions at the events.

Key topics will include the need for organisations to embrace cloud-based automation, master software



Kerry Koutsikos, VP & GM, MEA Infor.

Cloudflare democratizes spoof-proof security

Cloudflare, Inc., the security, performance, and reliability company helping to build a better Internet, today announced a new offering to make physical security keys the most accessible and economical solution for customers to better secure their business and employees. Cloudflare customers will be able to purchase Yubico's security keys, the leading hardware security keys and most secure form of phishing-resistant multi-factor authentication (MFA), at an exclusive 'good for the Internet' cost.

A Zero Trust security model means that no one is trusted, by default, regardless of if they're inside or outside of a corporate network. As such, verification is required from everyone trying to gain access to resources on that organization's network, including location, familiar devices, and passwords. Today, hardware security keys are an additional layer of protection and a method of MFA that has been proven to be phishing resistant.

platforms, gain real-time visibility into the extended supply chain, and embrace agility to thrive in Saudi Arabia's fast growing industrial manufacturing and distribution sectors.

Kerry Koutsikos, VP & GM, MEA, Infor, said: "Industrial manufacturers and distributors in Saudi Arabia must embrace cloud-based solutions and automate their systems to tap the amazing opportunities for growth and development. While organisations are enthusiastic about transformation, many lack a clear understanding of exactly how they should go about it. By attending our events in Khobar and Riyadh, they will learn the steps they need to take to digitally transform, and how to get it right. We're excited to help Saudi Arabian organisations on their transform journey".



Dane Knecht, SVP, Emerging Technology and Incubation at Cloudflare.

Cloudflare customers will be able to claim an offer for Yubico's Security Key Series at highly discounted prices – as low as \$10 – through their Cloudflare dashboard. Larger organisations using Cloudflare and purchasing a multi-year YubiEnterprise Subscription for YubiKeys will receive a 50% discount off their first year of a 3+ year subscription. This collaboration aims to make it simple and seamless for organisations of all sizes to acquire, activate, and authenticate with security keys.

"We're always asking ourselves how we can do even more to provide the best possible security to our customers and the Internet-at-large. With phishing attacks on the rise, this means helping to democratise additional security measures to complement the Cloudflare Zero Trust experience. We experienced this first hand and wanted to make implementing hardware security keys a no-brainer for any organisation", said Dane Knecht, SVP, Emerging Technology and Incubation at Cloudflare. "Working with Yubico is just another way we're trying to make it as seamless as possible to arm our customers with the best Zero Trust security strategy. Being a Cloudflare Zero Trust customer introduces an easy, fast and affordable way to implement security keys in your organisation, and all part of our greater mission to help build a better Internet".

Everdome's Metaverse rocket launch to Mars announced

The interplanetary metaverse project

Everdome announces its upcoming first rocket launch as they pioneer new Web3 frontiers along with their 500,000 strong community and partners including OKX, Pierre Gasly, and Alfa Romeo F1 Team ORLEN, just to name a few.

The rocket launch stage will see the earliest Everdome supporters and adopters, named "Tier-1 Evernauts", embark from the Hatta Spaceport to the Everdome Phoenix (EVR Phoenix), a spaceship design inspired by imaginable and viable technologies, created in collaboration with the project's space scientist partners.

This Everdome Phoenix will then rendezvous and dock with the immense Everdome Cyclor in Earth's lower orbit, a 3km long interplanetary vessel which will propel the first interplanetary metaverse community to their new settlement on Mars.

Everdome's city on Mars is placed in Jezero Crater, a location chosen by NASA for its contemporary space missions. Once arriving in Everdome city, the pioneering Evernauts will enjoy multiple storylines and experiences, encompassing adventure, entertainment, learning and trading in this virtual, hyper-realistic metaverse space.

All stages of the Everdome experience are inspired by futuristic technology, enjoying hyper-realistic visuals created with cutting edge conceptual artists, augmented by engaging storytelling and accompanied by a soundtrack and sonics composed in collaboration with renowned music producers and composers.





FIT FOR PURPOSE

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **John Woods**, CTO at Algorand, to find out how the blockchain company has gained the edge over its market competition by offering a chain that he believes is ‘fit for purpose’.

John Woods is one of the most respected thought leaders within the crypto community globally.

A couple of months ago, Woods decided to leave one of the biggest players in the cryptocurrency industry Cardano, to take up the position of CTO at Algorand.

Some of his industry peers may have been surprised by that decision, but Woods says the sheer quality of Algorand’s technology made the offer impossible to ignore.

In a candid interview with CNME, he explains that he is driven by a desire to deliver first-class customer experiences, wants to increase the accessibility of Algorand to everybody – and explained how their VRF primitive is the only market player capable of solving the ‘trilemma’.

We kickstarted the conversation by talking about the experience economy that we now live in, and how Woods is determined to deliver great customer experience to Algorand users.

“There’s nothing that I love more than a great customer

experience. I’m very focused on pursuing great customer experiences, both in my personal life, and providing it in my professional one. In addition to customer experience, it’s all about the product. When I look at the ecosystem now, it’s my job to examine where Algorand is now, and determine where it needs to improve, and where it needs to be in a couple of years. We really do have a great array of tools that developers can use to bring their imagination to life through the production and development of a working application, and it’s critical for us that we deliver a seamless experience for the end-user,” said Woods.

Woods reinforced the customer experience element within Algorand, by going into greater detail in relation to different options that exist within the product portfolio.

“I want to coalesce and take the best parts of the ecosystem and make it easy to find. I think if you’re someone that is either advanced, or at an intermediate stage in terms of development then you’d be able to go online

and find a couple of different tools to really bring that idea to life. However, that’s not for everybody, there are plenty of people who don’t have the time, or the technical ability to figure all this stuff out for themselves. What I am trying to do is make a blessed path, where it is very obvious to new people that this is the tools suite that I use, and here is how you can use it. It goes back to my idea of a product, so the tool suite is the product, and the education, documentation and the how to use it is really the customer experience, so when I marry these two elements together then I think we’re going to have a really good customer experience,” said Woods.

Interestingly, Woods likened where Algorand and other cryptocurrencies are now to Microsoft Windows back in the 90’s.

“Listening to your customers is really important and I view developers as our customers. Essentially, these people are the ones responsible for building the apps. If you take Microsoft Windows for example, when we were kids there was very little on Microsoft Windows 3.1, but then 95 came out and there was this explosion of new apps and the internet blew up, and today, there is an app on Windows for everything. These computers are just so incredibly cool, and useful now because there is just an unbelievable volume of apps for everything. Algorand, and other cryptocurrencies right now are very much like Windows back in the early 90’s, where there are some things on it, but it’s not a bustling



hive of innovation, that has an app store, with thousands of incredible applications. However, it is developers that are going to get us to this buzzing metropolis of a platform that is very easy to use and fun to play with, and we have to enable them,” said Woods.

Woods acknowledged that in the experience economy Gen Z has a low tolerance for bad experiences, so it’s imperative to get it right.

He also highlighted the different ways he has been interacting with developers in a bid to give him a better

understanding of some of the challenges they face.

“I’ve only been in the role two months, but I’m engaging in many different ways with developers. I’ve joined Twitter Spaces with developers regularly, and I listen to their pain points. In addition to this I have downloaded the tools and launched a native



A lot of developers are young and they have a low tolerance for bad experiences, so in reality we only get one shot at getting it right.”

asset on Algorand, an NFT, and I have tried my hand at building a smart contract. I learned how I get my code compiled, and get it running on the main net. I also engage with the big players from the industry, whether that is the exchanges, the de-fi apps, the wallet creators, or the people who build the infrastructure like the block explorers, so I try to get the entire ecosystem of stakeholders to really listen to what they have to say. A lot of developers are young and they have a low tolerance for bad experiences, so in reality we only get one shot at getting it

right. If our documentation is not good, and are software is hard to use then they are going to go somewhere else. Our objective is to reduce the risk of that friction, so they come, they like and they stay,” said Woods.

Woods admitted that it was a difficult decision for him to leave Cardano, but declared that he was left in awe at the sheer quality of the technology used by Algorand, claiming it is the best kept secret in the crypto industry.

Trilemma

The decision to leave Cardano and join Algorand was a huge decision for me from both a career and personal perspective, but when I saw the technology that was available at Algorand I was shocked. I think it's the best kept secret in crypto. I wasn't aware of just how good it was, and during the interview process I downloaded it, and I was playing with it – and I just couldn't believe how good it was. I believe that it's the first chain that is 'fit for purpose' – and when I say fit for purpose, I mean that it is fit for the things that we say we want to do with crypto. We as the crypto community say things like let's make this decentralized identity for everyone in the world, let's bank the unbanked, let's go to an African nation like Nigeria and make it the way you get your passport. However, these are huge, very grand ideals, and it's all very well saying these things, but it's not going to work if it costs \$30 to send a transaction every time you try to check in at an airport, and it's not going to

work if you're at a store and you're trying to purchase your weekly shopping and you have to wait 30 minutes for the transaction to process. The crypto community talks a big game about building things, but you have to deliver,” said Woods.

Woods added that Algorand has the scalability, security and robustness that is fit for purpose.

He also explained what he means when he says that Algorand are the only company that can solve the trilemma.

“Essentially the trilemma is decentralization, security and scalability, but decentralization is also a little bit different to robustness because decentralization is asking is there a central authority controlling the network? Algorand has managed to solve this trilemma because its decentralized so there is no person with a finger on a button that can turn it off or on. It's owned by the people for the people and it's secure and scalable,” said Woods.

In terms of what it is that really differentiates Algorand from other crypto players, Woods said it's all about the VRF.

“It all starts with the VRF, which is a crypto graphic primitive within the world of cryptography. You have various building blocks, and one of them is encryption, so you can take data and then using enigma nobody can read it, so that's an example of a primitive. You can do digital signatures and hashing, and hashing is this idea that you take a large bit of data and run



Algorand, and other cryptocurrencies right now are very much like Windows back in the early 90's, where there are some things on it, but it's not a bustling hive of innovation, that has an app store, with thousands of incredible applications.”

it through an algorithm and get a fingerprint, no matter how big, or small the input is you can always get this fingerprint. So, essentially these are cryptographic Lego bricks that allows us to build more complicated systems. Our CEO created this new VRF primitive and it is the basis for how we solve this trilemma,” said Woods.

He explained that normally with cryptocurrencies they are mined in a way in which people will pull together their mining power in order to produce blocks which is proof of work – and proof of stake is when you join up your funds and produce blocks.

“However, the VRF is used in a way in which you don't have pools, you have wallets and they by sending a simple message to the network they can opt in to creating blocks, and what it does is allow you to select a block, then it is validated, and then it is certified. The magic of the VRF is the fact that you can always validate that the VRF was run fairly, but you can't predict its next output. It has allowed us to create a new type of consensus mechanism called 'pure proof of stake' and this really gives Algorand the edge,” concluded Woods. 

WESTERN DIGITAL

ICONIC LEADER

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Mohammed Owais**, Sales Director at Western Digital, to find out how the global data storage leader has firmly established itself as a truly 'iconic' brand.



14

Mohammed Owais is a well-respected thought leader amongst industry peers in the IT ecosystem across the Middle East.

The charismatic Sales Director at Western Digital has played a central role in the company's continued growth in the GCC region.

CNME managed to secure an exclusive interview with the dynamic sales executive onsite at GITEK Global in a bid to find out what the future holds for the data storage leader.

We began the interview by

focusing on the impact and platform that GITEK offers to IT leaders like Western Digital.

"GITEK provides us with a really unique opportunity to reconnect with all our customers and partners. In the last three years, we have introduced a large number of new products and solutions to the marketplace, but we didn't have enough events like GITEK to properly showcase them, because as we know physical events GITEK were severely disrupted due to the onset and aftermath of the global pandemic. However, at Western Digital, we are hugely excited about the future, and at GITEK you can really witness and see first-hand the incredible innovation that is taking place on a large scale throughout the IT ecosystem globally," said Owais.

As aforementioned above, Western Digital is a market leader when it comes to data storage, but how has the company managed to cultivate such a strong position for itself in such a competitive and saturated marketplace.

"To be honest, and I say this with a lot of humility, Western Digital are one of the most iconic storage companies in the entire world. 50% of the world's data resides in some of our devices, whether than be in

your cards on your smartphone, or on your laptop using our external storage devices. We touch people's lives on a daily basis. There is a popular acronym that we use at Western Digital, and that is, data is the new oil and we have all the barrels," said Owais.

In terms of what differentiates Western Digital from its market rivals, Owais believes it's the fact that they enjoy the best of 'both worlds'.

"To be quite frank, none of our competitors have the best of both worlds in terms of the mechanical storage and the flash storage capabilities they have to offer, so I think we are very uniquely positioned in the market. In addition to this, you may well have the best products in the world, but what differentiates us is our presence on the ground. We have been present in this region for over two decades, and because of how close we are to our customers we were cognisant of these opportunities a lot earlier than most of our competitors and that gave us a real edge," said Owais.

He added that another component in Western Digital's success has been the fact that it has been there for every step of the way in the UAE's incredible transformation as a global hub for innovation and technology.



“When we first entered the market, the UAE had just started booming, and we’ve been part of that incredible journey of growth undergone in Dubai and across the UAE, and we have played a key role in the country’s development as a hub of innovation and growth,” said Owais.

The UAE’s transformation has been well celebrated, but its neighbours Saudi Arabia, under the progressive leadership of MBS is undergoing their own economic transformation program in the form of Saudi Vision 2030.

Owais is excited by the opportunities emerging from the Kingdom as the country looks to reduce its dependency on oil and become a hub for technology and tourism, as Western Digital has been on the ground in the KSA since 2000.

“Western Digital and Sandisk have been in the KSA market for the best part of two decades. We appointed a distributor in Saudi Arabia way back in 2000, so we are very well established and respected in the region. We are one of the leading brands in the Kingdom, and if you visit a hardware, or channel company in the country, then you can’t miss the Western Digital hard drives. We’ve invested aggressively all over the region, and in a bid to better serve our customers we now engage in what we call the ‘last mile’ of service for our consumers and customers, and this is another key differentiator for us,” said Owais.



One element that is completely infused in our DNA is the fact that we always listen to our customers.”

Customer-centricity is another core principle and mission statement of Western Digital, and that closeness to their customers is another key factor in its success.

“One element that is completely infused in our DNA is the fact that we always listen to our customers. We hear them, and we strive to develop and deliver the technology that they need to overcome their business challenges,” said Owais.

Owais conceded that Western Digital face many of the same challenges encountered by their market rivals due to the ongoing macroeconomic situation impacting the globally economy, but said he was extremely satisfied with their business stability, and excited about future growth opportunities in the next 3-5 years.

“Look I think it’s fair to say that we share the same challenges that all the other vendors in this region have due to the macro-economic situation facing us all. However, I can say this, and again I say it with humility, but in the data storage industry we are very fortunate that we don’t have many challenges when it comes to our own business. There is a lot of opportunity, and with the exponential growth of data projected to grow ten-fold in the next 3-5 years, we are in a great position to leverage our technology and products to enjoy even more market success. Data is the new currency and the new oil, and Western Digital have the barrels,” concluded Owais. cmo

ACCEDIAN

SIMPLY THE BEST

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Richard Piasentin**, Chief Marketing and Chief Strategy Officer at Accedian during GITEX Global 2022. In a candid and fascinating discussion, Piasentin outlined the factors behind their phenomenal growth over the last 12 months in the Middle East – and declared that their portfolio of products are the best in the world.



16

Piasentin is one of the most respected and revered technology thought leaders in the IT ecosystem globally, and he has enjoyed a stellar career.

The last time we spoke was at GITEX 2021, an event where the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic still loomed large throughout the conference.

However, 12 months on GITEX was back with a bang, and so to was the dynamic Chief Marketing and Chief Strategy Officer at Accedian, who had once again endured a gruelling 16-hour flight from Canada to be onsite at the Middle East's flagship technology symposium.

I kickstarted our conversation a year later, by quite naturally asking him why he was back at GITEX!

"We have brought some incredible innovations that



we really wanted to display here at GITEX. This is the very first show where we are actively demonstrating our new security product, which has just been launched in the market – and we're extremely excited about that. In addition to this, our partnerships have expanded significantly over the last 12 months, which is another good indicator to the success we're enjoying across the region," said Piasentin.

Piasentin then paid tribute to the channel ecosystem in the Middle East, saying they were without a doubt the most innovative globally.

"This might surprise some of my North American counterparts, but I truly believe that the Middle East market has the most innovative value-added distributors and resellers in the world. There's just no disputing that in my opinion," said Piasentin.

Piasentin added that Accedian's tech platforms were really empowering those channel enterprises.

"Those businesses are adopting our products, and are integrating our Accedian technology platform into their operations, because ultimately, we enable their businesses unlike any other provider of performance and security solutions. We have seen



tremendous progress with our providers in the market, with companies such as SecureNet and Zain really benefiting from our solution offering,” said Piasentin.

The Accedian executive then elaborated more on the details of what their partnerships with Zain, Cisco and SecureNet actually entails.

He disclosed that the recent announcement with Zain is a joint venture between Accedian and Cisco, and that the partnership is delivering customer experience and automated assurance solutions both to Zain and through Zain to their business services customers. Fundamentally, their mission is to drive innovation across the region.

“Accedian is Cisco’s service assurance partner, and together with Cisco we just launched a project with Zain in the

market here, and it’s a really interesting use-case that utilises our service assurance platform on top of Cisco’s Crosswork Network Automation infrastructure. However, it also provides individual end-user consumable dashboards on performance. What this ultimately allows Zain to both benefit from and deliver real-time performance analytics and insight to their end customers,” said Piasentin.

He also briefly touched on the details of their partnership with SecureNet.

“SecureNet is deploying value-added reseller services and managed services around high-performance networking, as well as managed security solutions using our performance visibility and network detection and response NDR technologies. Again, it’s a partnership that is driving real value and benefits for us both – and SecureNet is truly an innovative first-mover in this market,” said Piasentin.

The Accedian executive then switched his focus back to the UAE, and the Middle East in general, and said that the ‘culture of innovation’ that exists in the market here is one of the key factors why the company has enjoyed exponential growth in the last year.

“We have increased our business here 5X in the last 12 months, which is just phenomenal. We couldn’t be happier with the performance of the team locally. There are a number of factors you need to consider when examining why we have enjoyed so much success of late. However, I think firstly, a major factor

is the ‘culture of innovation’ that exists in this market. Fundamentally, people want to unleash the potential of society, and as a consequence of that they want to adopt the best possible technology stacks to eliminate any barriers to those people producing they best that they can,” said Piasentin.

In terms of what ultimately differentiates Accedian from other market players, Piasentin again highlighted a range of different factors in their success, one of which being the fact the company was born in the ‘guts’ of carrier networks.

“We were born in the guts of carrier networks, which means that we were forged in the most high-performance environments possible. We came up through those ranks, and we worked with our customers who were developing the infrastructure for the cloud, so we were essentially born in the same companies that built the original cloud technologies. We recognised how those technologies were being used, and we adopted the right cloud technologies for our customer base to drive rapid implementation of services. We have the highest performance and granularity in real-time, cloud-based performance and security products in the world.

This market wants the best, and we are able to deliver that to them,” concluded Piasentin. CCMA



We were born in the guts of carrier networks, which means that we were forged in the most high-performance environments possible.”

TIMWETECH

DIGITAL ENABLERS

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Hatem Hariri**, Senior Vice President at MENA, Turkey, CIS and South Asia at TIMWETECH, during GITEX Global to find out how the digital enabler is accelerating digital transformation for telecom operators globally.



18

Hatem Hariri is one of the most distinguished and respected IT leaders in the Middle East, and was perhaps best known lately through his role as Managing Director of CNS.

However, after a hugely successful period with CNS, Hariri has left for pastures new, and has now been tasked with the responsibility of driving new growth for the company that has positioned itself to be a global leader in terms of 'digital

enablement' for telco and mobile operators.

In a candid interview with CNME during GITEX Global, Hariri talked about the company's product offering, its market presence in the Middle East – and the importance of an event like GITEX for the IT ecosystem across the region.

Digital transformation is a term our readers have become very accustomed to over the last few years, and that's where we began this conversation.

Hariri highlighted the

importance of digital transformation and documented the role they are playing in relation to helping telecom operators become digital players.

"The company specialises in digital transformation, and we work primarily with telecom operators. We essentially provide them with access to platforms that allows them to manage all of their content offerings. However, whilst the telecoms sector is undoubtedly our biggest industry vertical, we also work closely with the banking and retail sectors too in order to help them achieve their digital transformation goals," said Hariri.

Hariri also outlined the importance of delivering seamless digital experiences for an increasingly expectant customer base.

"Loyalty, customer engagement and retention is key for all industries, but particularly in the telco sector, so we are leveraging our broad portfolio of solutions to help operators incorporate loyalty programs into their operations, which we know is critical in the new experience economy that we all operate in," said Hariri.

In terms of the challenges, Hariri conceded that digital transformation is not easy, and provided more context as to the issues faced by operators, not only in the Middle East, but on a global scale.

"I think it's fair to say that when you look at telecom operators globally, they have all encountered difficulties when it comes to digital transformation. We don't send text messages anymore, and we use OTT platforms like WhatsApp or

Skype to make calls for free, so this major revenue model and for telco's vanished overnight. Many operators have struggled to monetize voice and data, and have recognised the fact that they need to embrace digital transformation and become digital players, because it's what their customers are demanding from them. This is where we come onboard, and utilise our range of skills and expertise to empower them to become digital players, and remove the complexities and issues they face when embarking on a digital transformation journey to bring them into the digital world," said Hariri.

TIMEWETECH has offices in the UAE, KSA, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Tunisia, Egypt, Angola, and Ethiopia and is hoping to expand across the GCC and Middle East in the next 12 months, but Hariri also disclosed that they are looking to expand operations in Africa too.

"We have been visible in the MENA region for the best part of 20 years and enjoy close working relationships with all the major telecom operators across the GCC region. However, recently we have decided to expand and are significantly increasing our footprint across Africa, which really is an emerging market full of new opportunities, and one we believe we can have a lot of success in, when you consider the portfolio of solutions we have to offer," said Hariri.

Hariri acknowledged that digital transformation is vague, and it has a different meaning depending on what way you approach it, but he articulated to CNME what DX means to a



company like TIMWETECH.

Digital transformation is a big word, it's a broad term and can have a different meaning for different entities. Some people believe it is a process, some think of it as a technology, whilst others think of it as a program. However, what we do is merge all of this together, and what differentiates us from other digital enablers is the fact that we fundamentally combine business and technology to provide better services to the end-users of the operators in a bid to generate revenue for them. We engage with the customer, and we go with them hand-in-hand on this journey,



I think it's fair to say that when you look at telecom operators globally, they have all encountered difficulties when it comes to digital transformation."

and we provide them with a platform that allows them to aggregate all the content that they want to deliver to their customers, like Netflix and other streaming platforms like Amazon Prime and Disney. It's our job to give operators the tools they need to win customers, and retain them by delivering seamless digital experiences," said Hariri.

The TIMWETECH executive concluded a superb interview, by highlighting the importance of an event like GITEK is not only for them as a company, but for the entire IT industry in general. He believes that GITEK serves as a mecca when it comes to new innovations and technologies.

"GITEK was incredible this year, and there was such a great buzz and energy around the show for the whole week. It truly has become a global event, and Dubai always impresses us, but this year they were pushing the boundaries of what's possible even more at GITEK. We witnessed Metaverse use-cases on display, and NFT creation, and that's fantastic to see. GITEK really is a tremendous platform to showcase all these new disruptive technologies that are designed to transform industries. The beauty of Dubai, and GITEK is that they have a burning desire to show the latest and the greatest when it comes to technology, and TIMWETECH are here to play a big part in this new journey to help our customers capitalise on the benefits of nascent spaces like the Metaverse. It's a truly exciting time for us and the region," concluded Hariri. cnme



OBSSESSED WITH DELIVERING HIGH-QUALITY AUDIO

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Jose Rivas**, Vice President of Global Sales, Emerging Markets at Shure, to find out how the company is leveraging their portfolio of solutions to empower the work from anywhere world – and why Shure is ‘obsessed’ with delivering high quality products to their customers.

We now live in a ‘work from anywhere’ world, and that rapid shift to a hybrid workforce has resulted in a huge dependence on high-quality collaboration technology to ensure business continuity and efficiency is retained outside the parameters of the traditional office space. Can you tell our readers how Shure has leveraged their product portfolio to help businesses have higher-quality collaboration experiences?

For almost a century, Shure has developed high-quality audio electronics that are reliable and built to last. In today’s working environment flexibility is key and we offer solutions that can help ensure a collaborative experience



whether it is in the office, reconfigured office, or home working.

With Stem Ecosystem, organisations can have audio devices that adapts to different spaces and budgets: from teams

trying to economically kit-out facilities for hybrid working or simply for smaller rooms within a bigger AV project.

As it is equally important how teams are equipped at home, solutions like Shure MOTIV™ Microphones or AONIC Headphones enhance the home-working experience and users can sound professional when joining their meetings remotely.

With Microflex® Ecosystem meeting rooms can be easily adapted for different purposes: from all hands meetings, classrooms, and hybrid events, while ensuring exceptional audio for all of them.

But now, it’s not only about product. Shure has also established technology partnerships with key unified communication platforms to ensure our products work well together. For example,



Microflex Ecosystem is certified for Microsoft Teams and Shure MV7 Microphone is Zoom certified, being the first to receive the new professional microphone certification for Zoom.

Thanks to the quality of our products and these, among other tech alliances, we can ensure our customers have great experiences with our audio and conferencing solutions. Users can feel equally part of the meeting regardless of where they are participating from.

Shure has become a market leader because it gives customers the autonomy to choose the product that works for them, and the flexibility of Shure's products allows for this to happen. Can you tell us more about what inspires the innovation behind your products - and why you believe

having that flexibility for customers is so important in today's digital economy?

At Shure, we have a deep audio experience that we leverage when designing our products.

We know what works on stage, in extremely demanding environments during live events, in broadcast, and we want to deliver those outstanding experiences to everyone in the workplace and classrooms.

As a global company and having teams collaborating remotely daily, we experience our own products ourselves, so we have a passion to make

them better and better. We also collaborate closely with our customers and partners.

This helps us understand their frustrations and demands, but also to stay ahead of market trends. We use this feedback and our expertise to deliver the highest quality products and audio solutions. That is what inspires us.

We understand that we live in a fast-paced, changing environment that requires us to be flexible. Today's hybrid, hyflex and remote environments mean that there are new ways for businesses to work, and those change daily.

Participants can join a meeting in person one day and the next day join from home. Creating a technology that easily adapts to this flexible environment is fundamental. But businesses also need to equip their teams with gear



Shure has also established technology partnerships with key unified communication platforms to ensure our products work well together.”

that can adapt to this working model, and this means providing systems both for meeting rooms and at home.

Can you provide us with more information on the unique audio capabilities of your Microflex Ecosystem and Stem Ecosystem - and what are the key benefits it provides for businesses that integrate these products into their day-to-day operations?

Microflex Ecosystem and Stem Ecosystem provide high-quality audio for customers, whether their needs are simple or complex.

For corporations, governments, higher education, or greater organisations that might have bigger investment possibilities, Microflex Ecosystem portfolio, which recently added the MXA920 Ceiling Array Microphone, brings outstanding audio quality to even the most difficult meeting and teaching spaces.

These devices undergo exhaustive development processes and quality tests in our labs, and easily integrate with third-party AV equipment. They also allow spaces to adapt to different situations. We know that some broadcasters and film production companies have been using some Microflex Ecosystem solutions on set and in studio.

With Stem Ecosystem portfolio, Shure offers a customisable solution that require a more straightforward audio and control package which local IT teams can deploy in standard meeting rooms.

For small businesses or simply smaller meeting rooms

within a larger AV project can have consistent and effective audio with these solutions. Now with an enhanced acoustic performance thanks to the firmware 2.5, recently announced. It is easy to use, scalable and can be combined with other communication platforms.

What are the biggest challenges businesses face when it comes to collaboration technology - and how does Shure offer a remedy to that issue in terms of the products they provide?

There are several challenges business face when it comes to collaborative technology: for example, products with limited capabilities being deployed in unsuitable environments, budget restrictions, complexity of installation and scarcity of AV professionals with the necessary technical skills.

For these challenges, Stem Ecosystem is a great solution, as it can be installed and scaled by IT teams without specialist AV skills, it can be configured for every type of meeting and teaching space to give a cost effective, and user-friendly communication experience.

Another factor to keep in mind is that in AV and conferencing systems, there are several solutions and technologies involved: video, audio, software, and it's fundamental that they collaborate and connect seamlessly.

When they don't, it negatively impacts teams' productivity and creates unnecessary frustrations, leading to time waste and mental burnout.



Our audio solutions can help solve those issues as they are easy to integrate and combine with other AV platforms while remaining user friendly.”

Our audio solutions can help solve those issues as they are easy to integrate and combine with other AV platforms while remaining user friendly. With our audio devices, teams can connect, collaborate, and communicate efficiently – focusing on what is important: their meeting.

What are the most important industry verticals for Shure?

Shure's main focus is providing reliable and high-quality audio gear wherever our customers and the industry need them. We've supported companies in different spaces like pharmaceuticals, finance, local and national governments, higher education institutions, and more.

We've recently released products for conferencing such as the MXA920, but also wireless systems for live events and broadcasting, like Axient® Digital.

We also have great microphones for podcasters, gamers, and content creators. We make products for high-stakes moment on stage, in the studio or in the meeting room with the goal that our customers sound extraordinary and can always rely on Shure. 

IDCA

BUILDING FUTURE-PROOF ECONOMIES

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Medhi Paryavi**, Chairman of the International Data Center Authority (IDCA) to learn more about the nature of their work with international conglomerates, large corporations and government entities – and what opportunities they can provide for telecom operators and cloud providers across the region.

24

Can you tell our readers more about the IDCA and what the mission statement of the organisation is?

The International Data Center Authority (IDCA) has been established to streamline, structure, educate and give direction to the Information Technology industry.

It was set up with the mission of helping nations around the world build sustainable digital economies. We help them in a very diverse manner, both in terms of education, advisory and mentorship, in order to build digital infrastructure that is future proof.

How important is the opening of your MEA Regional Office to accelerate your ambition to help nations across the region build sustainable digital economies?

This region is very important for us and comes with a lot of opportunities.



After long and careful consideration, we've realised that we need to be locally present here due to the high demand for technology and everything related.

We believe that our local presence here will add immense value to end users, vendors and providers, so that's why we decided to be based here as well.

Can you outline to our readers who exactly your target customers are?

We're targeting a broad range of people. On the IT side of things, we've got experts, consultants, manufacturers, vendors, service/technology providers, cloud companies, municipalities, states, nations, ministers of education, ministers of economy, ministers of technology – so we deal with nations, helping them build the right digital economy foundations.

We also deal with institutions, corporates and governments alike, to build the right transformation plans, to be prepared for Industry 4.0.

What international experience does IDCA bring to the local market?

We come with extensive, in-depth experience because of our global exposure, the nature of our work, our interactions with international conglomerates, large corporations and government entities.

I think our experience and exposure that we have internationally will bring a lot of value to this region, because there is fast-paced development here.

But at the same time, we need to take a step back and make sure we make use of the experience of everyone else

experience and diversity could bring exactly this.

Can you expand more on the opportunities you can provide for your customers and end users?

Everyone will benefit. Let's look at the end users first. Very often, end users are not aware of how to host their data, where to host it, what benchmarking system to use—everybody's using a different system or mechanism.

So how do they make a future-proof statement and confront the delivery claims in a mature manner?

And how can the end-user

understand what exactly the delivery claims are? We make it simple and easy for them to choose the best provider, so they will benefit in the best possible way. We're very end-user based.

Can you elaborate on the opportunities that exist for telecommunication operators and cloud providers?

Providers will get clarity about where to provide their services and which industry/vertical to target. They will also understand the specific requirements of each industry, and how to provide customised services and categories that fit in with each of their needs.

It makes their decisions easier because they will be able to understand their audience well.

Cloud providers will get a clear understanding about how to interact intelligently with their end users and how to address their various requirements—anywhere from AI and Machine Learning, to cloud computing and cloud services, all the way down to IT and physical infrastructure.

All of this needs to come together in the form of an ecosystem whereby everybody will have a universal way of communicating, and bridging those gaps is what we do.

We're here to create an intellectual dialogue between the facility guys, IT guys and application guys, as well as the decision makers—CIOs, CEOs, CFOs and show them the bottom line—show them what is their total cost of ownership for a specific IT decision versus another. **cmme**



who has been here before us, to ensure that we take the right decisions going forward and avoid mistakes. This region is a good example.

Every construction project you see here is an example of learning from everybody else's experience and doing it better. So, I think in the area of digital economy and digital infrastructure, our expertise,



The International Data Center Authority (IDCA) has been established to streamline, structure, educate and give direction to the Information Technology industry.”



CULTURE IS KEY

CNME Editor Mark Forker secured an exclusive interview with **Fayez Ibbini**, CEO of IT leader Alpha Data, to find out how the company has emerged stronger in a post-pandemic world – and how he believes its culture has been the critical component in its phenomenal success.

Fayez Ibbini, is one of the most respected and distinguished thought leaders in the IT ecosystem across the Middle East region.

CNME last spoke with the charismatic CEO of Alpha Data back in July 2020, when we were engulfed in the crisis that was the global COVID-19 pandemic.

During that conversation two years ago, what struck me then was how upbeat and optimistic about the future Ibbini was, despite the many challenges he and his team were attempting to overcome as the world shifted to working remotely.

The strength and bravery of his leadership, and his honesty and transparency ensured that Alpha Data not only navigated their way through the choppy waters of the storm that was the pandemic, but in fact emerged stronger as a result.

Some of the practices

implemented by Ibbini back in 2020 remain today, such as their regular webinar meetings with all the Alpha Data team.

“I remember saying at the time that there were huge challenges with the pandemic, but with challenge comes opportunity. We embraced the challenge and capitalised on the opportunities that were emerging from the ‘new normal’ as it was coined at the time. For example, traditional internal face-to-face meetings that we had in Dubai, or Abu Dhabi were typically restricted to just a few people, but during the pandemic having to move to video calls allowed us to get



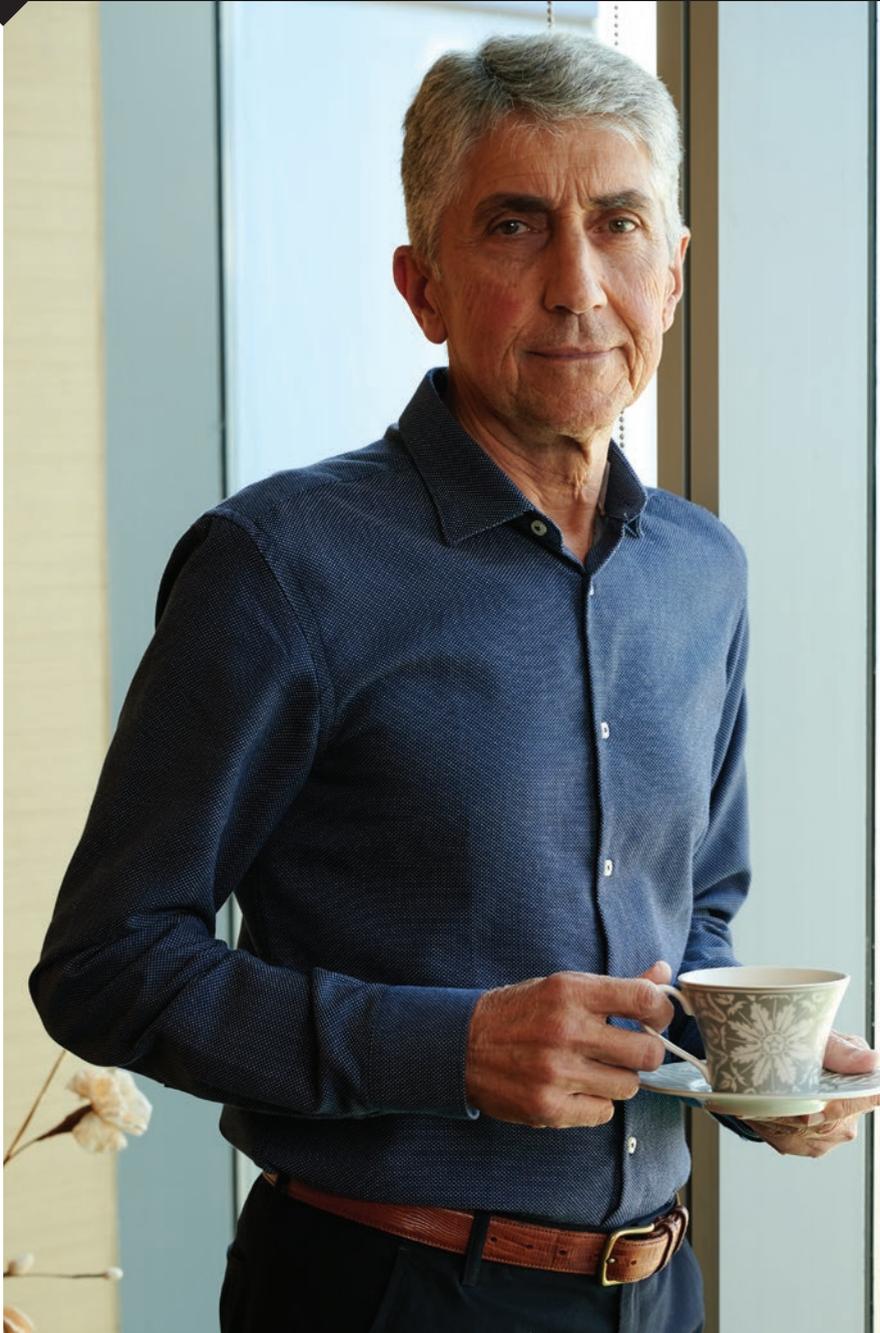
I believe that if a business has a strong culture, then it can achieve great things, in many ways, culture translates into trust.”

whole teams involved. We now hold a twice-monthly webinar with over 200 people, and these changes really have been beneficial for the connectivity and culture of Alpha Data,” said Ibbini.

Ibbini admitted that he was skeptical about remote working and had fears that it would significantly impact and alter the company’s culture and key core principles.

“To be honest, I didn’t think Zoom was going to work, I had real concerns. I felt that it would have a detrimental effect and impact on our company culture. However, the mind is incredibly able to adapt and slowly but surely, we all got used to it; now the whole process is very comfortable and natural for us all,” said Ibbini.

His mindset has changed so much that the Alpha Data CEO now attempts to dissuade people from travelling long distances to meet him in the



office, as he simply views that as unproductive and often a waste of resources.

“If someone says that they are coming down to Abu Dhabi to meet me, my instant response is do you really need to do that? I just don’t believe it’s efficient anymore. You feel obliged because someone has travelled so far to see you that you need to engage in pleasantries for 10-15 minutes,

then you’ll move to the main discussion, and then after the meeting concludes you’ll spend another 10-15 minutes saying goodbye. Whereas with Zoom, or other video collaboration technology you can just get going, and it is so much more productive,” said Ibbini.

The visionary leadership on display from Ibbini, and the company’s culture of evolution, which has been evident since

its inception over 40 years ago, has served the IT entity well, so much so that it is on course for a record-breaking year.

“From a business perspective we spent the bulk of 2020 helping our customers and equipping them with the solutions they needed to adapt to working remotely in a seamless way. It could have been a very difficult year for us due to the crisis, but, even though it was challenging, it actually turned out to be a very good year for us, and that momentum has continued. Quite frankly we are on course for 2022 to be the best year ever, so it’s been an incredible couple of years for us,” said Ibbini.

When asked what was the main factor behind the incredible success enjoyed by Alpha Data, Ibbini was unequivocal in his response, the answer was ‘our culture’.

“Culture is to a company what passion is to an individual; it is what drives them to achieve the best they are capable of.”

When asked what culture looked like to him, and what the core characteristics of culture are, Ibbini said that culture created a feeling of trust and that enables people to be part of something greater than them.

I believe that if a business has a strong culture, then it can achieve great things, in many ways, culture translates into trust. When we have the same values, and we are all on the same mission, then we create trust. If I work very hard then I trust that my colleagues in logistics, warehousing

and engineering are working just as hard, because the culture implies that we all win together, and lose together. As a sales and engineering organisation we are all motivated by incentives in the form of KPIs and key business outcomes. However, I think the secret sauce for any company is culture, and our culture has enabled us to achieve great success and growth,” said Ibbini.

Alpha Data has claimed that it is ‘relentless’ in its pursuit of transformation for its customers in the fast-paced digital economy we now live in.

The company leverages nascent technologies to help their customers overcome challenges.

One tangible example of this, is a unique project they worked on with a governmental agency in the UAE, in which they used AI to completely transform a process that was extremely time consuming.

“We worked with a governmental agency who wanted to verify that all new Quran’s that are issued are accurate and reflect the original scripture. The smallest variation on the Arabic text can change the meaning. This government agency receives a large number of Quran’s for approval, which means they have to verify everything before printing. It’s a tedious task which is very time consuming for a human to do manually; and the risk of errors is high. In building a solution, we engaged in a number of technologies. One of them was robotics, as we needed to physically turn the pages of each Quran being

verified. We then needed to implement video cameras that could capture every single word. We leveraged AI to compare all of those images captured with the original scripture to ensure it was all correct. Now you can take a newly printed Quran and leverage the power of AI to quickly find out if there are any revisions or corrections to be made; this process has been completely transformed through the use of AI,” said Ibbini.

Staying on the topic of nascent trends and technologies, our conversation quickly shifted to the new futuristic world of the Metaverse.

At the recent installment of GITEX Global, almost every company was talking about their plans for the Metaverse.

Unsurprisingly, as a leader in innovation, Alpha Data is already involved in some early Metaverse projects.

“We are engaged in a number of projects related to the Metaverse. The Metaverse is an environment that is designed to ultimately enrich different types of experiences across multiple industries. I believe it is a great tool for training in virtual reality; sectors like healthcare are leveraging the power of the Metaverse to enable their students to watch brain surgery be performed in real-time and because of the

3D environment it is far more interactive and immersive in a Metaverse space.

“The beauty of the UAE at all levels, whether it is the government or private sectors, is the fact that they are so willing to try new technologies, they don’t want to be left behind, instead they want to take the lead in these spaces and drive the future roadmap and direction of its adoption,” said Ibbini.

CNME concluded the discussion by asking Ibbini what the future holds for the company, and what strategy he is embarking upon to continue to drive growth.

“I believe that the best strategy you can have is to grow with your clients. If you try to race ahead of them then you will lose out, but if you don’t keep up with them then they will simply go elsewhere. In the UAE, the clients are very well-informed and they are constantly exploring, and if you are close to them then they will tell you what they want.

We’re blessed to operate in a region that for the last number of years has really benefited from the government’s long-term vision for the UAE. It has made the country one of the most technologically progressive places on earth. We are also excited by the opportunities emerging in places like the KSA and Qatar, and believe we are well-positioned to capitalise on the growth opportunities surfacing in those markets. We are very excited for the future, we plan to continue to learn with our customers and grow with them,” concluded Ibbini. 



Our mission is to accelerate our clients transition to a ‘digital-first’ organisation.”

GODADDY

EMBRACING THE 'POWER OF DIGITAL'

CNME Editor Mark Forker sat down for an in-depth discussion with **Selina Bieber**, Commercial Strategy Senior Director, International Markets at GoDaddy, to find out how the global marketing leader is leveraging their expertise and knowledge to empower entrepreneurs and start-ups across the UAE to embrace the power of digital.

We know that the UAE is a global hub for technology and innovation, but it's only in recent years that the country has really started to make a concerted effort to cultivate and foster an environment. What role specifically is GoDaddy playing in terms of supporting the start-up community in the UAE?

When we look at the UAE, or any market in which there is investment being made to facilitate start-ups at a local level, then it's clear to us that this ecosystem has to be built from the bottom up.

We look at it from a more global perspective, and when you examine the key challenges that start-ups and entrepreneurs face, they are the same across the board, regardless of what market you are operating in. We have 21 million customers globally, and essentially all of them are on

the same journey.

They are restricted when it comes to access to human resources and technical knowledge, and they need to find a way to get up and running very quickly. GoDaddy has 25 years of experiences working with small businesses and entrepreneurs, but our approach has obviously evolved over time, and we've seen the world move from a more physical space to a much more digital one.

What we do is try to determine what the profile of an everyday entrepreneur is, is it somebody that really needs a do-it-yourself solution, like a mumpreneur, or somebody starting a new business?

At GoDaddy, we talk a lot about building your online business presence, but it's important to acknowledge that there has been a huge evolution. An online presence in the digital economy means that you are fully integrated, which enables you to build integrated digital

marketing within that, and design your own website.

If you look at our website + marketing product, which I used to build my own website, you can basically plug it in to Facebook and Instagram, and you can see the online appointments that are available.

For example, I host mentoring sessions on Friday's, so if people want to join then they can, and I can also potentially have a 1on1 with them, so having all those capabilities on the one platform removes all the complexity of having to set that up yourself and that is a huge value to entrepreneurs.

However, it's important to highlight that you need to make it affordable, and the way our plans work is that you can do it step-by-step, so you can start small, or go bigger, and if you're having difficulty then you can downsize, and that's the beauty of digital.

So, in summary that's our core product offering and how



it fits in with an entrepreneurial journey. Customer care is a big component of what we offer, and we've invested a lot in the region around education, and conducted a series of workshops with the Dubai College of Tourism, where we helped their students understand how they can design their own brand.

For us, guidance is a core part of helping entrepreneurs embrace the power of digital.

From your experience is there anything you see start-ups consistently do, that they need to avoid, and are there a set of fundamental guiding principles that they need to deploy to be successful on their business journey?



An online presence in the digital economy means that you are fully integrated, which enables you to build integrated digital marketing within that.”

I think the common pain points are similar, and at GoDaddy, we do a lot of research.

We conducted the MENA survey recently, and when we asked respondents what are the common challenges that they

are facing they were extremely similar.

Yes, they might change from market-to-market, but, if we look at the KSA, UAE and Egypt, it might differ in terms of what their digital marketing channel focus is, but essentially, they want to gain more visibility, they want to attract more customers – and ultimately retain those customers.

This idea of keeping customers is something that has emerged over the last three years, before it was more about gaining new customers and growing the business, but now that idea of retention is also coming to the fore, which I think is great and really important in the experience economy.

So, generally the challenges and the pain points are the same, but I do think planning is critical, you need to know the right tools and solutions to use and then be able to grow steadily.

When we look at the concept of building a digital presence, we conduct a lot of workshops, and a lot of people come in with different ideas and questions, but even if we look at it from an SEO perspective, you can't talk about ten different things on one website because you're never going to gain visibility from SEO.

Research is just so essential to be able to determine who you are as a brand, this is what I'm an expert in, what is the market competition saying.

These are basic principles, but I think it's key to go back to basics in order to be able to know who I am, who do I

serve, and how do I serve – and answering those questions in a way that allows you to build a plan for your business, and the business plan has to be aligned with the marketing strategy and the digital journey of the company.

The other key component required is starting small and growing steadily is very important. I do think that a lot of brands are guilty of trying to do too many things at once, but the beauty with the tools that are available now is you can integrate as you go, there is no pressure.

The analogy I give in our workshops is that you can start with a 1-bed apartment and build it into a villa, and you can scale back and downsize if you start to struggle.

We know that the regulatory environment in the UAE and across the Middle East, doesn't have the same red tape

that exists in other markets, such as Europe. With that in mind, is an environment and business ecosystem like the UAE the perfect place for start-ups and entrepreneurs to grow and drive new innovations?

The UAE has made remarkable progress in terms over the years and has firmly established as a hub of technological progress and innovation. It is a lucrative destination globally, and it is a hub for the Middle East.

I think the steps and measures taken by the government over the last few years, such as the creation of a freelancer economy, and the ease at which you can now establish new businesses here

means that the UAE is now on everyone's radar.

Personally, what I love about the UAE is the leadership vision of the country. They have been unequivocal in their belief that the future is going to be digital and they are fully committed towards achieving that.

The infrastructure is excellent and the connectivity across the UAE is rock-solid. There is a lot of funding and investment and a strong desire to facilitate businesses that are trying to transform society.

There is a lot of mentorship and knowledge in the region and that innovative drive to succeed is evident right across the country.

It is an environment that ultimately really fosters and drives innovation, a lot of the business leaders here are fearless and are continually pushing the boundaries as to what is possible. enme



For us, guidance is a core part of helping entrepreneurs embrace the power of digital.”



WHAT'S EASY TO SEE IN OUR CLOUD? OPPORTUNITY.

It's easier than ever to access advanced cloud analytics with SAS® Viya® on Microsoft Azure. Viya is optimized for Azure, which means it's easier to find, share and analyze information all in one place. So more people can ask the questions that lead to more opportunities. Together, SAS and Microsoft make it easier to find answers in the cloud.

Learn how at sas.com/microsoft





TRANSFORMING THE CHANNEL

CNME Editor Mark Forker spoke to **Jeff McCullough**, Vice President Global Partnerships at SolarWinds, to find out more about their newly-launched 'Transform' program, the opportunities it presents for the channel - and why the IT leader felt the time was right to build a more strategic roadmap for their channel partners in a bid to highlight and acknowledge their best partners globally.

Can you tell our readers more about the significance of SolarWinds launching a new global transform partner program - and what opportunities will that provide for their channel partners?

SolarWinds has a long history of working with partners and they've been a big part of our business globally. However, we have never really built a program framework to be prescriptive and predictable about our partner engagements.

We've done great business together, but we've never memorialised our strategy and our intention for our partner business and the role that they play - and we've never really identified what a great partner looks like.

We're now at a point in our maturity curve where we have enough partners that have invested, developed and worked hard to build a business with SolarWinds, so it really is incumbent on us to illustrate to the market the role partners play in our business and these are the best partners that we have.

Every partner develops and grows their business and we now have the opportunity to create within our partner ecosystem different ways partners can participate, but at the same time be able to highlight the best of the best and be able to offer customers choice when they are looking for SolarWinds solutions and resources they can to, not only to purchase our products, but also from a sales and technical acumen capability standpoint.

Our mission is not only to identify our biggest and best

partners, but also highlight who the most capable are in terms of skills. We can tell our customers these are the best partners, not only in terms of their scale in the market, but what they can bring you in relation to resources and support designed to make you more successful.

It's a big milestone for us, I've only been at the company for a year, but I know that the company has been working hard for a long time to get to this point.

Can you outline to our readers why SolarWinds decided that 'now' was the right time to transform and relaunch the way it engaged with their channel partners on a global scale?

The name of our program is Transform, and that term wasn't accidentally selected as our program name. We use that term every single day when we go about our business, we talk about our own internal transformation from a monitoring company to an observability company -





and we also talk about helping customers on their digital transformation journeys, and transforming our go-to-market strategy with our partners.

I think the inflexion point for SolarWinds has been the fact that we have a great presence in the mid-market of the industry and work with almost all the companies in the Fortune 500.

However, our share in those customers is relatively small, but we recognise that there is a phenomenal opportunity when you look at the breadth of our IP, and all the capabilities that we have. Our goal is to drive

greater consumption across our customer base, and the best place to do that is in the channel as partners represent the best way to engage the market.

They continue to be on a global scale the primary way customers consume IT products, even when you look at the growth of cloud and MSPs, and MSPs is an

important new channel for us. One of the fastest growing parts of the channel market is the MSP market, which aligns with the sweet-spot where we are, small to mid-market customers consume considerable amount of their IT solutions through MSPs.

As we shift to observability, ours is a great story, because it scales from customers who are struggling with tool sprawl, the challenges of staffing, and the ongoing battle to consolidate all of their management platforms through observability into a single platform is a big play for us.



Our mission is not only to identify our biggest and best partners, but also highlight who the most capable are in terms of skills.”

As our products evolve, we are going to continue to be on-prem with our Hybrid Cloud Observability Platform and our GSI and MSP partners are going to serve as great vehicles for delivering that.

It is all really about us diversifying our go-to market base so we can get to more customers and we can leverage this broader IT stack that we have to offer through our Hybrid Cloud Observability platform.

Did you face challenges in terms of convincing your channel partners to embrace the new benefits of your Transform program? Was there any resistance to change?

As we move to observability it creates change for everybody, and where there is change there is opportunity.

I think one of the great things about us building out our partner program and identifying the partners that are invested with SolarWinds is the fact that they are the ones really embracing the change.

If you take a look at all our top partners then you'll see that every one of them is in Hybrid Cloud Observability and they are very excited about our roadmap, particularly our SaaS platform.

Our strategy comes from the belief that we have a place for all our partners, and if one of our partners has a customer that wants to consume our products, and engage and work with us then we will absolutely develop a path for them.

However, we also acknowledge that there are

partners that have a very consistent pattern when it comes to the business they conduct with us, and that comes from the fact that they are invested, focused on the market and strategically aligned to help customers overcome their challenges – and we want to work with those partners and give them an opportunity to accelerate with our business.



Our goal is to drive greater consumption across our customer base, and the best place to do that is in the channel as partners represent the best way to engage the market.”

All these inflexion points of change create new opportunities, and we are really excited about the opportunity we are creating for partners, not just to help our 300,000 customers install base make that transition, but to talk to the next 300,000 customers hopefully about all the things that we can do for them.

It's great opportunity to introduce SolarWinds to customers that didn't really understand all the capabilities that we have to offer.

It's been a great business model for us because a lot of our engagement has been online and customers try our software and then they consume it, but whilst that model is there and we still use it, the market has evolved, and

customers aren't necessarily downloading and trying new software all the time. We are shifting towards where the market is going, but we are bringing all the IP that we offer and all the proven technology that we have been able to deliver with our observability benefits added on top.

SolarWinds has an extensive portfolio of products and solutions, but what inspires your product innovation, is it customer-driven to address their problems, or is it from your own internal R&D?

Customer feedback continues to be a cornerstone of our product development as we look to continually enhance and improve the roadmaps for our products.

In addition to this, we engaged quite extensively with our partners to see what they wanted to see in relation to the partner tools and the new portal to be specific.

We want to improve our partner experience and working with them every day is of key importance to us. We have a global partner portal that is used differently in different parts of the world, but our focus is to get one simplified and consistent user/partner experience worldwide.

As more and more of our partners expand and operate globally then it really does become important to us, because we don't want to have 4 sets of different rules for each region, that just makes it difficult for us internally, so we want to simplify everywhere we can. [GTM](#)

DELL TECHNOLOGIES

KNOWING YOUR CUSTOMER

Ben McDonald, Senior Marketing Director, Middle East at Dell Technologies, told CNME Editor Mark Forker that despite the evolution marketing has undergone over the last 20 years, the basic principles remain the same – such as knowing the intrinsic needs of your customers in today’s fast-paced and turbulent digital economy.

Ben McDonald has carved out a reputation within the IT industry as being a straight talker in the jargon-filled world that can be marketing.

In a career that has spanned over 20 years, McDonald is well-respected by his industry peers and regarded by many to be a prominent thought leader.

During GITEX Global, CNME managed to secure an exclusive interview with McDonald to further examine the capabilities of their product portfolio, how the world of marketing has evolved – and his view on the new futuristic concept of the Metaverse that is filling up column inches globally – and was a major talking point at GITEX.

McDonald kickstarted the conversation by reflecting on the seismic changes that have occurred over the last few years, and disclosed that their customers are wondering what is coming next?

“At GITEX, we’re showcasing a lot of future technologies, technologies that are a few years away from where we are today, such as quantum computing and the Metaverse.



It’s been well-documented by now, but it has been a very challenging few years – and customers are thinking about what is coming next? However, where we find ourselves now is really all about how do we thrive in the ‘new normal’. The reality is we are working, acting and living differently than we were a few years ago, and some of the changes that we are experiencing now I believe are going to be permanent

changes,” said McDonald.

McDonald said that at GITEX, the region’s flagship IT and tech symposium, Dell Technologies were focusing on four key areas, which where hybrid working, data, security and multi-cloud environments.

“Our first area of focus is on people. We know that the way we work has been completely transformed. Organisations still have people coming into the office, whilst others stay at home, and hybrid working is a concept that Dell Technologies has really embraced. Working is now much less about where you go, but more about what you do. It doesn’t matter where you are, and even traditional timings have changed, so now essentially it is all about outcomes. As a manager myself, I’m looking at my team and I’m requesting them to do a task within a certain timeframe, whether they get it done in the office, or at home, or in London, or Los Angeles, it doesn’t matter as long as the job is done. It’s one thing embracing hybrid working, but you also have to empower it. We’ve been leveraging our

portfolio of solutions to ensure our customers have the right tools and technologies to be able to do that and can they work productively,” said McDonald.

McDonald also touched on the importance of data in the new digital economy, and highlighted the importance of businesses gaining better visibility into their data to allow them to make better business decisions. Multi-cloud is another key focus for Dell, and again he said it was crucial that enterprises selected the right cloud model that works for them and their customers.

In terms of security, McDonald believes it presents the greatest challenges to customers regardless of their industry on a global scale looking ahead to 2023.

“Security has been a hot topic for several years now, and more and more businesses are investing in their security infrastructure. We know that with people working remotely keeping your data secure has proven to be a huge challenge for many enterprises. I think in the past, many businesses were guilty of putting security at the bottom of the priority list, but in the current environment security is just something that we can’t ignore anymore. I think we have all witnessed the devastating impact that a security breach can have on organisations from both a financial and brand perspective, so it goes without saying that if data is now driving your business, then you need to do all you can to protect it,” said McDonald.

The Metaverse was all the rage during GITEX, and McDonald revealed that Dell

is going to position itself as an enabler in terms of constructing the infrastructure needed to make the use-cases within the Metaverse a reality.

In terms of use-cases, he sees the Metaverse as a great tool for training.

“From a Dell Technologies point of view, the organisations that are building these Metaverse universes are going to need technology. We are there to create the infrastructure that will make a lot of this possible in the future. We are demonstrating with a local partner some of the use-cases that can accelerate the development of the Metaverse space. Some of the areas today are focused around how do we train people more effectively? Is it through physical training, or can you do it more effectively in a virtual, or 3D world. These virtual Metaverse environments are going to need the underlying technology, and that’s where we have a role to play at Dell Technologies,” said McDonald.

As aforementioned above, McDonald has been in the marketing industry for the best part of two decades, so there’s not many better placed than the Senior Marketing Director at Dell to comment on the evolution the industry has undertaken.

Interestingly however, McDonald said that the ‘fundamentals’ in marketing are still as relevant today as they

were when he first started his career 20 years ago.

“Marketing has been a very interesting industry to be involved in over the last 20 years. We have witnessed lots of different trends and technologies come and go, but what I do tend to think is that there are certain fundamentals that will never go out of fashion. The biggest fundamental of course is knowing your customers. If you even go back to the traditional 4 Ps of marketing, which are product, price, place and promotion, they have been around for years, but again they are never going to go out of fashion,” said McDonald.

McDonald added that he had seen ‘digital fatigue’ since the onset of the pandemic changed industry norms, but said that the challenge remains trying to get to the right people at the right time.

“What we have certainly seen over the last while is a big demand to reengage in face-to-face physical events, there is still an appetite for that networking element. Obviously, over the last few years we have seen a big push towards digital, and trying to get to people in a digital manner. However, on the other hand we have seen a bit of digital fatigue as well. During the whole COVID-19 pandemic process we saw an influx of online events, and I think that caused fatigue and people were yearning for that face-to-face interactivity. Trying to find the best tactics to get to the right people at the right time is always a challenge, and in many ways keeps marketing interesting,” concluded McDonald. 



From a Dell Technologies point of view, the organisations that are building these Metaverse universes are going to need technology.”



FUTURE ENTERPRISE AWARDS

LEADERS OF THE 'FUTURE'

CPI Media Group hosted their annual Future Enterprise Awards on Day 1 of GITEX at the Madinat Jumeirah, which celebrated the IT and technology leaders that are cultivating innovation and driving change across the Middle East.

















INJAZAT

AGENTS OF TRANSFORMATION

Injazat, a technology pioneer born and bred in the UAE, has further solidified its position as a champion of digital transformation with a number of very notable strategic agreements and partnerships during GITEX Global 2022.



48

The digital enabler has been described as an ‘agent’ of digital transformation and has played a critical role in empowering enterprises all across the UAE to harness and embrace the capabilities provided by nascent technologies.

However, at GITEX, the region’s flagship IT and technology symposium, Injazat signaled its intentions to expand beyond the UAE with its new partnership with Nesma, designed fundamentally to drive and support the technology transformation of the KSA.

The newly established joint

venture, called ‘Nesma Injazat’, will begin operations this month with offices in Riyadh and Jeddah. In the presence of Mansoor Al Mansoori, Chairman of Injazat and Faisal Alturki, Chairman and President of Nesma; Ussama Dahabiyeh, CEO of Injazat, and Salah Al Sunaid, CEO of NIT, formalised the agreement during a signing ceremony at GITEX Global, currently taking place at Dubai World Trade Centre.

The new company will offer services that include enterprise applications, cloud infrastructure, and cyber defense laying the groundwork for Saudi Arabia’s next

generation of technology-driven economic growth. Injazat’s expertise and proven track record in building agile, bespoke industry solutions combined with Nesma’s market experience and customer knowledge, is set to fast-track the Kingdom’s digital economy goals by co-creating transformational digital platforms and services through public-private partnerships (PPP).

Nesma Injazat will play a critical role in supporting organisations across various sectors that include healthcare, smart cities, energy, and construction across the Kingdom, developing its IT and digital infrastructure with a three-year expansion plan for each.

Commenting, Ussama Dahabiyeh, Chief Executive Officer at Injazat, said: “It gives me great pleasure to announce our joint venture with Nesma Infrastructure and Technology which will become a catalyst to developing our businesses and supporting the Kingdom as it pursues an ambitious digital transformation plan. We have been waiting for the right opportunity to expand into

Saudi Arabia in a bid to solve complex industry problems and helping them achieve their business goals faster. Nesma shares a strategic innovation mindset with Injazat, and so has proven to be a natural partner for this opportunity. Together, we will be actively driving and pioneering the future technology landscape of Saudi Arabia.”

Salah Alsunaid, CEO of NIT



said: “For the past 40 years, NESMA has been at the helm of multibillion dollar projects helping build the Kingdom’s most ambitious and challenging projects ranging across various sectors including construction, energy, aviation, and of course infrastructure, and technology solutions. Combined with Injazat’s expertise and innovation our joint venture will add momentum towards realising Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman’s ambitious Vision 2030 goals.”

Injazat and Nesma have appointed Gianluca Meloni as the interim CEO of the JV “Expanding to Saudi Arabia has been a long-standing

ambition for Injazat, and we are delighted to announce this partnership with Nesma Infrastructure & Technology. Having many customers across the Public Investment Fund’s investment projects, Nesma’s reputation as a key market player is outstanding. By combining the technical in-depth and service capabilities of Injazat and Nesma, the venture will build operational

established Joint Venture.

Accelerating digital transformation is one of the key pillars of Saudi Arabia’s National Transformation Program, outlined in Vision 2030. The sector is growing at a rapid pace in the Kingdom with spending on digital transformation initiatives reaching \$3.19 billion per year in emerging technologies, open-source government software, and cloud computing solutions.

We know that all major industry verticals have been completely transformed in the last few years, but few better represent that seismic shift that the healthcare sector.

Injazat announced another major development in that area, one that will only serve to further accelerate and cultivate nascent technologies to transform the way healthcare is both accessed and dispensed.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHAP) Injazat is hugely significant.

The collaboration targets the development of multiple digital health solutions, in line with the Ministry’s strategic objectives to provide innovative and advanced technology-based and AI-integrated services. The MoU also comes in response to the government’s ambitions towards making the UAE a leading international destination in smart healthcare.

The MoU was signed by H.E. Ahmed Al Dashti, Assistant Undersecretary for the Support Services Sector



We have been waiting for the right opportunity to expand into Saudi Arabia in a bid to solve complex industry problems and help them achieve their business goals faster.”



in MoHAP, and Dr. Mansoor Al Mansoori, Chairman of Injazat, during GITEX Technology Week, taking place at Dubai World Trade Centre between October 10-14.

Innovative Platform

The agreement will see MoHAP leverage Injazat's technological capabilities to launch digital solutions that can provide seamless and improved healthcare. Both parties will work together to enable a single, unified platform for patients and providers, as well as establish a strong digital strategy to help all stakeholders adapt to emerging healthcare trends and improve patient experience.

Additionally, to enhance the quality of health services and patients' safety, both parties

will develop an innovative platform for data analysis of the population, using a comprehensive and sustainable analysis system. AI-based analysis will equip MoHAP with the necessary insights to improve the policies and processes that can ultimately deliver innovative and comprehensive health services as per the best international standards.

Digital Transformation

"The MoU defines a new milestone in the Ministry's digital transformation ambitions, enabling MoHAP to leverage AI technology to provide better, more efficient health services. In line with our wise leadership's directives to establish an integrated health ecosystem

that ensures community satisfaction and wellbeing, the collaboration will create sustainable solutions for smart healthcare, in addition to launching innovative projects and initiatives," commented H.E. Ahmed Al Dashti, Assistant Undersecretary for the Support Services Sector in MoHAP

"Our partnership with MoHAP is the perfect example of how public and private bodies can contribute to the evolution and advancement of the country's healthcare industry through digital transformation. We will also support the Ministry's efforts to establish a smart, sustainable, and fully integrated health ecosystem," said Ussama Dahabiyeh, Chief Executive Officer at Injazat. **enms**



Build a secure, productive hybrid workplace

Choose devices that optimize hybrid work
Your teams require different tools to be successful:



Many prefer flexible 2-in-1 devices, while some love their laptops.



Everyone wants accessories that work seamlessly and make work easier.



Simplify security with zero-touch deployment and password-free login.

Set your employees up for success
with devices and accessories that enhance productivity, collaboration, and security.

Tel: +973 17700777 | acsales@almoayyedcomputers.com | www.acme.tech

 Almoayyed Computers Middle East (ACME)  [almoayyedcomputers](https://www.instagram.com/almoayyedcomputers)

 Almoayyed Computers

COMMVAULT® 

Be **data** ready.

Commvault is a worldwide leader in delivering data readiness. Our intelligent data management solutions work on-prem and in the cloud, allowing you to store, protect, optimize, and use your data. Always.

[commvault.com](https://www.commvault.com)

