

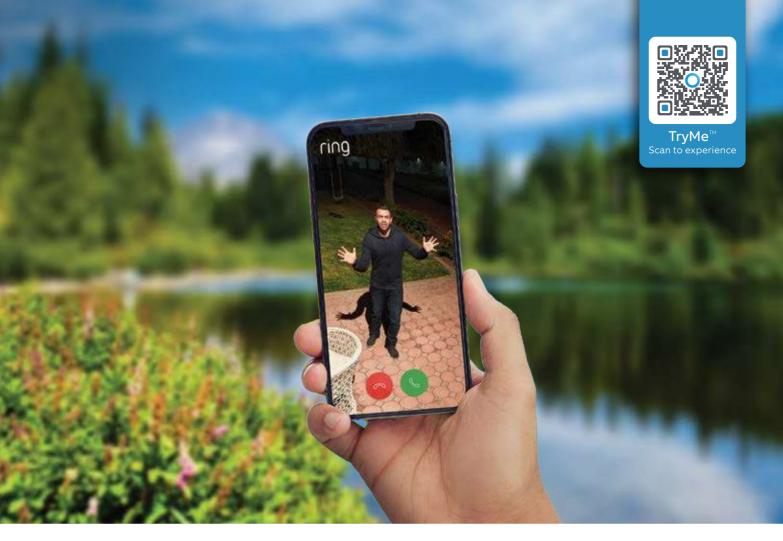
## RE-MAGINE THE DIGITAL TOMORROW

Viswanath Pallasena, CEO of Redington MEA, on Redefining the Region's Digital Future





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## **EDITORIAL**





Anita Joseph Editor



E-mail: anita.joseph@cpimediagroup.com



Facebook: www.facebook.com/ TahawulTech



Twitter: @TahawulTech



Instagram: @TahawulTech

#### GEARING UP FOR THE FUTURE

elcome to the July edition of our magazine, where we delve into the exciting realm of reimagining and preparing for the digital future. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and transformative shifts, it has become imperative for us to adapt and embrace the digital landscape that shapes every aspect of our lives.

The digital revolution has not only altered the way we

communicate and access information but also revolutionised dels, and societal structures. As the digital world continues to evolve at

industries, business models, and societal structures. As the digital world continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace, it presents us with both boundless opportunities and unique challenges.

In this edition, we explore the multifaceted aspects of the digital future and provide you with insightful perspectives, expert analysis, and inspiring stories that highlight the transformative power of technology. From artificial intelligence and machine learning to blockchain and virtual reality, we uncover the potential of emerging technologies and their impact on the channel industry.

We also focus on the importance of digital literacy and the need to bridge the digital divide to ensure equal access and opportunities for all. As we navigate this ever-changing landscape, it is crucial to empower individuals and communities with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the digital age.

Furthermore, we examine the implications of the digital revolution on various industries, shedding light on how they are evolving to meet the demands of a digitally-driven world. We showcase groundbreaking innovations, disruptive startups and forward-thinking organisations that are reshaping their respective fields and challenging conventional norms.

While the digital future offers tremendous potential, it also raises important ethical and societal questions. We explore topics such as data privacy, cybersecurity, and the ethical implications of artificial intelligence, emphasising the need for responsible and inclusive digital practices.

As we embark on this journey of reimagining and preparing for the digital future, it is essential to remember that technology alone is not the solution. Human creativity, empathy, and collaboration are integral in harnessing the full potential of digital tools and platforms.



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

Editor Anita Joseph anita.joseph@cpimediagroup.com PRODUCTION AND DESIGN
Designer
Prajith Payyapilly
prajith.payyapilly@cpimediagroup.com

DIGITAL SERVICES Web Developer Adarsh Snehajan webmaster@cpimediagroup.com Publication licensed by Dubai Production City, DCCA PO Box 13700 Dubai, UAE

Tel: +971 4 568 2993

Publishing Director Natasha Pendleton natasha.pendleton@cpimediagroup.com OnlineEditor Daniel Shepherd daniel.shepherd@cpimediagroup.com

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Sales Director Sabita Miranda sabita.miranda@cpimediagroup.con All Rights Reserved

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TOP STORIES

## FINESSE PARTNERS WITH JETPATCH TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND PATCHING MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

inesse, one of the leading digital transformation partners in the GCC, has partnered up with JetPatch, an ITOps company that provides end-to-end automated patching solutions. The partnership leverages the expertise of both companies to deliver comprehensive and robust cybersecurity measures that help businesses effectively manage and reduce risks associated with digital transformation.

This partnership comes at a time when organizations are increasingly embracing digital transformation and facing growing cybersecurity challenges. With Finesse and JetPatch working together, businesses can confidently navigate their digital journeys while safeguarding their digital infrastructure.

Eljo J P, CBO & Director of Finesse said, "We are delighted to partner with JetPatch to provide comprehensive patch management solutions to our clients. As companies increasingly migrate their operations to the cloud, prioritizing cybersecurity and protecting against emerging threats becomes critical. By combining Finesse's expertise in digital transformation with JetPatch's advanced



patch management solutions, we can help our clients maintain a secure and resilient digital environment."

Todd Kirkland, CEO, Jetpatch said, "We are delighted to join forces with Finesse to provide businesses with automated patching solutions. JetPatch automates vulnerability remediation to help enterprises proactively eliminate security flaws and achieve continuous compliance across environments. By combining JetPatch's expertise in automated patching solutions with Finesse's digital transformation services, we can offer businesses a comprehensive solution that addresses their evolving security needs."

Pavin Varughese, Sales Director - EMEA & APAC, JetPatch said "JetPatch's expertise in providing effective patch automation solutions. combined with Finesse's extensive experience in system integration. will undoubtedly bring immense value to businesses in the region. This partnership is poised to deliver enhanced cybersecurity measures and streamlined operations, empowering organizations to proactively address vulnerabilities and strengthen their overall IT infrastructure. I look forward to witnessing the positive impact that JetPatch and Finesse will make together in the Middle East market."

#### TENABLE JOINS CLOUD SECURITY ALLIANCE

enable, the Exposure
Management company, has
announced that it has joined
the Cloud Security Alliance
(CSA) as Executive Member. CSA is the
world's leading organisation dedicated
to defining standards, certifications and
best practices to help ensure a secure
cloud computing environment.

As an executive level member, Tenable will champion preventive security approaches, helping organisations understand and reduce cybersecurity risk across their entire attack surface—from the cloud, IT, OT, identity systems and beyond. Tenable brings a wealth of expertise in cloud exposure management, having helped thousands of organisations maintain security and compliance standards without slowing down development



cycles. Tenable Cloud Security enables organisations to continuously assess the security posture of cloud environments, offering full visibility across multi-cloud environments and helping organizations prioritize security efforts based on actual risk.

'According to a study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Tenable, 64% of businesses already use cloud security tools as part of their overall cybersecurity strategy1," said Brian Goldfarb, chief marketing officer, Tenable. "But the speed and scale of cloud computing often leave environments riddled with undetected or unremediated exposures such as misconfigurations, vulnerabilities and excess privileges. Joining CSA is an important way for Tenable to engage with cloud users and collaborate with our industry peers on important initiatives so we can secure these complex environments before they can be exploited by cyber attackers."

TOP STORIES

#### **VECTOR CAPITAL COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF RIVERBED TECHNOLOGY**

ector Capital, a leading private equity firm specialising in transformational investments in established technology businesses, has announced the successful completion of its acquisition of Riverbed Technology ("Riverbed" or the "Company"), a leading IT solutions provider that delivers secure, seamless digital experiences and accelerates enterprise performance to global organisations. In connection with the close of the transaction. Dave Donatelli has been named Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. Dan Smoot, who previously served as CEO, will continue to support the Company on a transitional basis.

Donatelli previously served as the Executive Vice President of the Cloud Business Group at Oracle Corporation. Earlier, Mr. Donatelli served as Executive Vice-President of the Enterprise Group at Hewlett-Packard leading the \$30 billion division and



overseeing storage, server, networking, and converged infrastructure solutions. He began his career at EMC Corporation, serving in multiple leadership roles, most recently as President of the EMC Storage Division. He most recently served as the lead independent director at MarkLogic, a leading data management and data integration solutions provider and

Vector Capital portfolio company.

John Theler, who most recently served as the CFO at MarkLogic and earlier as the CFO at Riverbed, is rejoining Riverbed as Chief Financial Officer. Theler brings over 25 years of experience as a financial professional for both large public and mid-sized privately owned software, hardware, SaaS and technology-solutions businesses. Prior to his role at MarkLogic, Mr. Theler was the CFO of Avetta, LLC. He began his career at Ernst & Young, LLP.

"Riverbed is a terrific business with a strong foundation for success. Its industry leading portfolios, Alluvio by Riverbed for Unified Observability and Riverbed Acceleration are market leaders with blue-chip customer bases," said Donatelli. "Bolstered by a significantly improved capital structure, I look forward to working with Riverbed's team and Vector Capital to enhance our product offerings through innovation and strategic growth investments."

## MTC PARTNERS WITH HUAWEI TO ACCELERATE SMBS' DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE REGION

emory Technology Middle
East (MTC) signed a
partnership agreement with
global ICT leader Huawei
to accelerate digital transformation for
Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs)
in the region, starting with the UAE. The
partnership will enrich the technology
products and solutions offerings

for SMBs and empower their future business development and growth.

Under the terms of the new agreement, MTC will serve as a run-rate distributor to provide a comprehensive datacom SOHO (Small office/Home office) portfolio supported by the Huawei eKit platform. The partnership with Huawei reinforces

Grow Together, Win the Future

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MTC's dedication to delivering cutting-edge technology solutions and exceptional service to its clients. The new partnership offerings will cater to a wide list of SMBs, such as medium size hospitals, schools, supermarkets, restaurants, internet cafes, and much more.

Houssam Mobied, CEO of MTC and Brent Li, Managing Director of Enterprise Business Group, Huawei UAE, signed the Sales Framework Agreement for Distribution Business on behalf of the two companies. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Mr. David Shi, President of Enterprise Business Group, Huawei Middle East and Central Asia.

Headquartered in Dubai, MTC is a leading IT distributor. Since its inception in 1998, MTC has continuously evolved in the IT distribution landscape, carving a niche for itself as the premier distributor in the MENA region.

## NOKIA AND RED HAT ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP FOR NEW BEST-IN-CLASS TELECOMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS

okia and Red Hat, Inc., the world's leading provider of open source solutions. has announced that they have reached an agreement to tightly integrate Nokia's core network applications with Red Hat OpenStack Platform and Red Hat OpenShift. As part of the agreement, Nokia and Red Hat will jointly support and evolve existing Nokia Container Services (NCS) and Nokia CloudBand Infrastructure Software (CBIS) customers while developing a path for customers to migrate to Red Hat's platforms over time. Additionally, Nokia will leverage Red Hat's infrastructure platforms to enable faster development and testing of Nokia's extensive core network portfolio.

Nokia customers will continue to be supported by Nokia directly, while Red



Hat will provide Nokia with ongoing development, services and advanced care for Nokia NCS and CBIS. As customer cloud strategies evolve, Red Hat and Nokia will support a smooth transition path for customers who choose to migrate to Red Hat's platforms. In addition, certain Nokia cloud infrastructure teams will transition to Red Hat to provide continued roadmap evolution, deployment services and support on behalf of Nokia to its customers.

Nokia cloud infrastructure platform customers will have the full service and support of Red Hat's open source ecosystem and access to Red Hat's transformative 4G and 5G technologies and use cases. By combining Nokia's 5G expertise with Red Hat's open hybrid cloud vision, customers will be able to transform their core network infrastructure and applications to be fully cloud-native and future-ready with service and support from Red Hat as the industry accelerates to the edge.

### TOPSOE ACCELERATES GLOBAL GREEN HYDROGEN ECONOMY WITH AVEVA SOFTWARE

VEVA, a global leader in industrial software, driving digital transformation and sustainability, has been selected by Topsoe, a leader in carbon emission reduction technologies, helping fast-track development of the decarbonisation solutions needed for the production green hydrogen and other carbon neutral fuels. Topsoe will use AVEVA Process Simulation to model its Solid Oxide Electrolyzer Cells (SOECs) with a view to optimising their design and developing their control strategy.

To achieve global NetZero targets, a rapid decarbonization of all industries is essential, however not all of them can be easily electrified. These industries are often referred to as the hard-to-abate sectors and include heavy transportation such as shipping and aviation but also carbon intensive industries like steel manufacturing and petrochemical production. The challenge is finding and replacing fossil fuels with carbon-free alternatives. This is where Topsoe can help, and by using Topsoe's highly efficient SOEC



based electrolyzers, it's possible to produce the green hydrogen needed to decarbonize many of these carbon intensive industries. Time is of the essence, and with its flexibility, open modeling, and ease of use, AVEVA Process Simulation1 is helping accelerate the energy transition by enabling Topsoe's engineers to design and optimise their electrolyzers with increased speed and efficiency.

Poul Georg Moses, Chief Technology Officer in Power-to-X at Topsoe, said: "Green hydrogen is essential for



decarbonising industries that cannot be easily electrified, and there is no time to waste if we're to succeed in achieving global NetZero targets. Topsoe is already leading the way by building the world's largest SOEC electrolyzer manufacturing facility, enabling us to deliver green hydrogen technologies Power-to-X solutions2 at industrial scale. The AVEVA Process Simulation software is a gamechanger for us, with its dynamic simulations we're removing bottlenecks and speeding up the development of our solutions."

#### **NEWSMAKERS**

#### PEPSICO EXTENDS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FOR ANOTHER THREE YEARS

PepsiCo, a proud partner of the UEFA Champions League (UCL) since 2015, has announced the extension of its strategic partnership for another three years, until June 2027, further strengthening its presence across the elite football landscape. PepsiCo is the first sponsor to renew the UCL collaboration and comes at a pivotal time as the competition format changes and the number of participating clubs increases, providing fans new ways to enjoy iconic PepsiCo brands including Pepsi, Lays and Gatorade.

Now in the third cycle of its UCL partnership, PepsiCo will help expand the reach of the world's most-watched sports competition, drive next-gen fan engagement and look to accelerate its PepsiCo Positive (pep+) sustainability agenda of supporting people and the planet. Specifically, the extension will reinforce PepsiCo's commitment to drive

societal and environmental impact with a \$1 million investment dedicated to collaborative projects with the UEFA Foundation for Children as well as to initiatives focused on environmental sustainability, including joint efforts on the "road to zero" to significantly reduce single-use plastic.

The next era of the PepsiCo and UCL partnership will fuel a two-way dialogue between brands and fans and will generate cultural moments of global conversation. PepsiCo is committed to delivering unmatched experiences for fans and is striving to further expand the reach of UCL globally and doubling up activations in the U.S. – the fastest growing football market – and the Middle East:



Among the highlights of the renewed partnership is a joint commitment to scale the Kick Off Show by Pepsi, the must-see spectacle held moments before the UCL Final match each year. Since the Kick Off Show's inauguration in 2016, Pepsi has brought live global musical artists to the world's most watched annual sporting event, evolving the Final into a truly global entertainment platform for music as well as football.

#### DYNATRACE ANNOUNCES VAS INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS AS ITS REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE EGYPTIAN MARKET

Dynatrace, the leader in unified observability and security, has announced VAS Integrated Solutions as its representative for Egypt. VAS will provide easy access to organisations across the country to the unified, which is designed to simplify cloud complexities and advance digitization of business.

VAS, a subsidiary of Giza Systems, has a strong market presence in Egypt since 2006 and is considered as a trusted value-added distributor in the country. The company's extensive knowledge of the local market and reach will provide organisations with easy access to the comprehensive and industry-leading portfolio of solutions by Dynatrace that can help build and support competitive business capabilities. VAS specialises in providing advanced solutions to the Enterprise and SMB markets, and this partnership will enable both companies to expand its footprint by offering a more consistent, effective and tailored approach to their customers seeking efficient solutions to keep pace with this experienceled economy.

Egypt continues to make strides in



the direction of a competitive, balanced, and diversified economy by laying the groundwork for a knowledge-based economy. Development of Digital Egypt, which is part of Egypt's ICT strategy, is considered as one the critical pillars of realising the goals of the country's Vision 2030. Highlighting the current state of digital transformation through cloud in Egypt, the findings of an independent

global survey of 1,300 chief information security officers (CISOs) by Dynatrace, reveal that only 20% of large organisations in the country have a mature development, security, and operations (DevSecOps) culture. Additionally, the survey stated that 92% of CISOs in Egypt say automation and AI are critical for a successful deployment of DevSecOps and overcoming resource challenges.

## DRAGOS LAUNCHES OT CYBER INDUSTRY'S ONLY GLOBAL PARTNER PROGRAM TO SPAN TECHNOLOGY, SERVICES, THREAT INTELLIGENCE AND TRAINING

Dragos Inc., the global leader in cybersecurity for industrial controls systems (ICS)/operational technology (OT) environments, has announced the launch of the Dragos Global Partner Program, the only channel program to comprise OT cybersecurity technology, services, and threat intelligence. The Dragos Partner Program extends even further by offering training that prepares partners as experts who can offer their customers assessment services based on Dragos's proven assessment methodology; resell the Dragos Platform including asset discovery, threat detection, and vulnerability management; and manage deployment for customers.

The Dragos Partner Program enables channel partners to offer their customers the full range of ICS/OT cybersecurity technology and services to increase revenue opportunity and deliver positive customer outcomes. Partners gain confidence in being backed by Dragos experts, the industry's largest, most experienced group of ICS/OT security practitioners who've been on the frontlines of major cyberattacks on industrial infrastructure.



"Market demand for OT cybersecurity is accelerating as evolving threats, geopolitical dynamics, and regulations shine a spotlight on the need to protect industrial infrastructure," said Christophe Culine, Vice President of Global Sales and Chief Revenue Officer, Dragos. "With the new Dragos Global Partner Program, we will transfer our knowledge and experience as the industry's ICS/OT cybersecurity leader to our channel partners, enabling them to fully manage their customers' deployments with the industry's most comprehensive and complete ICS/OT security solution."

#### NVIDIA GEFORCE RTX 4060 NOW AVAILABLE ALONG WITH MORE DLSS GAMES

The GeForce RTX 4060 is now available from major retailers and etailers, starting at \$299. NVIDIA also released a new Game Ready Driver for the GeForce RTX 4060. DLSS momentum continues to roll, too, with the addition of Stranded: Alien Dawn (available now with DLSS 2) and TIME BREAKER (available now with DLSS 2 and ray tracing).

For gamers playing on previousgen GPUs, the NVIDIA Ada Lovelace architecture at the heart of the GeForce RTX 4060 delivers a massive upgrade, multiplying their performance with AI-powered DLSS 3, and supercharging creative apps. Thanks to the Ada architecture's industry-leading efficiency, gamers will now be using measurably less power, their graphics card will run cooler, and fans will run at quieter speeds or



even idle. Creators will also love the 8th generation NV Encoder with AV1 support.

Additionally, NVIDIA's latest driver is Game Ready for the GeForce RTX 4060, the newest member of the GeForce RTX 40 Series family.

GeForce Game Ready Drivers deliver the best experience for users' favourite games because they are finely tuned in collaboration with developers and extensively tested across thousands of desktop and laptop hardware configurations for maximum performance and reliability.

#### TENABLE NAMED SNOWFLAKE'S CYBERSECURITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR



Tenable, the Exposure Management company, has announced at Snowflake's annual user conference, Snowflake Summit 2023, that it has been named the 2023 Cybersecurity Partner of the Year award winner by Snowflake, the Data Cloud company,

Tenable was recognised for its Tenable One Exposure Management Platform.

Tenable One, Powered by Snowflake, helps joint customers gain a holistic view of their entire attack surface — including software and web application vulnerabilities, cloud misconfigurations, identity, and access weaknesses — and glean actionable insights with out-of-the-box dashboards, risk scoring, and attack path analysis. Tenable One delivers a scalable, global exposure management platform to help customers prevent cyberattacks and accurately communicate cyber risk to support optimal business performance.

"Our work with Snowflake is critical in helping customers quickly identify exposures, prioritise remediation, and reduce cyber risk," said Glen Pendley, chief technology officer, Tenable. "Leveraging the Snowflake Data Cloud enabled us to be highly scalable and efficient, and deliver a seamless user experience. The flexibility provided by Snowflake allows us to focus on developing platform features, delivering greater value to customers faster. We look forward to further expanding our partnership to build even deeper product integrations that support our ecosystem."

"Tenable and Snowflake's partnership represents tremendous potential for data-driven security programs," said Omer Singer, Head of Cybersecurity Strategy, Snowflake. "As our Cybersecurity Partner of the Year, Tenable has made great strides towards unifying vulnerability insights, asset inventory, and other key aspects of attack surface- all on the Data Cloud.

#### **NEWSMAKERS**

## ZOOM BRINGS TOGETHER IN-OFFICE AND REMOTE EMPLOYEES WITH THE LAUNCH OF INTELLIGENT DIRECTOR FOR ZOOM ROOMS

Zoom Video Communications, Inc. has announced the launch of the award-winning Intelligent Director for Zoom Rooms. For hybrid meetings with a Zoom Room, Intelligent Director uses AI and multiple cameras to provide the best image and angle of participants in the room so remote participants can see each person clearly, even in large conference rooms.

"As more people return to the office, it's no longer enough to deliver the best remote worker experience; every business needs a solution to deliver the best hybrid meeting experience," said Smita Hashim, chief product officer at Zoom. "Even with some employees in the office, oftentimes other team members are dispersed, so meeting equity and inclusion become more important than ever. Intelligent Director is the solution that can bring employees together, regardless of location, so they can truly connect face-to-face."

Intelligent Director is specifically designed for medium- to larger-sized rooms and helps avoid the "bowling



alley effect." Intelligent Director can individually frame up to 16 participants in a Zoom Room using multiple cameras, choosing the best video stream via a Zoom-designed AI, and send that stream to the gallery view of the Zoom Meeting.

Intelligent Director is made possible through the support of Zoom's hardware partner ecosystem. Manufacturers, including Apple, AVer, Dell, HP | Poly, Intel, Logitech, and Yealink have supported Zoom with the computer, controller, and camera solutions necessary to produce this major advancement.

#### KASPERSKY UNCOVERS NEW MALWARE FAMILY USED BY ANDARIEL, LAZARUS' SUBGROUP



During an in-depth malware investigation into the activities of Andariel, a notorious subgroup of Lazarus, Kaspersky researchers discovered a new malware family called EarlyRat, being used alongside Andariel's known utilization of the DTrack malware and Maui ransomware. The new analysis helps to reduce the time needed for attribution and proactively detect attacks at their early stages.

Andariel, an advanced persistent threat (APT) has operated for more than a decade within Lazarus group, and has been on the radars of Kaspersky researchers. Most recently, they have found Andariel's campaign and uncovered a previously undocumented malware family identifying its additional tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).

Andariel initiates infections by leveraging a Log4j exploit, which enables the download of additional malware from its command-and-control (C2) infrastructure. Although the initial piece of downloaded malware was not captured, it was observed that the DTrack backdoor was subsequently downloaded shortly after the Log4j exploitation.

A fascinating aspect of the investigation emerged when Kaspersky was able to replicate the command execution process. It became evident that commands within the Andariel's campaign were being executed by a human operator, presumably one with little experience, as evidenced by the numerous mistakes and typos made. For example, the operator mistakenly wrote "Prorgam" instead of "Program".

## OMNIX INTERNATIONAL AND DOCACQUIRE LIMITED PARTNER TO BRING INTELLIGENCE IN DOCUMENT PROCESSING TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Omnix International, an end-to-end digital solutions and services pioneer, announced that it has entered into a partnership with intelligent document solution specialist, DocAcquire Limited. As a solutions and consulting partner, Omnix will leverage its proven Gulf-wide reach to engage with organisations embarking on their digital transformation journeys, enabling them to unlock critical value hidden within the scores of unstructured documents that they handle on a day-to-day basis.

DocAcquire is an intuitive cloud-based intelligent document processing (IDP) platform that automates document centric business processes using machine learning and other approaches, to intelligently extract key data from business documents and pass it to business workflows. The firm is committed to empowering organisations across sectors to benefit from frictionless document workflows.

"Omnix is proud to join hands with



DocAcquire to bring its cutting edge IDP platform to companies across the Gulf. By partnering with them, Omnix is extending its current solution offerings including Hyperautomation and Conversational AI with an intelligent document management solution. With DocAcquire's commitment to Arabic language support, both companies are well-positioned to tap into and address the unique needs of the Middle East market, as more organizations embark on their digital transformation journeys," said Walid Gomaa, CEO of Omnix International.

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### **Smart Wi-Fi for Family**

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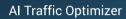








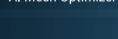




Al Assistant



AI Mesh Optimizer







Health Mode







## SIMPLIFYING COLLABORATION

**Stuart Collingwood,** General Manager UK & Europe, Owl Labs, tells Anita Joseph how the company is redefining video collaboration.

ell us about the partnership between Owl Labs and Ingram Micro Owl Labs and Ingram Micro have been working together now for over two years within the European market. It's been a great partnership and we're really pleased to be able to tap into their customer base and their domain knowledge across the video conferencing and UC space. Therefore, it was inevitable that we should look to make a jump into other regions with them, and a natural next step to was enter the Gulf market. I'm really excited about the future that we have working together in the region.

## How would you describe the video collaboration market in the region? What are some of the leading trends?

Hybrid work has been a phenomenon that's really caught on quickly in this post-pandemic world. Owl Labs as a business, pioneered the category of hybrid working with 360-degree cameras and AI and robotics, and we built this product long before the COVID pandemic started. We also saw an explosion in our business during that period. All across the world, territories, individual countries, individual companiespeople have had to change the way they work, and it's no different here. However, there are some real benefits

here as to how hybrid is being pursued. Some of that relates to people making more efficient use of their time, workplace and quality of life.

## Post Covid, the need for collaboration has become more significant, especially with the hybrid working trend. What's your take?

Companies, Governments, educational institutions-what they all desire is simplicity. However, video conferencing, historically, has been quite technical and complex. At Owl Labs, our goal has always been to be to simplify things, make things more affordable and make them portable. The question is: Can you take the equipment that you've got and move it from one space to another rather than tying it up in one location or one room?

I think as it's got more widely distributed, people are accessing it on a more personal basis or more individual basis, or even in potentially smaller spaces like huddle rooms, not just the big boardroom. So historically, we're being fitted out. People need stuff that's easier to use and more affordable, and that's where we come in.

#### How is Owl Labs helping its customers transition smoothly to the digital realm, particularly with digital transformation in full swing?

In addition to simplicity, the exciting aspect of hybrid is about how you can make the people who are not in the

room feel like they are in the room. The inspiration for Owl's original products of which we are now on the third generation was: could you present to the people who are not there-the remote participants-the best view of everybody who's in the room so that it felt that they were included? That's something we've done from day one, and we've just gotten better and better at it. Making people feel that they are included and giving them an immersive experience is at the core of making 'hybrid' work. In fact, our recent announcements, including extending our portfolio of products, to one single objective, which is to make sure people have all of the angles covered all of the time.

### How do you evaluate the region when it comes to readiness to adopt video communication technologies?

I think we're seeing a lot of adoption acceleration now as far as video conferencing goes, but there's still millions of rooms that still are not wired for video. There are also many organisations that had previously not considered video collaboration products and solutions, maybe because of price or complexity, but are now, for the first time, able to embrace those and provide flexible environments for their employees, colleagues or customers. So, I think this is a market that's really set to grow very strongly, globally. This is because even though people are going back to work, perhaps not at levels that were seen before the pandemic, the



## SIGNIFICANCE OF ECM & BPM IN BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

**Rahul Bhatia** - Vice President – Sales & Practice Head – ECM And Conversational AI, Finesse

n the evolving digital era and growing business landscape, organisations face immense pressure to adapt and transform to stay competitive.

**Business Process Management** (**BPM**) has emerged as a critical component in driving business transformation. Whether you own a small, medium, or large enterprise, implementing the business processes is of utmost importance to function efficiently.

Here, one of the core business processes is to manage the content lifecycle. And this can be achieved by implementing the **ECM (Enterprise Content Management)** throughout your organisation.

#### What Is BPM?

Business process management is a set of processes that ease the business process via process automation, management, and optimisation.

BPM works in combination with ECM that enables the automation of various activities such as accounts payable, contract management, content management, information security and governance etc.

Organisations employ BPM to optimise and standardize business processes, automate complex tasks, create and maintain SLAs, reduce dependency on manual tasks, elevate knowledge worker skills, and achieve digital transformation.

Further, businesses can reduce ad hoc workflow management tasks and scale the business processes to achieve future goals.



#### The most common examples of BPM in the organisation are:

- Account opening and customer onboarding
- · Accounts Payable
- Vendor Management
- Contract Management
- Expense Management
- Effective data management
- Project Management
- Service Requests Automation

BPM processes accomplish hefty tasks enabling smooth functioning business processes.

#### **Benefits of Business Process Management**

Businesses that are unorganised and distorted not only prove inefficient for the workforce but also for their customers. Imagine a business full of bottlenecks and traditional methodologies.

That said, scalable Business Process Management helps remove bottlenecks, scan and eliminate the inefficiencies effectively.

Here are the quick benefits of adapting BPM in the organisation:

- Run daily business processes in automation
- Assess the risks in advance and mitigate them
- Optimise the complex operations
- Plan larger organisational goals
- Track processes as they move through the workflow.

One of the major components of this holistic BPM process is ECM (Enterprise content management). The major goal of this part of business process management is to reduce the dependencies on paperwork and manage the content lifecycle of the organisation.

#### What is ECM (Enterprise Content Management)?

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) refers to a set of strategies, processes, and tools used by organisations to manage the creation, capture, storage, retrieval, secure, distribution, and archiving of digital and physical content throughout its lifecycle.

ECM encompasses a wide range of content types, including documents, images, videos, emails, web pages, and more. The major goal of the ECM system is to reduce the dependency on paper documents, forms and organise the information in hierarchies or as the admins wish.

#### **Importance of ECM**

One of the major USPs of ECM is the way this approach works. It's like having an x-ray of your content distribution system. ECM solutions are created to tackle the changing technology and organise the content silos to deliver the right information at the right time.

#### Here are the quick benefits of ECM systems in the organisation:

- Better management of vast repositories of data to reduce clutter and provide visibility
- Increased accessibility to various types of data helps lower costs and save significant time
- Minimal use of paper-based tasks by leveraging cloud-based storage services.
- ECM also archives and collects the previous information in a structured way that can later be accessed from anywhere and anytime
- Connect and collaborate with the content team, stakeholders, team leads using a single unified dashboard
- Secured exchange of documents and risk management practices to avoid unauthorized access to documents.

#### ECM and BPM: Know the difference

The common misconception regarding the ECM and BPM is that it is almost the same. Though the two processes work towards a common goal, it would be wrong to consider them similar or to separate them with each other.

While ECM is a process that addresses the lifecycle of your content systems, BPM is more oriented towards improving the business process tasks in an organisation such as the modification of existing processes and automation of the business indicators.

Understanding the key functions of ECM and BPM can help organisations leverage the right tools to optimise

both their content management and business processes. Let's understand how ECM and BPM can work together.

#### How do ECM & BPM work together?

BPMS or Business Process Management suite is a more holistic system that contains the features of both BPM and ECM. One of the major benefits of using BPM and ECM together is because of the system's vast range of features along with customisable platforms.

The ECM and BPM should have some joint features that save costs, and time and boosts productivity. For example, ECM must contain digital signatures so that it guarantees the validity of the documents.

#### **Integrating ECM & BPM**

Imagine an example of an eCommerce website. A customer does market research, adds the products to the cart, makes the payment, and gets the shipment delivered.

#### Now, there is a vast amount of data and questions that you would want to collect:

- Are they satisfied with the website experience and content?
- Are they loyal customers?
- Which suppliers do they prefer the most?
- How long is the time to deliver the shipment?

A single customer process may contain large set of data that could potentially benefit your business.

The combined power of BPM and ECM integration empowers organisations to automate end-to-end processes, manage content effectively, improve collaboration, and optimise decision-making.

It fosters a holistic approach to managing both structured processes and unstructured content, driving efficiency, agility, and innovation across the enterprise.

All in all, the interoperability between ECM and BPM in BPMS helps make data-driven decisions based on real data. This enables better customer satisfaction, increased operational efficiency, and scalability.



# RE-IMAGINE THE DIGITAL TOMORROW

Viswanath Pallasena, CEO of Redington Middle East and Africa, unveils the captivating story of the company's strategic transformation and unprecedented growth. In a candid conversation with Anita Joseph, he reveals how, with a finger on the market pulse and an innovation-centric, customer-first mindset, Redington MEA is helping businesses in the region shape their journey into the future.

HE EVOLUTION Businesses today are transitioning from traditional on-premises operations to cloudbased solutions as they strive to meet the growing needs of their customers. As this evolution gathers momentum, channel partners stand tall at the forefront of all the action, bridging the gap between end customers and cloud technologies. This journey toward cloud adoption presents both challenges and opportunities, and Redington continues to play a vital role in guiding customers through this change while successfully anticipating market trends.

Interestingly, businesses have stopped speculating whether to migrate or not, and are now focused on identifying workloads that should be moved to the cloud. Previously, customers were comfortable relying on channel partners for tasks like product purchases, installation and maintenance. "The transition to the cloud has upset traditional paradigms and thrown up new considerations. It has now become important for customers to be clear about which of their applications are suitable for cloud migration and which ones should remain in their current environment. In this crucial decisionmaking process, the advisory services offered by channel partners have become indispensable. Recognising this need, partners are honing their skills in guiding customers throughout the transition and Redington is spearheading this trend."

One aspect of cloud transition that demands careful attention is the commercial side of the equation. Traditionally, product sales followed a straightforward process of issuing invoices and collecting payments. However, in the modern consumption-based cloud model, pricing structures have become more complex. Channel partners must navigate platforms, connectivity needs and billing considerations, requiring a deeper level of engagement with customers. Redington stepped in to address these challenges by developing the CloudQuarks platform—an allencompassing solution that integrates major hyperscalers, applications, cloud solution providers' businesses, and other essential components. Additionally, Redington continues to expand the platform by incorporating additional services that partners can resell. This holistic approach allows partners to establish

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direct connections with customers, facilitating ongoing consumption and transactions.

Redington recognises that supporting channel partners every step of the way is pivotal in ensuring a seamless and successful cloud transition for customers.

#### THE EVENT

Redington's groundbreaking event, Redington Re-Imagine 2023, took place in June in Dubai, highlighting the company's commitment to embracing new possibilities and redefining its role not only as a distributor, but also as a visionary channel ecosystem player and future-first technology company.

"The event was a testament to Redington's forward-thinking mindset and its dedication to building the capabilities of tomorrow. By assembling an impressive lineup of global speakers, the event stepped beyond the present and explored the future possibilities that lie ahead," Pallasena said.

Among the guests was eminent

physicist, Dr. Michio Kaku, who captivated the audience with his insights into quantum computing and the age of quantum theory. Dr. Kaku's compelling presence throughout the day, engaging with partners, highlighted Redington's pledge to delivering a transformative experience. Redington also invited Dr. Zina Jarrahi Cinker, an R&D strategist and condensed matter physicist, who shared her perspectives on connectivity and frontier materials. This thought-provoking session shed light on the evolving nature of connectivity and its profound impact on industries and society. Redington's focus on highlighting these crucial aspects of technological advancements demonstrated the company's commitment to equipping partners for the future.

Understanding the needs and expectations of the customers of tomorrow is paramount for the survival of businesses. Recognising this, Redington invited renowned futurist Mike Walsh to share insights

into the advent of one of today's most significant and pathbreaking technological inventions: Artificial Intelligence (AI). Walsh's session delved into the impact of AI on emerging job domains and valuable advice for businesses to adapt and thrive in an AI-driven world. Redington's dedication to providing partners with actionable guidance for the future consolidated its position as a trusted technology partner.

Beyond all the intellectual discourse and technological insights, Redington also curated a memorable experience for the event attendees.

It was the region's first mega conclave for the tech industry with over 600 channel partners from over 12 countries and 1200 unique participants including ISVs, startups, vendors and industry experts. Redington Re-Imagine 2023 was a resounding success by all accounts, positioning the company as a technology frontrunner and innovator. By bringing together distinguished speakers, cutting-



edge technologies and industry stakeholders, Redington demonstrated its commitment to leading the way in the ever-evolving world of technology. This transformative event not only showcased the company's capabilities but also provided partners with invaluable insights into emerging trends and technologies. Redington's unwavering dedication to innovation and its role as an ecosystem player continues to drive the success of its partners and the entire technology ecosystem.

"The event had a profound impact on the leaders from the technology world with world renowned speakers talking about the future of technology and how as an ecosystem we can evolve to the next level. It was a one-of-a-kind event and had experiences ranging from the metaverse to powerful entertainment performances. The feedback we received was fantastic and for sure it has brought the entire ecosystem closer than ever before," Redington MEA CEO added.

Redington also celebrated the achievements of its top partners across the region at the Redington Re-Imagine Ecosystem Awards.

#### THE SURVEY

As Redington began to initiate conversations around the future of technology, it decided to commission a CONTEXT survey on the sidelines of the Redington Re-Imagine 2023 event, where over 200 C-Level executives from the channel ecosystem across the Middle East and Africa opened up about their needs, challenges and growth trajectory. All mid-sized companies, they shared their journey



WITH A REMARKABLE YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH OF OVER 25%, REDINGTON IS WELL POISED TO CONTINUE ITS UPWARD TRAJECTORY AND BREAK INTO THE TOP FIVE DISTRIBUTORS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

#### **Highlights of Redington Re-Imagine 2023**

- Redington Re-Imagine 2023 featured technology experts and icons. It was a great place for the entire ecosystem, to connect, grow, and prepare for the future.
- 2. Dr. Michio Kaku, Dr. Zina Cinker and Mike Walsh shared insights into the world of the future, driven by technology
- 3. Adam Simon, Global MD of CONTEXT, revealed results of the survey, commissioned by Redington 'Technology Innovation and Adoption' that polled over 200 technology professionals
- 4. Redington leadership discussed the new Re-Imagined Redington and the way forward
- 5. Attendees were transported to the metaverse through an interactive VR game The Infinite Loop

and perspective on critical issues such as how training and learning are vital, how much of their money is being spent on redevelopment, how many of them are in the cloud business or at least moving towards the cloud, how many are worried about AI and what percentage of them think AI is going to make a difference to them in the future. In fact, the CONTEXT survey of MEA resellers showed how the IT channel ecosystem is clearly demonstrating its readiness for the next stage of digital transformation.

The survey aimed to identify three key factors that help resellers take advantage of opportunities at the Forum: Readiness, which intended to measure positive outlook, investments and a focus on the future, Skill Development, which evaluated the level of investment in training and developing proprietary intellectual property to gauge the development of local skills and talents and Strategic Thinking which examined long-term and short-term issues to determine the mindset of resellers.

Key indicators place MEA resellers in a similar place to their European counterparts – 80% of resellers have already sold cloud services, 65% for more than two years. 47% of those who have been selling for more than three years, are able to deploy more than 10 cloud services. Nevertheless only 13% of the resellers who have been selling cloud for less than three years offer more than 10 cloud services – it is vital to increase the number of cloud solutions offered in order to provide multi-vendor complex cloud solutions.

One notable finding was that some partners, particularly those with employee sizes ranging from zero to 25, were investing approximately 2% of their total turnover on training and redevelopment. This demonstrates the significance they place on certification and skill enhancement. Moreover, around 50% of respondents stated their involvement in the development of intellectual property, particularly software. Only 22% of participants indicated no engagement in the cloud business, implying that a significant majority, around 78%, are actively involved in the cloud business at varying levels.

Pallasena pointed out that Adam Simon, Managing Director of CONTEXT, played a significant role at the Redington Re-Imagine 2023 event. "During his benchmarking analysis of the EMEA reseller and as-a-service markets. he discovered that the level

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of advancement and investment in development was higher in the MEA region compared to the others. He also emphasised the significant presence of software development and intellectual property activities here. Additionally, he noted the increasing interest in AI among this region's partners, with the percentage rising from 9% to 18% over the past year, reflecting a doubling of interest. In contrast, the interest in AI among partners in other regions was around 40%," he added.

The survey also revealed that major retailers, in particular, appear to be well-prepared for the AI revolution and its future significance. This trend aligns with the technology-driven projects emerging from Dubai, the UAE Government, Saudi Arabia and other countries where substantial investments are being made.

Pallasena summed it up thus: "The CONTEXT prediction for the Middle East Channel is that B2B and B2C customers will be the drivers of green standards adoption and IT company employees will push for compliance. Vendors will drive new processes for circularity and recycling of products. Leading edge resellers will tap into this important wave of transformation.

These insights provide Redington a clear understanding of the needs and interests of its partners and serve as a guide for evaluating its current strategies. By aligning its initiatives with partner expectations, the company ensures that its approach resonates well and leads to meaningful collaborations and success stories."

REDINGTON RECOGNISES THAT SUPPORTING CHANNEL PARTNERS EVERY STEP OF THE WAY IS PIVOTAL IN ENSURING A SEAMLESS AND SUCCESSFUL CLOUD TRANSITION FOR CUSTOMERS.

#### **How Redington Organised for Growth**

Redington Middle East and Africa has restructured its business units to four distinct divisions –

#### **Technology Solutions Group**

(TSG): TSG caters to holistic cybersecurity solutions and services and houses cuttingedge global brands. The diverse portfolio encompasses enterprise infrastructure, software, and security solutions. By collaborating with ISVs, system integrators, and solution providers, the business unit delivers tailored solutions that empower businesses to overcome their unique challenges.

#### Cloud Solutions Group (CSG):

CSG includes comprehensive cloud offerings and services and proprietary platforms, helping to make channel partners' operations even more efficient. The portfolio of services caters to customers' unique needs, supporting their

digital transformation journey and fostering scalability and growth

#### **Endpoint Solutions Group (ESG):**

ESG delivers world-class brands to the market, from extensive range of desktops and tablet PCs, printers, supplies to gaming products, and more. The business unit covers major consumer categories and leverages the company's diverse partnerships to reach stakeholders through an online, offline, and omni channel approach.

#### Mobility Solutions Group (MSG):

MSG offers an impressive array of world-class brands and products that encompass smartphones wearables, and accessories. Its comprehensive suite of services including credit and finance, pre-sales and post-sales support, demand generation, consulting, and training ensures that channel partners thrive in today's competitive landscape

#### DISTRIBUTION AND BEYOND

Redington is a well-established distributor with a broad range of products, cloud services and more. The company recently underwent a re-organisation to drive growth, and established different business groups. Its Value Business segment is now known as the Technology Solutions Group (TSG), emphasising its commitment to providing innovative solutions. Recognising the importance of cloud services, the company also formed the Cloud Solutions Group (CSG) and a Services Group to support it, Meanwhile, the Endpoint

Solutions Group (ESG) focuses on how technology is consumed by end-users, while the Mobility Solutions Group (MSG) caters to the needs of the mobility sector.

In addition, Redington has integrated services and consulting through Citrus, its subsidiary company. Citrus offers Migration Advisory Services and cutting-edge technology solutions to customers, guiding them through their digital transformation journey. Furthermore, its insurance systems and logistics arm provide lifecycle services, ensuring a seamless experience for partners. Redington's logistics services organisation, ProConnect, assists customers by offering warehousing, freight forwarding, and last mile deliveries, for not just Redington's customers but as third-party logistics provider to the rest of industry.

The company also provides a wide range of IT services and solutions that cater to dynamic business needs and facilitate effortless IT integration.



Redington's Ensure Services team specialises in life cycle services, deployment services and providing customised solutions in partnership with over 36 leading technology brands, ensuring seamless IT service experience.

"By aligning the company's business structure and offerings with evolving market demands, Redington is poised to embrace the future and provide comprehensive technology solutions to customers." Pallasena noted.

#### **CREATING VALUE**

It is important for the partner ecosystem to align with the changing needs of its customers. Understanding this, Redington strives to continuously enhance its efficiency and stay relevant. In fact, as part of its growth strategy, the company has formed customer-centric organisations with cluster heads overseeing them. Under the account management principle, it has established different routes to market, such as the commercial route, mobility route and consumer route.. These measures ensure that their partners can effectively cater to market demands and deliver value to their

Redington has also developed a digital twin of its distribution engine: The Sales Interface and Redington Online. The Sales Interface facilitates face-to-face interactions. Redington Online is a digital platform that serves as a complete digital twin of Redington. In fact, the company has successfully onboarded partners from nine countries onto this platform. It offers a seamless experience, allowing partners to access information about Redington's products, latest deals, and exclusive offers. The platform also lets partners place orders online and track their order history and analytics. This convenience empowers them to conduct business with the company anytime, anywhere. For example, they can place orders while on holiday or even in the middle of the night, without having to contact a salesperson directly. They can request customised deals, and the backend engine collaborates with the sales team to generate the right pricing, which is then made available on the online platform for easy ordering. In short,

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customers find it simpler and easier to engage with Redington and conduct business online.

In Pallasena's words: "With business models evolving beyond traditional capital expenditure (CAPEX) transactions and shifting toward operational expenditure (OPEX) models, Redington is keeping pace with these changes and offering various business models, including its consumption-based cloud infrastructure. This allows partners to align their business strategies with the changing market landscape."

In short, the company's focus on the partner ecosystem includes enhancing routes to market, providing efficient interfaces for sales and online engagement and embracing evolving business models. These initiatives allow it to add value to partners and facilitate seamless collaboration in the technology market.

#### **FUTURE FORWARD**

The fact that Redington has reorganised itself for growth, only serves to further reinforce its identity as a future-first technology company. Distinct, purpose-based business groups like the Technology Solutions Group, Cloud Solutions Group, Endpoint Solutions Group, and Mobility Solutions Group, make it better positioned to bring the best technology and solutions to the market. This ensures that it has access to top-notch technology sourcing and can offer the best products to its customers.

In addition to the business groups, Redington is also committed to supporting the ecosystem of Independent Software Vendors (ISVs). The company onboarded more than 120 ISVs onto its cloud platform, allowing them to sell their software solutions to Redington's partners.

This enables the ISVs to leverage Redington's technology and cloud services, while partners benefit from a wider range of offerings. This approach makes Redington an ecosystem aggregator, bringing together various stakeholders and offering the right business models to customers.

Plaudits are not new to Redington. Last year, the company achieved a significant turnover milestone by crossing \$10 billion. As a company with a strong presence in emerging markets, including India and Singapore, it is listed on the Indian stock exchange. A recent report by Canalys, the global research firm, recognised Redington as one of the top 10 distributors globally, further cementing its position in the industry. And with a remarkable yearon-year growth of over 25%, it is well poised to continue its upward trajectory and break into the top five distributors in the near future.





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## FUTURE PERFECT

Anita Joseph caught up with **Sakkeer Hussain**, Director - Sales & Marketing at D-Link Middle East & Africa, to learn more about the company's journey into the future.

-Link has a wide range of products catering to different segments, from consumers to large enterprises. How does the company ensure that these offerings align with the evolving technology needs of these diverse customer groups?

At D-Link, our customers are at the heart of everything we do as a business. We have a comprehensive portfolio of offerings for both SMEs and large enterprises. We ensure the portfolio meets the different needs of the customer segments. We also ensure to provide different levels of support. For example, large enterprises may need more dedicated support than a SME as the challenges could be different. D-Link's products are also competitively priced making it an attractive option for both customer segments. Another important element is that we ensure our offerings are scalable. So, if a smaller business wants to start off with a solution, he need not invest for the entire offering right away. It can be as per consumption. We are also open to feedback and really listen to our customers to ensure we are catering to their every requirement.

Can you discuss the role of channel partners in D-Link's distribution strategy and how the company collaborates with them to reach and serve customers effectively in the Middle East and Africa region? Channel partners are our extended arm and play a vital role in our growth strategy. They allow us to expand our footprint to new markets, new verticals and new customer segments. Channel partners help us increase our sales exponentially and help us by being our representative for the customer on ground. We work very closely with our channel network and regularly organise training workshops and enablement programs so that they are able to effectively sell D-Link offerings.

the future of networking and connectivity products, particularly in relation to emerging technologies such as IoT, 5G, and cloud computing? The future of networking and connectivity products is highly promising, with emerging technologies such as IoT, 5G, and cloud computing playing a major role. These technologies are enabling new applications and

services that are transforming the way

we live and work.

What is D-Link's vision for

We believe as IoT continues to connect billions of devices to the internet, there will be a need for higher capacity and better capable networking and connectivity products. At D-Link, we aim to be a step ahead of the market curve and are continuously investing in R&D to create futuristic products that add value to businesses. 5G is going to be a game changer and will be critical for real-time data transmission applications. Cloud computing will continue to be the backbone of new developments and provide scalability and flexibility. The networking and connectivity market

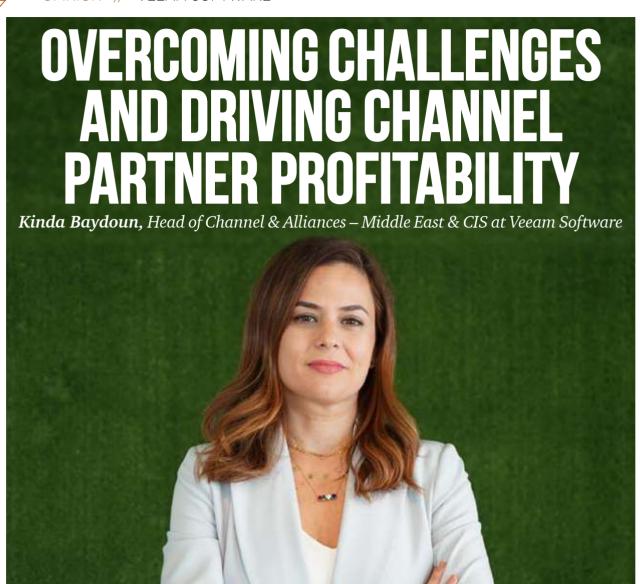
will only continue to grow in the near future.

Other trends that are also expected to drive growth in the networking and connectivity market include increasing use of AI and ML to enhance performance and efficiency of networking products, growing importance of sustainability in networking products and rising demand for high-speed connectivity in emerging markets.

Innovation plays a crucial role in the technology industry. Can you share some examples of how D-Link fosters a culture of innovation within the organisation and how it translates into cutting-edge products and solutions for its customers in the Middle East and Africa?

D-Link fosters a culture of innovation and advocates an open and transparent environment internally through a variety of initiatives and activities. We make sure we celebrate successes in a grand way and embrace failure as this is an important part of the innovation process. We make sure our engineers and developers have access to the best of resources to build innovative, futuristic and useful products. At D-Link, employees can express new ideas and be assured that it is well received by leaders. We also empower employees to take risks and make decisions. D-Link's partner ecosystem also has the same level of freedom to be as innovative, collaborative and forward thinking as possible. This is how as a brand we are able to create cutting-edge products and solutions for our regional customers.





active partners and 450,000 end-customers serviced by our ProPartner network globally, Veeam's channel gives businesses access to unrivalled expertise and knowledge. Our interactions with channel partners throw up a lot of interesting insights that give an indication of where the market is headed and what players in this space need to do in order to stay competitive.

From a technology perspective, we see that our partners are putting a lot of

energy and focus into four key areas:

1. Cloud – Instead of seeing cloud as a threat, partners should recognize the clear preference that customers have for these solutions. With the launch of multiple datacenters by hyperscalers like Microsoft, AWS and Google, we continue to see a very high interest from them to further invest in the region. Our partners are looking for new ways to generate revenue streams by routing their customers to the public cloud marketplaces. Furthermore, some of our partners are either building their own datacenters or

leveraging local service providers to offer their own cloud services. Partners should look to align with vendors that give them the opportunity of leveraging a hyperscaler's marketplace to sell the vendors' licences as well as those vendors that have specialized cloud service provider programs that offer the entire portfolio as-a-service.

2. Cyber Security/ Data Security
– this is one of the hottest trends
in the market today. According to
the Veeam Data Protection Trends
Report 2023, "85% of organizations
suffered at least one cyberattack

in the past 12 months, an increase of 76% compared to 2022". In the case of ransomware, which is becoming increasingly prevalent, while many organizations may say that 'ransomware is a disaster' and therefore include cyberattacks within their Business Continuity or Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) planning, the actual interaction between the teams leaves much to be desired. As per Veeam's 2023 Ransomware Trends Report, 60% of organizations surveyed believe either 'significant improvement' or 'complete overhaul' is needed between the Cyber and Backup teams. An alarming statistic from the report is that 21% of respondents that fell victim to ransomware, paid the ransom but could not recover data. These percentages are scary, considering the fact that cyberattacks are becoming very aggressive and hackers are getting more relentless. Channel organizations noticing this trend have started developing their capabilities in cyber security solutions and consultancy, to help organizations devise a solid cyber preparedness strategy. Partnering with vendors that offer market leading solutions in data protection and ransomware recovery offers partners a great opportunity of highlighting the criticality of data protection as part of an overall cyber security strategy and providing customers with technologies to ensure that their IT operations and businesses don't suffer downtime.

3. Artificial Intelligence (AI) - AI is now central to the way we live. The recent pandemic has taught us how enterprises that ignored emerging trends in artificial intelligence found it hard to survive



PARTNERS SHOULD VIEW UPSKILLING AND RESKILLING EMPLOYEES AS KEY PRIORITIES the changing workplace environment and market dynamics. AI continues to be one of the biggest trends and will be an ongoing focus in the future as more and more businesses adopt the technology in order to stay relevant and competitive. What AI applications to adopt and how to integrate that within businesses will be definitely on the roadmap of our partners, whether it be to optimize internal processes and automate operations, or to create better customer engagement. It is also important to remember that AI is a double-edged sword. On one hand its value to business is undeniable. But on the other, there are risks that may extend far beyond the intended use - privacy violations, discrimination, accidents/ potential loss of human life, national security - the list goes on. Partners intending to develop competencies in the area of AI must approach the technology in a pragmatic manner, and work with organizations to develop enterprise-wide controls to guide the development and use of AI systems, including policies, procedures, worker training, and contingency

4. Services Trends - IT environments are getting more and more complex and IT leaders are facing multiple challenges. They are building and supporting increasingly complex hybrid environments. They are under so much pressure to integrate the latest market trends, but lack the right talent, from a numbers, as well as skills perspective. And this is where channel partners can plug the gap. Offering services as part of their portfolio is very crucial for partners to maintain a healthy and profitable business. Upskilling the existing workforce and hiring good talent is indispensable in achieving this objective. Partners can play a big role in supporting customers through their digital transformation journey - from consulting and design services to post sales and implementation services. At Veeam, we fully rely on our partners to deliver services through Veeam Authorized Service Partner (VASP) program which is designed only for

very highly skilled services partners.

#### **Overcoming Challenges**

When it comes to channel partner related pain points, we see that the rise of digital transformation is met with a glaring gap in the relevant skillsets needed for the future of work. In a survey by Gartner a couple of years ago, it was cited that leaders and IT executives see the talent shortage as the most significant adoption barrier to 64% of emerging technologies. If those challenges are not tackled, partners will face the risk of simply becoming obsolete.

Partners should view upskilling and reskilling employees as key priorities. In order to upskill their employees, they need to start by defining their business framework, which should include 8 key components as per 'IDC Industry view 2023' – 1) Switching from Resell to aaS, 2) Having the right Technology Portfolio, 3) Specialization, 4) New Go-To-Market (such as marketplace), 5) Customers (access to C-suite), 6) Competition (creating smart partnerships), 7) Ecosystem (creating synergies) and 8) Solutions. I believe this is a great tool that partners can use to design their strategies and develop their key priorities this year and beyond. I always advise my partners to be the best at what they do.

#### **Driving Profitability**

Focus and specialization are key to having a profitable business, and this can be achieved by creating smart synergies within the right ecosystem and by investing in the right talent. Vendors have a key role to play in helping partners in this area by supporting them through training and certification programs that increase skill specialization and diversification that help differentiate the partner's offering in the market. In this way partners can scale their business models and address the needs of their customers in a very flexible and customized way. When looking to collaborate with vendors. besides the technology aspect, channel companies need to pay attention to a vendor's partner program. All programs don't have equal merit. Channel organizations need to collaborate with vendors whose partner programs centre around partner profitability and motivate and engage channel partners to create more value for customers.



## **DISRUPTING DISTRIBUTION**

Jagat Shah - Chairman & CEO – Mitsumi Distribution FZCO tells Anita Joseph how the company's strategic initiatives and growth plans have positioned it at the top of the distribution market.

ow has the first half of the year been for Mitsumi? What are the key learnings?

During the first half of the year, Mitsumi has experienced several key learnings that have significantly impacted its growth and expansion. To serve its customers better, Mitsumi inaugurates a state-of-the-art logistic centre (MLC) in Jebel Ali, UAE. This strategic move has streamlined operations, enhanced efficiency, and improved overall logistics capabilities, enabling the company to meet customer demands promptly and effectively.

In addition, Mitsumi's decision to open offices in West Africa French speaking has been instrumental in tapping into new markets and expanding its reach. New offices are opened in France, Senegal, Mali, Chad, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivore, DRC, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Togo. This strategic expansion has fostered closer relationships with local partners and customers, resulting in increased market presence and business opportunities in the region. To stabilize and attract new and existing partners Mitsumi participated in GITEX Africa 2023.

Mitsumi's successful signings of distribution contracts with world-renowned brands such as Lexar and Optoma demonstrate the company's commitment to offering top-quality products & solutions to its partners. These partnerships have not only strengthened Mitsumi's product portfolio but have also positioned the company as a trusted distributor of reputable brands in the region.

Furthermore, Mitsumi's extended partnership with HP & Dell Technologies to distribute their products & solutions in West Africa French speaking countries has significantly bolstered its market position and added a renowned brand to its distribution network. This collaboration has allowed Mitsumi to access a wider customer base and offer a comprehensive range of HP & Dell products to its partners across various regions. These key learnings reflect Mitsumi's dedication to innovation, market expansion, and strategic partnerships. By leveraging its state-ofthe-art logistics capabilities, expanding its presence in new regions, and collaborating with renowned brands, Mitsumi is poised for continued growth and success in the industry.

#### How significant is the Middle East regional market for Mitsumi? Tell us about your growth and the story behind vour success here.

The Middle East region holds immense significance for Mitsumi, playing a pivotal role in driving its market expansion and growth. Having established a robust presence in the Middle East, Mitsumi has emerged as a leading distributor of IT and technology products. The strategic location of the region, coupled with its vibrant economies and growing demand for advanced technology solutions, has contributed significantly to Mitsumi's remarkable success.

Mitsumi has made substantial investments in cultivating strong relationships with local businesses and partners, not only in the UAE, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain but also in the process of opening a legal entity in Saudi Arabia. This proactive approach has allowed Mitsumi to gain invaluable insights into the preferences and requirements of the region, enabling the company to tailor its product offerings and services to precisely meet the specific demands of customers across diverse industries.

Another key factor in Mitsumi's

success story in the Middle East is its extensive distribution network. By strategically positioning warehouses and offices in key locations throughout the region, Mitsumi ensures streamlined logistics and punctual delivery of products. This expansive presence empowers Mitsumi to reach a broad customer base, ranging from small businesses to large enterprises, and cater to their needs with the latest technological innovations.

As the Middle East continues to embrace and drive technological advancements, Mitsumi stands wellpositioned to further expand its market share and spearhead innovation in the region. The company's commitment to understanding the Middle East market, coupled with its robust distribution capabilities and focus on customer-centric solutions, reinforces Mitsumi's position as a trusted partner for businesses seeking cutting-edge technology in the dynamic Middle Eastern landscape.

#### With AI and Machine Learning dominating the business landscape today, how is Mitsumi adapting to this change? How are you integrating the various technology trends into your operations?

Mitsumi recognizes the transformative power of AI and Machine Learning in today's business landscape and has proactively adapted to leverage these technologies. Understanding the immense potential they hold for enhancing operational efficiency, customer experiences, and decision-making processes, Mitsumi has integrated various technologies into its operations.

One notable area where AI and Machine Learning have made a significant impact is in optimizing supply chain management. By embracing these technologies, Mitsumi remains at the forefront of innovation and is well-equipped to meet the

evolving demands of the industry.

#### What are your plans for the region for the rest of the year?

Mitsumi has ambitious future plans for the MEA (Middle East and Africa) region, aiming to capitalize on the growing opportunities and evolving market dynamics. The company recognizes the immense potential for further expansion and aims to solidify its position as a leading provider of IT, Telco and Enterprise solutions in the region.

One of Mitsumi's primary focuses for the future is to continue building strong partnerships and collaborations with local businesses and technology providers across the MEA region. By forging strategic alliances, Mitsumi aims to leverage synergies, share expertise, and tap into new market segments, enabling the company to offer a broader range of products and services tailored to the unique needs of customers in each country.

Mitsumi aims to provide innovative solutions that enable businesses across various sectors to unlock new possibilities, increase efficiency, and drive digital transformation. Expanding its footprint across the MEA region is another key aspect of Mitsumi's future plans. While already having a strong presence in the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain Mitsumi intends to broaden its reach by establishing a local presence in additional countries within the region. This expansion will enable Mitsumi to deliver localized support, better understand local market nuances, and cater to the specific needs of customers in each country more effectively. Together with vendors Mitsumi has planned multiple product trainings, product launches and partner events in this regions.

Furthermore, Mitsumi recognizes the importance of investing in talent development and technical expertise. To achieve this, the company plans to enhance its training and skill-building initiatives, ensuring that its workforce remains well-equipped to address the evolving demands of the industry and deliver exceptional customer experiences. By fostering a culture of innovation and continuous learning, Mitsumi aims to nurture a highly capable and knowledgeable team that can effectively navigate the future challenges and opportunities in the MEA region.

BY STRATEGICALLY POSITIONING **WAREHOUSES AND OFFICES IN KEY** LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE REGION, **MITSUMI ENSURES STREAMLINED LOGISTICS** AND PUNCTUAL DELIVERY OF PRODUCTS.

#### PERSONALITY // AMRITA GHANTY



## NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

Our personality of the month is **Amrita Ghanty**, Channel Marketing Manager at Gulf IT Network Distribution.

ell us a little
about your career
background and
how long you've
been in the region/
industry

I moved to UAE in 2014 and began working in the cybersecurity industry with a renowned Value-Added Distributor (VAD) in their Marketing and Sales department. I have served in multiple VADs since then, covering

BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO BE TO REACH YOUR GOALS.

the GCC region in terms of handling channel, sales and technical trainings, along with professional services to channel and Field marketing. Each role has been exciting yet promising. It makes me immensely proud to say that I've been successful in all my ventures.

#### What are your plans for the year?

Our plan for the year is strategic and in line with the current cybersecurity demand. UAE and KSA have announced two major governance models primarily focusing on government and semi-government sectors. Our aim is to build a constructive solution framework for our customers to help them comply with these standards and regulations.

#### What is your mantra for success in this highly competitive industry?

Embrace your unique identity and cultivate your positive difference in a team environment. Have faith in your abilities and believe that you are everything you need to be to reach your goals.

#### What advice would you give women who wish to enter the IT channel/distribution space?

Closing the gender gap won't happen overnight. It's good that we are discussing this openly, but after the words, action needs to be taken. Though this industry has traditionally been predominantly male dominated, it is now diversifying and women are being increasingly accepted. The current issue with cybersecurity space is the technology skill gap and this can be achieved by enabling yourself with the upcoming technologies and its relevant industry certification and self-study. Information is available online these days.

However, achieving success in any field demands dedication and hard work. Be fearless, women can do anything, whether you are a rocket scientist or in the cybersecurity, nothing is insurmountable.



## ow has 2023 been so far, and where do you see VAD Technologies at the end of this year?

2023 continued to be as successful as 2022 and we see most of our Product & Solutions in a hyper-growth mode now. Our investments of the last almost 10 years are paying off, as the regional markets of the Middle East are super hungry for disruptive technologies. The region's data centres urgently need to power up to meet the demand for AI and Cloud empowered digital transformation requirements of their clients. We are in a very good spot, because "during a gold rush, sell shovels" and that's exactly what we are doing.

## As a company distributing cutting-edge enterprise-class technology products, how is VAD Technologies redefining the concept of value-added distribution?

VAD Technologies was established with a clear Vision and Mission to bring innovative and disruptive technologies and solutions to the markets of the Middle East and beyond. We constantly scouting disruptive technologies from around the globe and start very early to invest into preparing the markets, building the required channel landscape and acquiring the technical expertise & know-how to support our channel partners to position the products & solutions successfully with their clients. This can be a very long process and demands solid commitments from all sides and the necessary stamina to find success. Sometimes it will take very long, but I can assure you that till date our patience paid off and earned us a very strong reputation of being the distributor of choice for many of our vendor partners.

## What strategies does your company employ to build partnerships with channel partners and vendors, and how do these collaborations contribute to the overall success of your business?

Our partnership with channel and

vendor partners is beyond what you would term a normal "supplier & customer" relationship. We are shareholders in either business and act as the enabler to ensure that business is uninterrupted. More than supporting technically, logistically, financially and commercially, we proof true ownership of the business from manufacturing & development till our channel partner's clients achieve the expected Return on Investment (ROI).

We take pride in the fact that top System Integrators, Service Providers and Resellers in the market work closely with us, and we are taking an active part in defining their future solutions portfolio and Go-To Market. Similarly, we are proud to see our vendor partner relationships grow year-on-year and VAD Technologies being an integral part of their regional strategy.

## How does VAD Technologies stay updated on the latest technology trends and market demands to ensure it is offering the most relevant and in-demand products and services to customers?

As I said many times before, this is a "Billion Dollar Recipe" that has several ingredients and is refined with a unique & secret VAD Technologies factor.

As technology becomes easy to use, it becomes increasingly more difficult to choose. And that's true for us, too. Let's define what are disruptive & innovative technologies, as especially, "Disruption" is nowadays a very conveniently used term to just hype a product, solution or even Go-To-Market. Unfortunately, too much of it is just marketing.

For us it's all about looking for simplification of a technology, which will lead to a Lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) or other significant advantages that will justify an investment in any such "new" technology.

This constant search for disruptive & innovative technologies leads us to very entrepreneurial vendors that challenge established players and market leaders.

To make our mission successful,

VAD Technologies works with various Industry Organisations & Associations, such as the Global Technology Distribution Council (GTDC), ContextWorld and many others to proactively scout disruptive and innovative Technologies from major IT Research & Development Centers around the Globe. Furthermore, the Team constantly examine most of the world's leading research & advisory company's frequent Reports, such as the "Magic Quadrants" from Gartner or other reports from Forrester, IDC, Evaluesery and Nielsen, to name a few.

Last but not least, we observe the regional market and track the executive movements inside the channel ecosystem very closely.

Visiting international ICT trade exhibitions and conferences. such as GITEX, GISEC, InterSEC, GESS, CES, MWC, IFA and many others, is another important aspect of the product management team. Once we find and evaluate the "Unicorns," we need to build a launch plan with realistic timelines and business expectations.

#### In an era of disruptive technologies, what is your go-to market strategy and vision for the region?

As said earlier, the region is hungry for Innovative and disruptive technologies and distributors who have prepared for this, like VAD Technologies, see the Results and enjoy strong growth. In fact, many of the Vendors we have been working with for years have now moved from being an emerging vendor into hyper growth mode. Something which helps us to continuously reinvest into our business and strategy.

The past few years has seen the regional distribution market further consolidating and only distributors that were able to successfully create new growth opportunities could maintain a profitable business and survive. Distributors found it increasingly difficult to strike a healthy balance between growth and profitability, especially due to shrinking margins with the established legacy vendors and increasing cost to better cover the entire region and support their reseller partners.

FOCUS // GARLAND TECHNOLOGY-OREGON SYSTEMS



## SECURING CRITICAL INFRASTURUCTURE

Anita Joseph caught up with **Chris Bihary**, CEO & Co-Founder of Garland Technology and **Manu Nair** GM of Oregon Systems, to learn more about their partnership and what it means for critical infrastructure security in the region.

#### ell us more about this partnership and the specific strengths both companies bring to the table.

**Chris Bihary-** Oregon Systems is a leading OT, IT and IoT Cybersecurity regional distributor of leading OTfocused cybersecurity vendors, serving the market through its qualified channel partners across the region, with a constant focus on customers in critical infrastructure and large enterprises. The partnership is a natural choice for Garland Technology. When selling outside the US, we focus on finding strategic partners that can help integrate our technology so we can deliver turnkey solutions to our customers. We've chosen Oregon Systems to help deploy our technologies within OT and critical infrastructure environments. This could include utilities, oil, gas, manufacturing, maritime etc, and the collaboration between the two companies is critical to be able to deliver to local customers within the Middle East region.

Manu- Being a professional engineering company, it becomes extremely crucial to choose the right technologies which provides the right kind of cybersecurity deployment in critical infrastructure. Unlike IT, this is a very complex infrastructure and there is multiple segmentation of this infrastructure, confidential networks, confidential data on different OEMs which have different proprietary protocols-understanding all this communication is a very complex challenge, if not, the whole cybersecurity design will fail. Garland Technology, as a technology provider, has multiple



capable of collecting information from critical infrastructure and providing it to the other systems from an integration point of view, which helps us give the right kind of visibility to define the threat landscape and take the right steps to address security threats.

We believe that the combination of Oregon Systems and Garland

solutions available, that are highly

We believe that the combination of Oregon Systems and Garland Technology is the right combination to ease the journey of customers and deploy cybersecurity in a correct manner.

## As far as customers in the region are concerned, what can they look forward to from this partnership?

Manu- Critical Infrastructure customers are keen on the deliverability of a particular technology. So, they evaluate each and every technology deeply, because the infrastructure is critical for them. They select infrastructure based on performance and capabilities. And as an engineering company and the biggest distributor of ICS, we thoroughly evaluate multiple technologies before we onboard. We are answerable to our customers about why we are proposing a certain technology and therefore, we ensure that the technologies we provide have the highest capability as of today, in the world. Garland Technology is one of the technology providers we identified, as having the best capabilities that we are looking for.

Chris- Network security is important. Garland Technology's "TAP to Tool" philosophy helps Oregon Systems deliver on its promise of security. At Garland Technology, we understand that companies invest a great deal of time, money, and personnel in security sensors. We strive to empower those sensors, not compete with them. Security sensors need full packet-level visibility to perform optimally and

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WE BELIEVE THAT THE PARTNERSHIP
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Garland Technology's solutions ensure the sensors have 100% visibility into the network. When you have an IT company that has data stolen, that will obviously result in a cost to the customers and the business. But when you deal with OT environments, we're talking about potential loss of lives. If someone were to hack a crane that's loading something onto a ship, you could have people dying as a result of a cyber hack into the operating system of the crane. Critical infrastructure is everywhere, there's so much that can go wrong. Network security in OT environments is absolutely critical and there's really no room for error. It is, therefore, important to partner with the best - not only with technology, but with those who know how to implement this technology. Oregon Systems has the experience, the people and the expertise, and that's crucial.

#### Tell us about Garland Technology and the work that you do in the region.

**Chris:** Assisting critical infrastructure networks is in the DNA of Garland Technology, Jerry Dillard (CTO / Co-Founder) and I got our start in the industry working on critical networks like emergency call centers and fighter jets respectively. This instilled an ambition to help ensure critical networks never fail. Garland Technology was born out of the desire to innovate and engineer solutions that are accessible, uncomplicated, and dependable. Added attention has been placed on developing solutions ideal for industrial and manufacturing OT networks. Garland Technology understands that industrial and manufacturing OT networks are unique environments, with demanding and exacting requirements. We engineer products that operate in a variety of conditions like extreme temperatures, vibration, DC power, tight spaces, 100Base-FX media, and unidirectional traffic flow with physical hardware separation inside the Network TAPs (data diodes). Garland Technology's products have been deployed in hundreds of OT networks alongside technologies like Nozomi Networks. In fact, we have the largest TAP and Packet Broker portfolio for OT networks in the marketplace - no competitor has the OT portfolio that we offer.

TECHNOLOGY // HUAWEI



### HUAWEI TO LAUNCH FULL SET OF COMMERCIAL 5.5G NETWORK EQUIPMENT IN 2024

t the 5G Advanced Forum held during MWC Shanghai 2023, Huawei announced that it will launch a complete set of commercial 5.5G network equipment in 2024. Huawei's Director and President of ICT Products & Solutions Yang Chaobin, who made the announcement, said that the company intends that this launch will mark the beginning of the 5.5G era for the ICT industry.

With service models and content continuously evolving, breakthroughs in technologies like glasses-free 3D are creating unprecedented immersive experiences for users. However, these new services continue to require stronger 5G network capabilities. The industry has widely agreed that 5.5G will be a key milestone in 5G evolution and that it is fast approaching.

Huawei proposed the concept of a "5.5G Era", based on an end-to-end solution that integrates comprehensive

evolved technologies, including 5.5G, F5.5G, and Net5.5G. This solution would protect operators' previous investment in 5G, while also improving network performance by 10 times. This 5.5G Era would feature 10-gigabit peak downlink speeds and gigabit peak uplink speeds to meet increasingly diverse service requirements. It would also refresh the industry vision by using new technologies like passive IoT to unlock a market of 100 billion IoT connections.

As an advocate for end-to-end 5.5G solutions, Huawei has been working with multiple players across the industry on R&D and verification of key 5.5G technologies. Significant progress has been made in this verification process, specifically for extremely large antenna array (ELAA). This underpins 10-gigabit downlink, flexible spectrum access, which helps realize gigabit uplink, and passive IoT that can enable 100 billion IoT connections. 50G PON is another key technology that can enable 10-gigabit

speeds for F5.5G ultra-broadband networks and is expected to be extensively used in homes, campuses, and productions in the future. Huawei has worked with over 30 operators around the world on technological verification and application pilots for these technologies.

In addition to the development of key technologies for 5.5G wireless and optical access networks, Yang announced that the company has been working on applying AI-native technologies to 5.5G core networks to continuously enhance network capabilities and availability. This would allow AI capabilities to be delivered to the very ends of networks, so that they can better serve numerous industries. Net5.5G promises 10-gigabit access, ultra-broadband transport, and microsecond-level latency over AI networks, allowing it to serve as a next-generation network foundation for industrial digitalization by providing high-quality network access.



Dubai, UAE

#### SUBMIT NOMINATIONS NOW

The Future Enterprise Awards is undoubtedly the flagship awards ceremony in the IT industry in the Middle East.

Hosted by CPI Media Group and tahawultech.com, the awards are the most prestigious in the IT industry both here in the UAE, and indeed across the Middle East.

The awards are set against the backdrop of GITEX Technology Week, which is the region's flagship IT conference held at Dubai World Trade Centre.

#FutureEnterpriseAwards2023 #tahawultech

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SECURITY // SANS INSTITUTE

## WHY ZERO TRUST ARCHITECTURE IS CRITICAL IN SECURING CLOUD-BASED ENTERPRISES

#### Matt Bromiley, SANS Institute

here has been an upsurge in cybercrime in recent years despite widespread commitments to strengthening security posture across the public and private sectors. Global spending on best-of-breed security solutions and AI-enabled machine learning tools reached record highs in 2022. And even amidst the socioeconomic headwinds of current market conditions, Gartner

still forecasts that security and risk management investments are slated to grow by 11% through the end of 2023 – equating to more than \$183.3 billion.

Despite this, adversarial threat actors continue to seemingly bypass stringent security implementations with ease. The paradoxical discrepancy is largely rooted in misalignment between common security controls and the evolving cyber threat landscape. With the societal adoption of remote and hybrid work environments following COVID-19,

organizations have integrated the use of cloud technologies, services, and third-party applications into functional operations at a rapid scale.

This new way of working expanded the attack surface exponentially, giving adversaries a wider range of external vulnerabilities to target via social engineering campaigns and malware-based attacks. From the emergence of new business collaboration channels like Slack and Microsoft Teams to the meteoric rise of remote IoT devices, an organization's digital footprint is more exploitable than ever.

Compounding the issue is that many companies have invested in security stacks originally designed to defend complex on-premises environments, not the unstructured data assets of their cloud-based business ecosystems. Given the heightened sophistication and funding of modern cybercrime, organizations must operate under the presumed assumption that their network will be breached — meaning it's not a matter of if, but when.

To align with these changing dynamics, it's critical to shift away from the legacy perimeter-based controls of the past in favor of a more agile zero trust architecture (ZTA) that restricts adversaries from causing irremediable damage after that inevitable breach occurs.

**The Building Blocks of ZTA**When approaching the integrated

adoption of a successful ZTA model, it's first important to remember that the inherent concept of zero trust extends beyond any single element or control. It's rather a prescribed way of being that weaves security into every layer of the enterprise and





guidelines efficient mitigation in the wake of compromise. Removing implicit trust and, in turn, access to specific privileges based on that trust reduces the ability of a compromised account to wreak havoc within the organization's digital ecosystem. Consider it defense in-depth.

Achieving a true zero trust environment is not a light switch scenario by any means. ZTA requires a complete architectural overhaul comprised of calculated planning, integration, access/operations management, and verification mechanisms. It certainly cannot be accomplished with an eye for old practices.

The foundational components of ZTA include identifying/inventorying enterprise assets, determining access policies, establishing where those policies should be implemented, and then controlling how they are maintained. That said, ZTA adoption can only begin with end-to-end visibility into an organization's existing digital infrastructure to identify what assets are of highest value to adversaries. The more attractive the asset, the tighter access policies in place.

For a healthcare system, an example of high-value asset could be sensitive patient medical records containing personally identifiable information. For a financial institution, it could

be data logs detailing the third-party vendor transactions and bank account numbers of a large enterprise. For governmental agencies, it could be confidential intelligence relative to matters of public safety. It all depends on the conditions that are unique to the organization's security environment, but regardless of size or sector, they have a responsibility to defend their assets from being leveraged for malicious intent.

#### Securing the Hybrid Attack Surface

Many enterprises that transitioned from on-premises to hybrid work environments still rely on virtual private networks (VPN) that grant remote users shared access to a myriad of end points and applications. But if a ransomware actor were to steal the right account with the right permissions through an email-borne phishing scheme, that VPN would essentially be rendered useless. After bypassing the narrow perimeter protections, there's nothing stopping them from utilizing the compromised account to encrypt and exfiltrate sensitive data for extortion.

But if that same enterprise had a ZTA model layered within their security environment, access determinations would instead be defined at a centralized Policy Decision Point (PDP) and scaled to the individual user on the principle of least privilege. This time, after the ransomware actor gained access to stolen credentials, a Policy Enforcement Point (PEP) system continuously monitoring the account's activity would already be positioned to identify suspicious behaviors and subsequently terminate the session in real time — thus mitigating the breach's impact. The policies maintained by the PDP/ PEP determine per session what assets each user should and should not access based on certain key criteria.

In conclusion, it's clear that adversaries have found far too much success attacking today's modern enterprises. Even though we continue to see organizational growth and infrastructure implementations followed by new security tooling and security controls, threat actors continue to find vulnerabilities to capitalize on. These matters are further complicated when we consider the implications of the past 24 to 36 months from a computing and enterprise architecture perspective.

With ZTA adoption, however, all hope is not lost. Organizations with a vast array of resources, systems, applications, and data on a global scale need a security model that can grow at the rate the organization wants to move — not a rate that hinders growth or creates gaps for adversaries to exploit.

PRODUCT WATCH // EROS ELECTRONICS

# EROS ELECTRONICS PRODUCTS TO WATCH OUT FOR

n the fast-paced tech world where groundbreaking products and innovations are introduced every day, it is a challenge to identify the products one needs, from countless others.

Eros has made it simple by shortlisting the products to

watch out for. With conveniently located outlets throughout Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, Eros is the go-to electronics destination for countless citizens offering unbeatable prices.

Here are some of Eros's recommended products to watch out for!



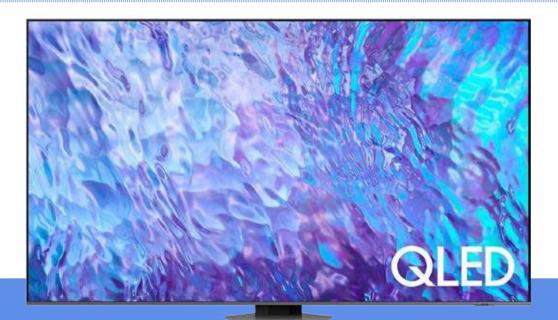
#### **Cosori Air Fryer**

Introducing the COSORI 6.4L Dual Blaze Smart Air Fryer, featuring 360 ThermolQ Technology with dual heating elements for faster cooking and lower electricity usage. Its 6.4L square basket serves 4-6 people, offering even cooking without stacking. The improved pure aluminum basket ensures better-tasting food in less time. Enjoy 12 functions, remote control via the Vesync App, easy cleaning, and access to online recipes. Upgrade your cooking with this efficient and convenient air fryer for healthier and tastier meals.

**Dreame Vacuum Cleaner** 

navigating system, a cutting-edge technology that enables precise and efficient cleaning. This smart device comes equipped with a 200ml water tank and a large 600ml dustbin, ensuring a thorough cleaning process. With powerful APP remote control capabilities, you can easily program and manage the cleaning tasks. The vacuum is powered by a 5200mAh large capacity battery, providing long-lasting cleaning sessions, and it automatically charges itself when needed. Additionally, the flexible antibacterial microfiber mop ensures effective sanitization during the cleaning process.





#### Samsung 98 Inch TV

Introducing the Samsung 98 Inch Series 8 QA98Q80C QLED 4K Smart TV, a masterpiece in home entertainment. With its Neural Quantum Processor 4K, experience breathtaking picture quality and enhanced depth, thanks to the Real Depth Enhancer feature. The Direct Full Array ensures precise lighting control for vibrant visuals. Enjoy a seamless Multi-Device Experience, connecting and controlling various devices effortlessly. With Auto Game Mode (ALLM), the TV optimizes settings for an immersive gaming experience. Its sleek Slim Look design in Carbon Silver adds elegance to any room. Smart Hub provides easy access to all your favorite content, completing the ultimate TV experience.



#### **LEVOIT Air Purifier**

Experience fresh and clean indoor air with the Levoit VeSync Core™ 400S Smart True HEPA Air Purifier. This powerful device utilizes H13 True HEPA filtration, capturing 99.97% of airborne particles at 0.3 microns, 99.9% at 0.1 microns, and features HEPASmart™ Technology for added bacteria and virus removal. The VortexAir™ Technology enhances air circulation and filtration efficiency, while the AirSight™ Plus Technology with a laser dust sensor monitors airborne particles. With PM2.5 Display, App Control, QuietKEAP™ Technology, and Air Quality Indicator Rings, you can efficiently manage air quality in real-time.

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technology. Additionally, this TV
supports 120Hz gaming, ensuring
a smooth and thrilling gaming
experience. Get the best value and
an outstanding audio-visual journey
with the 98C735 QLED TV.

### **Solar Powered Camera**



Powered by solar energy, this kit sets up without any electrical wiring.

#### **Easy installation**

Easy set up without mechanical equipment-reducing the installation costs and time.

Can withstand bad weather

Prone to extreme weather such as strong wind and rainstorms.



FINAL WORD // FRESHWORKS

## FRESHWORKS UNVEILS NEW GENERATIVE AI ENHANCEMENTS ACROSS PRODUCT LINES

reshworks Inc., has announced Freddy Self Service, Freddy Copilot and Freddy Insights to make artificial intelligence more accessible to every workplace. The new predictive and assistive generative AI capabilities embedded within Freshworks solutions and platform go beyond content generation and help support agents, sellers, marketers, IT teams and leaders become more efficient with a revolutionary new way to interact with their business software.

The new Freddy AI enhancements will be demonstrated for the first time at Freshworks' Q2 '23 Launch event, adding to the AI upgrades launched in March that have reduced time to complete work tasks in sales, marketing and support by as much as 83%.

"Our goal at Freshworks is to put the power of generative AI in the hands of the Fortune five million, not just the Fortune 500 enterprise," said Girish Mathrubootham, Founder and CEO. "We've been helping customers run more efficient businesses with AI for half a decade and know they don't need a billion apps to do so. Every department could benefit from a workplace assistant that maximizes productivity, and that's what Freddy AI can do – for the support agent, sales person, marketer, IT manager, HR professional, developer and more."

The new Freddy AI capabilities leverage Freshworks' domain expertise in sales, marketing, customer support and IT to deliver artificial intelligence that helps eliminate busy work and makes doing work easier and more delightful. Freddy Copilot



offers contextual assistance, offloads repetitive tasks, and maximizes team productivity by enabling developers and employees in support, sales, and marketing to use conversations to get their work done; Freddy Self Service offloads monotonous work to bots to scale support and deliver excellent customer experiences; and Freddy Insights automates the analysis of their daily productivity and provides recommendations to drive greater business impact. Together, Freddy generative AI capabilities help businesses automate, scale, and derive actionable insights from their work.

Freddy Insights helps businesses to streamline operations and drive business growth. Freshworks' generative AI analyzes customer and employee support data to automatically identify areas for improvement. It also is able to analyze marketing and sales effectiveness and recommends optimizations that can improve performance and increase revenue.



Freddy Insights also offers proactive quality management that evaluates support quality, helps find out if staff are delivering on established goals and guides agents to get better with every customer conversation.

"For far too long companies have spent time and energy training humans to understand software. Now with generative AI, products are learning to adapt to how humans think," said Prakash Ramamurthy, Chief Product Officer at Freshworks. "Freshworks has a unique opportunity to bring greater productivity and proactive insights to businesses of all sizes and help our customers turn generative AI into business momentum."

Freshworks' goal is to have Freddy AI solutions unify the strengths of a range of LLMs to optimize business performance and speed deployments. Freshworks will build out proprietary language models and incorporate general purpose LLMs to address customer specific needs.





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27 inch Class 5K IPS Monitor with macOS Compatibility.



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## BEYOND FAST





