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DECEMBER 2018, VOL. 1 NO. 9 PAGES 40, ₹75



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MAXIMISING
THE CLOUD ADVANTAGE



ENTERPRISE MOBILITY: THE GROWTH DYNAMICS

Workforces are increasingly going mobile, and partners are hooked on to enterprise mobility like never before

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Vol 1. No. 9.
December, 2018
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WITH MOBILITY COMES REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERS



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Mobility can be seen as the inflection point to drive the consumption of technology. As technology touches every part of IT, most enterprises face numerous challenges while implementing mobility programs. This is where several opportunities for solution providers are being created that can help enterprises overcome the challenges they face.

In this mobile-first world, solution providers are not only trying to develop and deploy a mobile solution for their customer's business challenges, but are also ensuring that they are using the mobile-first approach. We are also seeing the partner companies having a higher business-level discussion in which they help their customers define a business case for mobility.

For instance, for Bengaluru-based Quadra Systems, enterprise mobility and security has now become an essential component of its offerings to customers. It is providing secure access to users and help protect enterprise data by managing apps and devices.

Building customer-facing applications is an obvious

opportunity for solution providers who have in-house development skills. Here, they can have a business discussion with customers about how the mobile can help them grow their business or save money in their business, and the way to do that is through applications. Partners can also help enterprises define a mobility policy, recommend and deploy an MDM product to support that policy; with this approach, they will offer a much-needed service.

Another solution partner, Multiverse Solutions, is looking at a range of 25-30 per cent Y-o-Y growth from this line of business, as it has a few mobility projects in the pipeline, including a project on m-commerce, integration of chatbots to existing application, and a project on mobile document management system.

As enterprise mobility is poised to take big leaps forward in the coming days, there are plenty of business opportunities being created for solution providers within this domain. More so, those partners who offer consulting services, are in a good position to seize the business opportunities that mobility offers.

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REGD. WITH RNI UNDER NO. MAHENG/75607/2018.

Printed and Published by Vaidehi Thakar on behalf of The Indian Express (P) Limited and Printed at Indigo Press (India) Pvt.Ltd., Plot No.1C/716, Off. Dadoji Konddeo Cross Road, Byculla (East), Mumbai 400027 and Published at 1st floor, Express Towers, Nariman Point, Mumbai 400021. Editor: Srikanth RP *

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8 | Cover Story

ENTERPRISE MOBILITY: THE GROWTH DYNAMICS

Workforces are increasingly going mobile, and partners are hooked on to enterprise mobility like never before

14 | Special Focus**Maximising the cloud advantage**

For getting maximum benefits out of advanced cloud computing, organisations need to create high-level cloud strategies and measure the factors driving its growth. An analysis of why cloud computing is so essential for businesses and the immense opportunities it presents for partners

Channel Chief

- 18 | 'We were first in the market to offer simple, predictable, profitable solutions'**

Paul Hunter, Worldwide Partner Sales Leader, HPE

- 32 | UiPath looks at onboarding specialised partners in India**

Ashutosh Kapoor, VP – Channel Ecosystem, UiPath

CXO Speak

- 21 | 'India is one of the biggest growth markets for us'**

Sean Duca, VP and Regional Chief Security Officer, Asia Pacific, Palo Alto Networks

- 26 | 'We have built a strong partner and customer pipeline across govt, enterprise verticals'**

Suresh Kewelramani, Director - Sales, EverestIMS Technologies, India

- 30 | 'Array Networks reiterates its commitment to the Indian market'**

Shibu Paul, Regional Sales Director - APAC, Array Networks

- 34 | NetRack: linking success with service response**

RaviRaj, CEO, NetRack Enclosures

- 35 | R&M to focus on telcos and enterprises in 2019**

Gaurav Ahluwalia, Managing Director, R&M India

Partner Corner

- 22 | Security is the largest growing market for iValue InfoSolutions**

Krishna Raj Sharma, CEO, iValue InfoSolutions

- 28 | 'We utilise the power of partners in their respective areas of specialisation'**

Prashanth GJ, CEO, TechnoBind

CIO Corner

- 24 | How digital and mobile-first strategy is redefining dining experience**

Kiran Komatla, Vice President - IT, Burger King India

Event

- 36 | Netmagic abreasts partners on scaling up applications in a cloud & mobile-first world**

Shantaram Shinde, VP & National Head - Channel Business, Netmagic Solutions

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ENTERPRISE MOBILITY: THE GROWTH DYNAMICS



Workforces are increasingly going mobile, and partners are hooked on to enterprise mobility like never before

■ Sandhya Michu

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the enterprise mobility business will grow significantly, given the fact that over the last couple of years enterprises have innovated with mobile applications to increase productivity and optimise costs. Moving forward, with IoT and other enabling technologies like analytics and cloud, enterprises of all sizes will increasingly go mobile. The market for mobile applications is expected to grow from 48.24 billion in 2016 to 98.03 billion in 2021. This growth will be driven by the growing demand for real-time data capture and the business focus on mobile workforces. The obvious reason for this is to have access to the best of breed of services, without losing control of IT. Besides the positive trend, the revenue opportunities that enterprise mobility promises are enticing the vendors and partners alike to enter into this space.

Expressing his views on this burgeoning market of enterprise mobility, Prashanth Subramanian, executive director, Bangalore based Quadra Systems says, "People are closer to mobile-only than ever before. Nearly 60 per cent of the digital time spent by them is on mobile apps. Employees are no different. Almost every enterprise that provides one or more services to their customers has developed at least an app to empower their mobile employees in connecting to their data systems. Enterprises dealing with their own intellectual property as well as that of their clients are looking for solutions that will help them secure them by managing apps and end-user devices. Also, securing the identity of their mobile employees while helping them to access confidential information from anywhere, anytime in any device is becoming essential."

Organisations are increasingly looking to adopt the Bring Your Own Device or the BYOD model and therefore the market for devices is also poised to grow significantly. Researchers estimate the market for devices to grow from US\$ 35.10 billion in 2016 to US\$ 73.30 billion by 2021, at a CAGR of 15.87 per cent. Organisations adopting a BYOD model are eyeing increased productivity

levels, greater employee satisfaction, and reduced hardware costs. Similarly, increased use of work-related activities on virtualised platforms is expected to see a growth from US\$ 2.16 billion in 2016 to US\$ 5.68 billion by 2021, at a CAGR of 21.3 per cent. The virtualised platforms also help enterprises streamline security strategies for layers and layers of data coming in.

Factors driving mobility led enterprises

The increasing demand for the smartphone, a trend to choose and bring your own device, increase in mobile data usage and mobile devices, and increase in adoption of cloud-based technology, are some factors fueling the market growth. The earliest applications were rather ad hoc, usually project-based. Organisations have now begun building apps around their business workflow.



"WE DEVELOPING OUR EXPERTISE AROUND SECURITY WHICH CAN COVER GATEWAY LEVEL SECURITIES, CLOUD TECHNOLOGY AS WE WANT TO DEVELOP CLIENTELE WHO ARE LOOKING FOR EMAIL SOLUTIONS, OFFICE APPLICATIONS ON THE MOVE"

Sonali V. Nerurkar
VP - Enterprise Business,
Questa Software Systems

While the security of data remains a concern for many companies, it is a trade-off an organisation is willing to make, particularly an enterprise looking forward to a global expansion. Enterprises are looking to provide better work-life balance to their employees by implementing the BYOD and the anywhere, anytime data and information access to boost productivity, remote assistance to employees to solve everyday technical snags from the helpdesk and support centers is becoming more and more an essential service. Also, training sessions for orientation, knowledge transfer and update are becoming vital for sustenance and growth of enterprises, solutions that require little or no upfront investment as well as low upgrade and maintenance costs are preferred to allow them to invest in their core business areas and reduced paperwork, and extended freedom to field workers are other factors that are behind the growth of enterprise mobility.

High profitability for partners

The big opportunity lies in spotting the right source, to emerge as the enterprise mobility provider. In the case of Quadra Systems' enterprise mobility and security has now become an essential component of its offerings to customers because of the threat that enterprises are facing, not only from external sources but inadvertently by internal users as well. Spear phishing and ransomware attacks are targeted towards individuals who are less tech-savvy and the IT department in the enterprise is not the only entity that is responsible for a data/information breach in an organisation. This has now transformed into a "pull" solution and has become a serious topic in the boardrooms for urgent decision-making.

Subramanian from Quadra says, "While we have been the pioneers in bringing the Office 365 Software as a Service to our customers, we have now moved on to provide secure access to those users and help protect enterprise data by managing apps and devices. There has been a tremendous appropriation of these mobility and security aspects of the

CASE STUDY

Prashanth Subramanian, Executive Director, Quadra Systems finds a good traction in the deployment of enterprise mobility. He talks about how Quadra is securing IP for one of its leading jewel designer and manufacturer customers.

Securing the intellectual property of the enterprise is a priority for organisations dealing with the design of products and especially when there is close competition to deliver the latest to customers. One of our customers is a leading jewel designer and manufacturer. New designs by the designing teams sitting

across the country were exchanged through mobile devices and using social media. This created a serious risk of pilferage or unintentional leakage of intellectual property. A click of a button could cost millions of rupees to the enterprise. In order to safeguard the designs generated and shared, our customer opted for an enterprise mobility solution from Microsoft. The mobile device management solution helped prevent movement of IP between enterprise apps and personal apps, once the device was enrolled as a trusted device. This also provided the user the freedom to use personal apps in the same device but clearly demarcated from the enterprise approved apps.



"PEOPLE ARE CLOSER TO MOBILE-ONLY THAN EVER BEFORE. NEARLY 60 PER CENT OF THE DIGITAL TIME SPENT BY THEM IS ON MOBILE APPS. EMPLOYEES ARE NO DIFFERENT"

Prashanth Subramanian
Executive Director, Quadra Systems

cloud by our customers. The number of seats that have adopted these solutions has grown to 300 per cent while our revenue growth through these solutions has almost doubled. Moreover, sales organisations that have seen a growth of mobile employees, manufacturing organisations that deal with design and development of new products, software developers that handle client data day in and day out and IT-enabled service providers that are accountable for customer data entrusted to them, are seeing the value of the enterprise mobility solutions."

Similarly, Noida based, Multiverse Solutions has been betting high on the rapid growth of the mobile handset and enterprise adaptation to the cloud. The company believes that the enterprise mobility market will be a lucrative area of business over the next few years. Considering the same, it is consciously started

offerings around creating a mobile application for a customer moving to cloud through them, PoCs and demos of the various capabilities that they have, SaaS mobile application which is ready to use with minimal or no configuration and becoming a one-stop solution for all enterprise mobility needs.

Anubhav Jain, CEO, Multiverse Solutions maintains, "We are looking at a range of 25-30 per cent Y-o-Y growth from this line of business, the same is derived upon looking at the interest our existing customers have shown in the 'one enterprise application', and also some of the major mobility projects in the pipeline that include a project on M-Commerce, integration of chatbots to existing application and a project on mobile document management system. We are also exploring the possibility of end-to-end ready to use solutions for attendance management, conference room booking, customer feedback etc.,

which we intend to sell on a subscription model creating a steady revenue stream for the company."

In terms of enterprise mobility, we are trying to develop our expertise around security which can cover your gateway level securities, cloud technology as these give opportunity to develop clientele who are looking for email solutions, office applications on the move, also in terms of monitoring all devices which are on the move, we are working on Unified NMS and FOS (Foot On Street) model, due to the mobile workforce, you need minimum investments like real estate, other associated costs like maintenance, etc., tells Pune based Sonali V. Nerurkar, VP Enterprise Business, Questa Software Systems.

Another partner from Mumbai echoes the same sentiments. Suresh Ramani, CEO of Techgyan points out, "This is one of the core areas for us. Our offering essentially uses Microsoft 365 and have built various processes

around the same and then we offer it as a complete solution to customers. We are aiming for 100 per cent YOY from enterprise mobility. The main reason is the digital transformation which is taking place in almost every company and we are deeply involved in this process."

Productivity tools for partners

Several partners are managing enterprise mobility for streamlining the internal process and that further helps them to articulate to the customers' need more vividly. At Quadra, the company adopts a BYOD concept encouraging the new entrants in the sales teams to bring their laptops and smartphones that they have, using comfortably at least for a few years. Soon after job orientation, their devices are enrolled as managed devices using Intune from Microsoft's EM+S. This enables them to use Office 365 from day one of their productive

careers. Likewise, technical team members can provide assistance to users and conduct training sessions to their juniors and peers using improved workflows built with the Remote Assistance feature.

Kaizala is increasingly becoming a preferred choice of various organisations who want to replace unmanaged chat apps with a secure and trusted platform that offers the convenience of chat while ensuring productivity for frontline workers. "Our feet-on-the-street executives communicate with their Leads and Managers real-time, sharing images, photos and other scanned documents from wherever they are. This aids faster decision-making and drastically shortens the sales cycle. Task assignment, tracking, and status check are helping the teams function more productively than ever," Subramanian adds.

In the same lines, Multiverse

Solutions is also creating an application that will allow on-field business and operations team to update their time-sheets on the fly, add comments on a customer meeting and push it to the business analysis or development team for relevant action. One enterprise application is a brain-child of Multiverse Solutions that address the organisational need of allowing employees the ability to access multiple business workflows such travel ticket booking, leave application, timesheet management, etc. The idea was to create one umbrella application that enables users to access and perform various activities through a single application. It envisages this application to be a game changer for account management which will give our account managers the ability to initiate immediate action on a customer query/grievance and thus



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CASE STUDY

Noida based Anubhav Jain, CEO, Multiverse Solutions is impressed with the growth margins that the enterprise mobility brings, which is almost 25-30 per cent Y-o-Y growth

Simplifying customers' need

One Enterprise Application is the brainchild of Multiverse Solutions that addresses the organisational need of allowing employees the ability to access multiple business workflows such as travel ticket booking, leave application, timesheet management, etc. The idea was to create one umbrella application that enables users to access and

perform various activities through a single application.

Where is the money?

The company looks optimistic with major mobility projects in the pipeline that include a project on m-commerce, integration of chatbots with an existing application and a project on mobile document management system. We are also exploring the possibility of end-to-end ready to use solutions for attendance management, conference room booking, customer feedback, etc., which we intend to sell on a subscription model, creating a steady revenue stream for the company.



"WE ARE ALSO EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF END-TO-END READY TO USE SOLUTIONS FOR ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT, CONFERENCE ROOM BOOKING, CUSTOMER FEEDBACK, ETC"

Anubhav Jain

CEO, Multiverse Solutions

achieve a higher degree of customer satisfaction.

Ramani informs, "Unlike many other companies, we do not use WhatsApp at all for internal use. Instead, we have used Microsoft Teams and integrated the same with multiple other services so that all internal users do almost everything using Teams. We have deployed this solution and we use it on desktops, browsers, and mobiles."

Delhi based Team Computers has also developed in-house applications and productivity tools for its offsite engineers and sales team for giving more output in fewer numbers of working hours. Ranjan Chopra, MD, Team Computers is a firm believer of reimagining the workspace and

workforce as customers' needs are changing. "We are undergoing transformation and enterprise mobility is driving this big change at Team," he asserts.

Enterprise mobility is related to the mobile workforce, the FOS (Foot On Street). "In our case we have different branches, where FOS are client facing, they could be with BYOD or company-provided devices, in any case, they should have a laptop, internet connection and handheld device to update the data. We work on entire centralised processes, like, ISE, technical, accounts, and finance, so FOS has got full support from HQ. In this case, we have streamlined our processes with the help of CRM

(Customer Relationship Management). Through this we can track FOS, their real-time locations, their check-in/check-out. Also, they can update their meetings, once done, in the mobile app itself. This increases productivity and decreases management cost. We are also working on some other collaborative tools to improve functionalities," says Nerurkar.

Coping with skewed IT budgets

There has been a sound growth in adoption of PaaS in cloud-enabling organisations to leverage various platform offerings by cloud providers to build scalable and secure applications that allow users to access and manage work on the go. The ready availability of authentication services to ensure secure single sign-on to enterprise applications, such as ADFS, and ready availability of mobile device management platforms, such as Intune, and ready integration with various platforms to create a seamless user experience across multi-device and multi-screen environments are more in demand.

In fact, enterprises are a lot more concerned about their IT security environment than ever before, but their concern is also about the cost involved in implementing a full-fledged mobility solution integrated with security. A solution that bundles both mobility and security, is the need of the hour. Whether building a secure app for their mobile employees or using an existing one for enterprise-wide use, they will require the management to take control of their IP as well as the user-devices. As there are many social media apps currently being used for instant communication and file sharing (documents, photos, images, and videos) that are unmanaged, there is a need for a similar tool – both user-friendly as well as manageable – to empower the mobile user. Add to it the safeguarding of the identity of the users and protecting them from threats looming large from outside, as well as from some non-technical users in the establishment.

"A comprehensive solution is essential so that it can be implemented fast, with little or no complexity involved in deployment and rollout. Minimum disruption to the users is a desirable aspect as change management is the single-most challenge for enterprises that implement solutions that involve the end-users," highlights Subramanian.

If the solution is compelling, then the budgets will come, believes Ramani, adding further, "Our focus is to make our offering so compelling that customers then go out of the way and get budgets for the same. And because we offer a complete solution which covers cloud + enterprise mobility + productivity + security, our story is very compelling."

Majority of customers, informs Jain, have very specific tasks or needs, such as creating an umbrella application for all major business workflows or allowing the end-user do certain things through the mobile, such as booking a conference room or requesting a leave. "These are usually taken up on a project basis and delivered on a fast track mode to add value to the customer. In terms of the IT budget we continuously work with the customers by monitoring their app and infrastructure usage closely to see where we can optimise the infra and thus save cost. The addition of our mobile application itself also reduces the cost sometimes by taking the redundant applications out of the application bouquet of the enterprise," explains Jain.

With enterprise mobility, a highly mobile, on-the-go workforce is a key driver of mobility in all industries. As mobile workforce is on the field, we get chance to build opportunities around, security, CRM, ERP, asset management, monitoring solutions, these solutions are very much required in terms of security and management of resources, so IT can be termed as an investment and not a cost centre.

Way forward

As this business segment is getting matured, BYOD and enterprise mobility market has its



"THIS IS ONE OF THE CORE AREAS FOR US. OUR OFFERING ESSENTIALLY USES MICROSOFT 365 AND HAVE BUILT VARIOUS PROCESSES AROUND THE SAME AND THEN WE OFFER IT AS A COMPLETE SOLUTION TO CUSTOMERS"

Suresh Ramani
CEO, Techgyan

wide application in banking, financial services, and insurance, automobile, manufacturing, IT and telecom, retail, healthcare, transportation and logistics, energy and utilities, and others. Increased productivity and employee satisfaction, and increase in smartphone penetration may act as the major driver in the growth of BYOD and enterprise mobility market. On the other hand, security risks regarding device management may hinder the market. Nevertheless, solution providers are looking bullish and exploring new areas to reach out to customers. For example, Quadra intends to capitalise on this market-wide trend, adding mobility and security as an essential component of their business strategy. It is expanding managed services offering with the advent of the Microsoft 365 for business enterprises that includes the management of end-user devices

that run Windows OS with the device encryption and advanced threat protection built in. "We are taking these mobility and security offerings to our customers who are already using the Office 365 productivity suite or are testing waters for some time in the apprehension of the security of their data on the cloud. We are conducting public customer-facing events to create awareness about this vital aspect of their IT environment. We are also offering onsite workshops and vulnerability assessment services that will help in identifying and plugging security loopholes with our Enterprise mobility and security offering," says Subramanian.

Jain points out that his company is building a centre of competency for enterprise mobility that will include solution architects, technology experts, developers, testers and business analysts to service the growing needs of the customer. "We are also investing a lot in terms of training our existing resource to enable them to become more competent in terms of the latest technologies such as REACT and Xamarin," he adds.

In terms of enterprise mobility, clients have to work on a more secure network as executives are on the move, so collaboration is very important. Also, when executives are on the move, they have to be in touch with office teams for conferencing, sharing their screens with back office, sharing quotes with clients, forwarding orders to purchase teams. They should know what internal events are going on within the organisation. If they are applying for any leaves, then communication with HR is the key, even HR has to manage executives' leave records. "Considering collaboration, conferencing, asset management, time tracking (check-in-check-out), CRM, sales quotes and orders, internal events, HR procedures and events, we are developing our capabilities around CRM, collaboration, cloud technology and asset management by Questa," concludes Nerurkar.



MAXIMISING THE CLOUD ADVANTAGE

For getting maximum benefits out of advanced cloud computing, organisations need to create high-level cloud strategies and measure the factors driving its growth. An analysis of why cloud computing is so essential for businesses and the immense opportunities it presents for partners

By Rachana Jha

Today the world of web is beyond the communication medium. Many aspects of our lives and businesses have moved online, and hence there has been a tectonic shift in the cloud services. Cloud computing is one of the most interesting topics in the technology and business world these days. In fact, in past few years cloud is not only used as a tool but the focus has shifted towards how one can use it for achieving business goals. David W Cearley, Vice President and Gartner Fellow, Gartner Research, says, "Organisations that do not have a high-

level cloud strategy driven by their business strategy will significantly increase their risk of failure and wasted investment."

Factors influencing adoption and growth of cloud computing

Some of the major reasons for the adoption and growth of clouds are cost-effectiveness, optimum resource utilisation, unlimited scalability of resources, and easier maintainability. Srinivasakumar Swaminathan, Director, Digital Track Solutions Private Limited, says, "The cost-saving benefits and ROI, lower total cost of

ownership, rapid implementation with little upfront capital, agility, flexibility, and scalability are some of the driving factors behind cloud computing growth."

Varadharajan Krishnamoorthy, Director, Clouds Direct believes that agility and cost-effectiveness are the main drivers which are responsible for the growth of cloud computing.

Gaining traction in SMB

There was a time when high-cost technologies were only available to large companies. Now, because of cloud, not only the big businesses even

small to mid-sized companies can also access high-cost technologies. A lot of companies have migrated them on the cloud. "Cloud is always the first choice for the companies who are thinking of IT deployments. SaaS has been gaining great traction across mid to large companies. Developer-centric cloud services are gaining higher growth with mid-range companies as it is very cost effective for them and increasing adoption in large companies as they move slowly from their data center to cloud," explains Krishnamoorthy.

Swaminathan points out that cloud computing is gaining traction as benefits become irresistible. Large enterprises have subscribed to cloud computing solutions that are integrated with advanced cloud computing technologies and SMBs adopted it depending on their business requirements. Now, IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service), PaaS (Platform as a service) and SaaS (Software as a Service) are becoming more widely used than traditional hosting options. Larger organisations are losing their data centers and more likely to make use of cloud computing services. "Cloud computing is gaining traction across various business verticals because of the operational efficiencies it brings with it, and the way it enables the automation of business processes and improves profitability, being able to operate across a variety of geographical locations, work can be done from any location, at any time, provided there is Internet access. It simplifies the IT infrastructure of the organisation, which means less hardware to maintain, less IT man-hours, lower overheads and fewer headaches," he adds.

Benefits of cloud practice

A lot of instances can prove why cloud practice is beneficial and how techies can maximise its advantage and how they use it as a platform for their project needs. "Top 200 brands in BFSI, ITeS, manufacturing, hospitality, and education practices are our repeat customers for our 100+ complimenting and compelling offerings around Data,

Network and Application (DNA of every biz) protection, optimisation and transformation needs. We have partnered with 500+ CXO's over the last three years, in their journey to make their data center agile and flexible to burst into multiple public clouds and manage both on-premise and cloud apps and instances seamlessly, in line with business needs. We have seen the BFSI and ITeS verticals leading from the front in these initiatives. The Government vertical is catching up big time with most g2b and g2c services being delivered on internet or mobile or both," states, Krishna Raj Sharma, Director & CEO, iValue InfoSolutions.

"Leading Indian Non-Banking Financial Companies wanted to deploy FinnOne application, a web-based global banking product that supports banks and financial solution companies to deal with assets, liabilities, core financial accounting and customer service. Umbrella team helped the customer to deploy infrastructure and host this application, adhering to security stipulations of the financial industry. Umbrella has set up a Direct Connect between customer datacentre and AWS Mumbai region, deployed OS hardening specific to security requirements; set up IPsec tunnel with partner CIBIL connecting production and UAT VPCs, and integrated Commvault with AWS for backup automation," says, Sanjay Agarwal, Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Umbrella Infocare.

Though today if we look at the technology scenario, we cannot deny from the fact that cloud computing has become equally important for non-techies too.

Transforming the business model needs

Punit Thakkar, Founder & CEO, Shivaami Cloud Services, explains how the cloud can transform the business model and offerings. He says, "We are born in the cloud company, so cloud has always been a sweet deal for us, working with the cloud is like walking along with the technology. So we

always have the latest technology offering for our customer, in that case even our customer is up to date with the technology." He further adds, "Our latest offering for our customer is that we are the one-stop cloud solution provider for our customer. By one stop I mean be it anything on the cloud, be it data security, data backup, cloud infrastructure or SaaS product, we have it and we are ready to help you with the requirement you have. To name a few, we have G Suite, Chrome, GCP, AWS, Azure, Office 365, Viami Backup, Google Vault, Spin Backup, Spanning, G Control to name a few."

Witnessing growth

Agarwal believes that being a focussed major player in the cloud area has definitely helped the company being relevant and grow approximately 100 per cent YOY in the last four years. "We expect to maintain this momentum in the next couple of years as well. We have seen major growth since services providers like AWS, Microsoft, etc., have set up their data centre in India. Also, large focus of GOI and corporates on digital transformation, better internet connectivity and GDP growth of more than 7.3 per cent is driving the growth of cloud adoption. Agility, flexibility and lower application roll-out time is helping organisations deciding for cloud adoption."

In terms of their Y-o-Y growth, Thakkar mentions, "We have a 300-400 per cent Y-o-Y growth in our business. The major trend that I see is that the country is accepting technology very rapidly, there is a value in the cloud and hence cloud technology is being accepted. We have customers ranging from one employee to 10,000 employees."

Streamlining internal processes

To a large extent a company's digital transformation decides its success. Streamlining the internal process is important for them because it helps them in attracting customers and retain them. Not only for the clients but leveraging cloud is for their betterment too. Explaining the need of leveraging cloud for streamlining the



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Director,
Technobind Solutions

internal processes, Harikrishna Prabhu, Director, Technobind Solutions, says, "All our applications, internally, is on the cloud only. We are a new generation company and we believe in being on the cloud. We have seen customers mostly leveraging the cloud to streamline their internal process. Given the complexities in the shifting the computing landscape, deploying the right strategy to harness benefits from cloud computing is crucial. A lot of customers are now adopting the Cloud-First strategy. Today most of the mid enterprises have started moving their secondary and tertiary application to cloud. We have a dedicated cloud service business unit. We work with partners to help their customers adopt cloud. We have certain tools that help customers

manage the cloud and optimise the cost. We provide services like data migration to cloud, DR on cloud, backup to cloud etc."

Sharma reminds that he has seen the majority of ITeS and BFSI customers leveraging the cloud to streamline their internal process for expediting response to external stakeholders. "Some of the use cases are testing environment provisioning, running proof of concept for customer applications, seasonal peak load management by leveraging public cloud on top of the private cloud, running BCP on the cloud for critical apps to ensure high availability, etc., " he adds.

Dealing with IT budgets

Budgeting is a critical aspect for any business. It outlines the organisation's

goal. Every organisation has different thinking line and strategy for their budget. In terms of cloud, different IT leaders have different thoughts. Ajith Mathew George, Co-founder & Director - Technology at SYSFORE, says, "IT budgets are never skewed. People who are part of the purchase committee sit with the traditional notions, hence new technology adoptions always get delayed. Most of the companies under utilise their budgets without actually looking at the overall business growth. Today, growing businesses need mature cloud services and partners to achieve lower operational costs covering deployment, world class security and management capabilities, which is increasingly seen accepted by customers. With Sysfore EASE, we provide up to 30 per cent cost reduction



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through automation and optimisation."

Prabhu is of the view that now companies can utilise their budget more proficiently. He states, "Every customer today, whether it is BFSI, the Government or manufacturing, has started to look at the cloud and they have started budgeting in terms of cloud adoption. The entire budgeting can move from CapEx to OpEx. Gone are the days when hardware or software was purchased with three years or five years warranty and block the funds, today we can talk about the subscription models. It could be quarterly, half yearly or annually. Like this, we are not blocking the entire fund. This is not the CapEx model. It is becoming easy for customers in managing their budget."

Broadening the horizons

Cloud computing companies are enjoying growth and this growth is opening a huge door of opportunities. Most of these companies have focused expansion plans with respect to this business. Like Agarwal states, "We have a good presence in Delhi NCR and have started building a cloud team in the west region (Mumbai), which will be in place by January 2019. We plan to start the south region by Q2 2019. Apart from cloud infrastructure deployment and migration, we are adding capabilities on BI/ML and analytics and cloud native business applications. In terms of revenue, we plan to continue to grow 100 per cent YOY for the next two-three years."

In terms of their expansion plan, Krishnamoorthy mentions, "Our focus

so far is on the business users side. Going forward, we want to expand to support IT organisations and developers on their innovation journey.

Revealing his plans, George says, "Cloud business is growing at over 200 per cent and to maintain this pace the first thing is that we will not go the traditional way, we will have work continuously for upskilling our resources. The level of growth and technology is so high that one is always needed to be upgraded." Also, the technology keeps on changing. It is not necessary that whatever technology being seen on the cloud today, remains the same tomorrow. It will change and develop according to the industry needs. Hence, up-skilling will be a key focus.

'WE WERE FIRST IN THE MARKET TO OFFER SIMPLE, PREDICTABLE, PROFITABLE SOLUTIONS'

In an exclusive interaction with CRN India, **Paul Hunter**, Worldwide Partner Sales Leader, HPE shares insights into the various facets of the Partner Ready Program that is helping partners transform and take advantage of the burgeoning market opportunities

By Nivedan Prakash

Recently, HPE announced enhancements to its Partner Ready Program. What is the thought process behind enhancing this program regularly?

You always want to keep the partner programs consistent so that partners are ready to invest in the future. However, at the same time, the market is changing and we need our programs to help partners take advantage of the market opportunity. Our feeling was that there is a lot more that we can do with our programs to help partners transform and take advantage of the market opportunities that exist.

We were very proud of the program that we had in place before, as it was market leading and has been there for three to four years. It also provided a high degree of consistency and predictability; but now the time is right to take it to another level.

We have spent the last three to six months working on a global program that is consistent in the 11 geographies where we operate. Whether you are transacting in India, the UK, Germany, or Seychelles, the program design, its attributes or the structure are the same. This gives partners the predictability to design

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their business and how they can invest for a long time.

On what basis are the key elements of the program added or removed?

We wanted the program to be very simple to understand, as partners really respond to simplicity. They want to know what they earn for their first dollar sale is going to be exactly the same for the 1000th dollar and ditto for the millionth dollar. Hence, we have built simplicity into the design.

Secondly, we looked at how the program will help our partners capture the burgeoning market opportunities. The new program helps them understand the market opportunities

which have got the best growth and are most profitable. We have also increased the rebate opportunities.

As part of these changes, you have also simplified the rebate model and there has been a special focus on passing on the benefits to the partner sales representatives?

Different companies try to pass on profit to their partners in different ways. We essentially run a rebate model. For every piece of Nimble sold, the partner, depending on the membership or tier, gets a payment for it. Here, we encourage the partners to reinvest the money earned in the skills and expertise that they need in order to deliver more value to customers, thus, further accelerating their growth. And we co-invest with the organisations where we have strong partnerships.

The other aspect is about how do the sales personnel get excited about an opportunity to sell. We have created incentive and rewards program, called 'HPE Engage & Grow', wherein we specifically keep the funds to pay the sales people of our partners and accelerate the benefits for selling the technology that delivers great benefit to our customers.

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WORLDWIDE PARTNER SALES LEADER,
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Is there a conscious effort that has been made to pass on those benefits to channel sales persons and in return are you expecting an ROI from the investments that have been made?

We are looking at two things - firstly, we are trying to help the owners of the business who are really excited about the profit opportunity with us and secondly, we want the sales people of those partner companies to be really excited about the money that they can make personally. Since we need both, we have got two components to the investments that we are making. It is not just a business that needs to invest in expertise but the sales people as well. They have to invest time, effort and energy to understand the propositions they have.

Furthermore, we understand that a constant investment has to be made in learning and the sales people's need to acquire knowledge time and again. We also know that we're not the only

vendor in the market and we have to compete for mindshare. However, we believe that our proposition is a compelling one, and that the sales people and partners will be more successful with us.

In general, the basic foundation of the partner program of any global IT vendor revolves around simplicity, profitability and predictability. Is there any need to put in so much effort in designing the entire program?

When we launched the program in 2014, we were the first in market with simple, predictable, profitable solutions. The reason we continued with simple, predictable and profitable is because it resonates with the promises to our partners. Now what differentiates us is our ability to be really simple. Target setting is a case in point. As soon as you put a target on a partner, it becomes more complicated. We have no targets

anywhere in the world. The drive for simplicity requires constant attention.

The programs may share the same foundation, but how they are applied is important. We have three core cultural beliefs - we want a partner, we are a partnership company, and we want to act. There is an impetus for us to act quickly and we want to be a company that responds quickly. Our belief is that the core of what we offer is innovation and those are the three foundational beliefs of our company, and partnership is one of them. I can't speak for other companies; however, I can just say that it is the foundation stone of what we do. We believe that it is a skill that we have cultivated right from the inception of the company in 1939.

Are there other areas, which are considered when you design the partner program? It is a coincidence that we see every OEM following these three areas ?

We are the leader and we have

people in the industry who copy the leaders. When our partner program was announced in 2014, we were the first one to focus on the above-mentioned areas. It is a great compliment that other people are imitating our program. We always think about accelerating the growth for our partners with the market opportunities that exist. This is what we want to achieve and part of that comes with program design.

What efforts are being put to upskill or reskill partners in this era of digital disruption?

Technical investment and building technical expertise will be a big priority for us in 2019. Our partners need to understand the value proposition we bring to the table. It takes a lot of work, expertise, good tools, systems and investment.

In 2019, we will be running a program that we first launched in Asia Pacific, called Tech Pro Academy. We will invest in the technical expertise of our partners and help them gain competencies. There are two areas – one is Tech Pro Academy, which will make greater investment, on our behalf, to help partners acquire the skills they need. Secondly, we have broadened our competency framework, wherein we are expecting our partners to get expertise. There are six competencies for a Hybrid IT portfolio and three for the Edge portfolio. We continue to

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evolve these competencies and also simplify them.

Do you think that the Indian partners lack in certain areas? If yes, then how would you want to bring them up to the level of successful partners in other markets?

I would say it is the reverse. Indian partners, in many instances, are more sophisticated and are quicker to adopt the consumption model. When you look at the size of the business, our consumption business here is growing. Indian partners have been quicker to adopt it because I think the dynamics of the economy and the customer have lend themselves to the demand for it and therefore, they are seeing opportunity quickly.

The partners here are very sophisticated, not just the traditional solution partners, but the system integrators here are also world class. These are companies that are competing on winning in a global economy and we learn a lot from them and we hope that they learn a lot from us so that we can grow together. These companies are really innovative, dynamic and constantly challenge us to keep up with them. They are demanding, but at the same time rewarding as well.

Indian system integrators have been at the forefront of actually making the global economy a smaller one because they carry the art of delivering the expertise and are really consistent with their expertise, intellectual property, and innovation they bring.

Of late, the Indian market has witnessed the rise of a lot of born in the cloud partners. Do you think that going forward the traditional partners will fade away if they are not able to match up to the speed of these new players?

The partner community here is incredibly resilient. In the last 30 years, for one reason or another, there has always been something in the horizon that is going to threaten the business. The partners have just been

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very resilient and adaptable to the market. I am constantly impressed by their ability to adapt to new market pressures. Hence, I believe that they will adapt to new market pressure with the new competition. While some will succeed, some will not. But as you know, in many markets good competition makes companies get better. I do think that partners that invest in their own expertise will be the ones successful in the long run.

On one hand, there are big SIs competing in the global market. And on the other side, there is a proliferation of small partners in India who are really innovative in their services offering to the customers. We have to cater to both the segments. Our aspiration is to have the right partner for the right customer and I believe both type of partners will co-exist.

What sort of support partners can expect from HPE in 2019 and beyond?

We consider the partners' sales people as an extension of our own team and this involves our trust in them and that trust is reciprocated. One of the things that we are doing for 2019 is that the assets and tools that we use for our own sales organisation are going to be extended to our partners sales organisation. We will help them take advantage of the opportunities out there in the market. If our partner is successful, we take great pride in that because that's a joint journey we are on.

'INDIA IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST GROWTH MARKETS FOR US'

"Seven billion people cannot be trained as cybersecurity professionals and we need to leverage automation as much as we can," says **Sean Duca**, Vice President and Regional Chief Security Officer, Asia Pacific, Palo Alto Networks, in an interaction with CRN's Rachana Jha. He also spoke about the ongoing digital transformation in India and how the Indian market is important for them

How do you see digitisation overall and in India?

Whether it is the government or the private sector, everyone is looking to digitise what they do and make it easy for people to interact. People get access to different products and services in multiple ways, which brings along amazing benefits and opportunities. They can think of innovative ways to provide a centre of services. However, this brings in some potential challenges as you digitise and collect a lot of information. Hence, there is a need for precaution about what information is being collected and how they should process and protect it. In India, the government is making efforts to digitise the systems, through some large IT and ITeS organisations.

We live in a world where there is a constant fight between man and machine. Seven billion people cannot be trained as cybersecurity professionals; we need to leverage automation as much as we can. Dealing with automated adversaries also means controlling our digital assets.

In the case of recent breaches do you think there was lack of accountability?

Many breaches have happened due to misconfiguration or lapse in the security system. A lot of us may be



using the same password for different accounts. When we have systems, where we continue to use the same password, there are chances of websites being compromised. That is how someone can get access to our environment, if we do not patch our systems and practice cyber hygiene. Malware is probably increasing at a faster rate than it has before. It is also programmed to do several things. Eighty per cent of the malwares have the capability of stealing personal and important data.

Sometimes it is not just the technology or a thought process; it comes down to the accountability of the business. Business owners, leaders, executives and board of directors need to come forward and take accountability for the same.

How much is India prone to cybersecurity attacks?

India is one of the leading markets in the world. We have seen that organisations do not take adequate steps to avoid cyber attacks. By digitising the domain, companies in India will benefit and will be able to curb such cyber attacks.

What are the steps one should take before implementing cloud or IoT?

Anything you put into the cloud is your responsibility. People tend to think that they do not have to do anything after implementing cloud. Microsoft is taking care of it with Azure and so does AWS. But, you must protect what you have put into the cloud. CISOs must protect the work and limit the access of what they want to put on the cloud. They must allow limited visibility and control Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), and Platform as a Service (PaaS). There should always be a healthy rivalry between CIOs and CISOs regarding the cloud and they should look at doing things in a secured way.

SECURITY IS THE LARGEST GROWING MARKET FOR iVALUE INFOSOLUTIONS

Krishna Raj Sharma, CEO, iValue InfoSolutions, in an interaction with CRN India, speaks about the significant initiatives of the company, contribution from Tier 2 markets and the focused business strategy for growing the enterprise segment

By Rachana Jha

What have been the recent major initiatives at iValue Infosolutions? How has the market been for the company?

We have undertaken important initiatives in various areas of our operation. In terms of resource planning, we have moved from 97 to 127. Recruitment is very challenging nowadays and getting the right resource for the right position and training the resource is also a challenge. We have gone through all those stages and now, we are in action.

As part of our efforts for the channels community, we have worked on an initiative for enterprise channel management for our large partners, who make significant contribution to our business. Around six people have joined us across the country and we have been managing close to 40 accounts. The enterprise vertical, like others, has listed accounts assigned to each sales person. We have listed around 150 accounts across the country to be addressed by around six people. These efforts have provided a good start for us this financial year and the government business is also moving well. Now, it is in a high speed mode which will result in good revenue for us.

AS PART OF OUR EFFORTS FOR THE CHANNELS COMMUNITY, WE HAVE WORKED ON AN INITIATIVE FOR ENTERPRISE CHANNEL MANAGEMENT FOR OUR LARGE PARTNERS, WHO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO OUR BUSINESS

While you are already working in the BFSI and government space, which other sectors contribute to the enterprise business?

For us the enterprise is a non-government and non-BFSI vertical. We consider all other accounts as enterprise accounts, wherein we have listed 150 such accounts. This is the first experience we want to have with some good traction and results. In one or two years, we may split this into one or two more separate verticals.

How has the enterprise channel management come into the fold?

We get around 60 per cent of our business from enterprise channels.

Earlier, we did not have a dedicated focus and team to manage them. The business and the value of business coming from this is increasing to multi-million dollar mark. We have also found a new breed of channel partners which is coming forward, especially catering to the government vertical. We call them as non-IT partners, who are very large partners, but different from traditional IT channel.

These partners are addressing a specific segment – Smart Cities. This is another reason for us to start enterprise channel management. Our channel basket has suddenly increased, these are the partners with whom we would not have had great traction earlier; but, there is a need, as they are going in for large government orders. Their operations as well as go-to-market is also little different from traditional ones; their departments and offices are spread across different cities. It makes sense to work with them as the bids are huge.

What kind of split do you have for enterprise channel and non-enterprise channel; how is the contribution from each of them?

Tier 2 channel contributions are significantly increasing. We receive about 45 to 55 per cent of contribution

from the enterprise channel and the Tier 2 channel community. Largely, the enterprise channel management would be dedicated to the BFSI and the government verticals and on the other side, we will also have great number of partners who would be contributing into enterprise. Additionally, we also have non-enterprise accounts which are called commercial accounts.

What have been the significant factors that have led to the increased contribution from Tier 2 partners?

We have a concept called 'Product Champ' (Product Champion), wherein a partner carries certain products to his accounts under his revenue target and he hits out in the market. We have a decent number of Product Champs in the field. Next, we have brought in significant sign-ups and our running products have increased the breadth, which means that more partners are coming up with product sales. We have larger manpower in the field, which brings in new relationships with our channels.

What are the best practices followed by iValue that will help the company reap benefits in the long run?

One great learning is the infrastructure and business around applications. In any organisation, like a bank, where there is a core linking application or a sub core application, or a PSU with an ERP solution or even a telco with a billing solution – there is a core application which drives the business. Our business is around the infrastructure of protecting these applications and securing the data. Protect the data, protect the network and protect the application; this is the learning that we are replicating our enterprise business.

In the enterprise segment, is there a particular vertical that you plan to target in order to get more business?

Currently, it is an open field and verticals have been regional-centric for us. South India has been largely focused on IT/ITES. Whereas, the Western region is centred around the BFSI sector, and North has been largely



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focused on government business for us. We also have many non-listed BFSI accounts in the West. Numerous NBFC and non-NBFC accounts are under the enterprise segment. All PSU banks are listed under enterprise for us, and more government insurance companies and banks are under that umbrella. In the North, telco-centric accounts are under the enterprise segment; whereas, the South market is IT centric.

Which are some of the key technologies which you are betting big on?

Security is the largest growing market for us, under which there are

new products coming in. The adoption of cloud is increasing, which presents a large opportunity. Few markets like East India are performing well for us; in fact, this is another growing market for us. The Eastern market would grow pretty significantly, and we will make an increasing investment into the Eastern region to get additional revenue for the few years.

Going forward, there will be more demand for MSSPs. How much of your focus is on upskilling or reskilling your current resources?

We have been investing money, energy and resources in getting skilled resources to deliver certain services as professional services. Hence, it is going to be an add-on offering to our partners. There are various non-IT partners who may not have resources specific to security, which presents a huge opportunity for us wherein along with product sales we can also help them in offering professional services.

In your observation, are cloud providers taking away your partners' business?

Cloud providers are adding new opportunities for us; and we would add solutions for the cloud moving forward. Cloud players are significantly different from the on-premise product partners. The kind of licenses they would need to sell along with their products, services and subscriptions would create lots of services opportunities.

Services opportunities, tagged with subscriptions, will be much more than selling captive products.

With the changing market dynamics, what has been the success mantra for iValue InfoSolutions?

The credit goes to our team, which understands the value delivered to the market. Unique initiatives gives us early learning from customers, higher win and insights to customers' business. Moreover, our interaction with channels has been one of the biggest success drivers for us. Our business happens 100 per cent through channels and they have been a great support.

HOW DIGITAL AND MOBILE-FIRST STRATEGY IS REDEFINING DINING EXPERIENCE



Digital menus, customisable meals, the speed of service, flexible payment options and personalised engagement are the key ingredients to create the next-gen dining experience. In an interview with Salvi Mittal, **Kiran Komatla**, Vice President - IT, Burger King India discusses how the restaurant industry is embracing cutting-edge technologies to provide the finest dining experience

Today's technology equipped customers are well connected and their high-end expectations generate enormous pressure on the restaurants to create a more personalised dining experience. The digital explosion has underlined delivery services with online ordering offerings. Mobile, cloud and AI evolution is redefining digital experiences at the dining table and operational efficiencies.

Digital menus, customisable meals, the speed of service, flexible payment options and personalised engagement are the key ingredients to create the next-gen dining experience. In an exclusive interview with CRN, Kiran Komatla, Vice President – IT, Burger King India discusses how the restaurant industry is embracing cutting-edge technologies to provide

the finest dining experience.

How is next generation technology and innovation redefining the dining experience in India?

Advanced technology is reducing friction in the ordering process, making it easier to customise meals and cut-down in the delivery time. Mobile applications allow the diners to track meal progress in real-time, from preparation to delivery. Some also allow customers to pre-order and pre-pay for meals for an expedient dining experience.

Mobile ordering systems incorporate geo-fencing capabilities, wherein an SMS alert will be sent when a diner is at a certain distance away, prompting the kitchen to prepare their order so it's ready when they arrive. With all of these progressive solutions, the goal is

to assist restaurants to comply with the expectations of technology-savvy and mobile-engaged customers expectations.

How is AI creating the new norms from frictionless ordering and customer experience?

Artificial Intelligence is transforming customer experiences and operational efficiencies to new heights. Customer service is a complex and expensive affair. AI has the potential to reduce costs in processing customer requests by using automated self-service solutions and spur the business efficiencies. Chatbots can solve customer support desk queries in different time zones and language barriers, making the brand accessible 24/7.

Multi-chain restaurants are



adopting emerging tech from machine learning to speech recognition, natural language processing to chatbots and process automation to offer personalised food ordering and maintain accurate responses. Data is a powerful tool, large datasets can provide proactive and actionable insights for quick service.

Prescriptive and predictive analytics can detect the patterns and provide precious insights into customer behaviour and service processes. It has the ability to supplement quality and customer loyalty. Advanced analytics is boosting inventory management across locations and providing proactive services.

What is the digital recipe for the food industry, with the capabilities of online ordering, payment flexibility, home delivery, and real-time delivery status?

Today, it is imperative for restaurant businesses to invest in digital platforms, in-store technologies for digital experience at restaurants, and empower employees to serve as brand ambassadors. Restaurant brands who well understand their customers,

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CLOUD ADOPTION IS HELPING TO ADAPT TO QUICKER CHANGES IN RESTAURANT POS SOFTWARE MANAGEMENT AND CENTRALISED OPERATIONAL AND GUEST DATA ACROSS FRANCHISES OR CHAINS

capitalise on digital/technology investments, are able to engage customers in a personalised way to drive the increased frequency, check size, customer conversion, upselling and build loyalty.

How are you integrating the digital experience to create a deeper connection with the customer?

Digital customer experience is the

combination of all digital interactions that a customer has with a brand – right from customers searching for a brand online to interacting with the brand on social media, purchase, feedback on all digital platforms seamlessly to give a single view of the customer.

Brands have to leverage the technological delight by integrating customer and brand context with technologies. Every interaction with the customer must be monitored to build deeper connections with them.

How should restaurants approach the mobile-first strategy?

For competitive advantage, restaurants must drive mobile-first strategy – tech-empowered customers demand information before-hand and menus on their fingertips. Mobile-first is all about creating the best possible mobile experience about your brand. Cloud adoption is helping to adapt to quicker changes in restaurant POS software management and centralised operational and guest data across franchises or chains.

'WE HAVE BUILT A STRONG PARTNER AND CUSTOMER PIPELINE ACROSS GOVT, ENTERPRISE VERTICALS'

Having already established a robust channel partner community in the past few months, EverestIMS has ambitious plans for 2020, including focused expansion in Tier-2 and Tier-3 markets of India and launch of new products. **Suresh Kewelramani**, Director - Sales at EverestIMS Technologies, India, reveals more details

By Nivedan Prakash

What are the key differentiators that make EverestIMS distinctive in the market?

EverestIMS follows different channel ideologies for different market regions. Implementation of go-to-market strategy in delivering our products is a key factor to achieve a competitive advantage. We always strive to bring innovation, integrated and customer specific features to our products to match the current and future industry requirements. On time delivery and deployment of software at client's location, incredible technical support team with rich knowledge on technology and 24x7 'ready-to-assist' attitude in serving the customer are the key growth factors for Everest. We also provide a focused training program to our partners – Everest Partner Program (EPP).

What are the benefits reaped by channel partners with EPP?

EverestIMS sales are completely channel-driven. To accelerate sales figures in the current competitive

EVEREST IS A NAME THAT CUSTOMERS IN THE AGENT SPECTRUM ARE VERY FAMILIAR WITH. SOME OF THE LARGE TELCOS OF INDIA ARE USING OUR SOLUTION

market, we have introduced this program. Through EPP, partners would be able to skill themselves on the solutions offered to customers. It is crucial because, these are the talking points which help them to convert and close the deal.

Under EPP, partners benefit from free product trainings – both sales and pre-sales; partner conference programs; marketing strategies including co-branded campaigns, focused vertical driven use case collaterals. Moreover, Quota Partners get backend rebates; all sales individuals of quota carrying

partners are eligible for incentives on deal closures. We also offer deal protection for partners wherein exclusivity in some opportunities is extended.

Please mention any big achievements for the company in 2018

Everest, after becoming an individual entity, started focusing on increasing the brand visibility across the IMS segment. We have started our operations/services in Hyderabad and Mumbai market. We have launched Everest IMS 5.0, a unified platform to effectively map, manage and monitor the IT infrastructure. EverestIMS has successfully started a joint venture with partners to cater and reach the untapped regions of the market. We have also made new customer addition to Everest's clientele from the banking and telecom sectors. Additionally, we have introduced a Quota Program for partners to benefit them in terms of achievements in bank end rebate, sales representative incentives, etc.

What was the reason to go private; and how has been the product acceptance in the market after becoming an individual entity?

The reason to go private is that we are the only product entity within a large telecommunications sector. A product company has a different DNA than telcos. Also, Everest's ambitions to grow in terms of market reach are very high; therefore, we want to play at a global scale and not limit ourselves to the Asian market.

The added advantage for Everest is that we already have a strong customer database across the globe. Thus, the product acceptance was not disturbed. However, the decision we have taken for this year is to make our presence in the cities and verticals where we are not present. With the help of our channel ecosystem, we are planning to penetrate into Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

How popular is EverestIMS in the Indian telco industry?

Everest is a name that customers in the agent spectrum are very familiar with. Some of the large telcos of India are using our solution. We are pioneers in managing 10,000 to 100,000 devices for each of these telcos. Not only are our solutions simple in terms of monitoring and management, but also complex for them in bringing in IoT as a platform for telcos. Everest plays a crucial role in completely unifying the infrastructure of the customer – including IT and non-IT. Thus, Everest is a renowned name in India's telecom industry.

What are the highlighted developments in the channel space? How channel contributes to Everest's growth?

In the past few months, we have built a strong partner pipeline and customer pipeline across government and enterprise verticals. We also cracked into verticals like real estate, hospitality, BFSI, ITeS, large PSUs and managed services with the help of our channel ecosystem. In November 2017, we appointed TechKnowLogic as our national distributor, which comes with years of experience in selling similar



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CHANNEL PARTNERS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN GROWING OUR BUSINESS. THEY CONTRIBUTE TO APPROXIMATELY 40 PER CENT OF OVERALL REVENUE OF THE COMPANY

SURESH KEWELRAMANI, DIRECTOR - SALES AT EVERESTIMS TECHNOLOGIES, INDIA

technology. Channel partners have a significant role in growing our business. They contribute to approximately 40 per cent of overall revenue of the company.

What is your roadmap and expansion plans for 2020?

Plans are on the table to tap upcountry market regions like Tier-2 and Tier-3 in India; making our presence in the Middle East and South

East Asian countries by appointing a distributor in the respective regions; catering solutions and services to South East Asian and GCC countries. We also have plans to launch new products – Everest Service Management and NCCM. Additionally, we are planning the introduction of ML and intelligent IMS and SM systems, alongside plans to announce Everest Service Partner Program for the commercial market.

'WE UTILISE THE POWER OF PARTNERS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF SPECIALISATION'

With its unique use-case approach and focus on a limited, but close set of partners, TechnoBind is bullish to achieve continued growth. In an interaction with CRN India, **Prashanth GJ**, CEO, TechnoBind, sheds more light

By Nivedan Prakash

What makes TechnoBind distinct in terms of expertise and offerings?

TechnoBind, as a company, falls under the category of Value-added Distributor (VAD), but we like to identify ourselves as a distributor, because the term 'VAD' is abused in today's market. During my past stints, I observed the difference between a distributor and a VAD was the value and volume that; alongside the high margin expectation. The actual value was getting diluted with one-two brands which were pulling the market with \$20-30 millions. Harikrishna Prabhu (Co-founder and Director) and I also saw the gap in the market and felt the need to fill it. We decided to work on new emerging technologies to plug the gaps. We also work with big brands, but with clear understanding of expectation beyond logistics and the credit part. For example, we are working with Check Point, which looks at us with focus on the SMB business – which is not Check Point's stronghold. The company – which has a strong presence in the enterprise segment – gave us exclusivity on the SMB front to build the market. We either work with them or emerging brands like Seclore, Commvault, Druva, which we have grown over the years, or into different

segments which were earlier not present.

This is what defines TechnoBind; we don't want to go all over the market, because we need to be specialised in and around "data". Since we come from the background of data, we understand the dynamics of the market, we understand the players and what drives them. We believe that even today, data is an area which is not commoditised. There is ample scope to add value to both the stakeholders – vendors and resellers. This is possible, because data is exploding and it is difficult to manage, handle and feed data. Mobility and BYOD are today's realities, which create the challenge of handling data, thereby providing an opportunity for us.

As part of our go-to-market (GTM) strategy, we always look for brands that have synergy between expectations and delivery. We try to understand the business pain points of customers, and identify the technology which can address those problems. We also figure out the sets of customers who may face the same problems and we get in touch with them. We make dockets of collaterals with all these details and approach channel partners to educate them on the same.

Additionally, we also help partners in discovering clients.

What is the composition of your partner ecosystem?

We work with around 650 partners across the country. Until last year, we were working in eight major cities including Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Pune. This year, we established a strong focus on Tier-2 markets as well, such as Chandigarh, Kochi, Trivandrum, Coimbatore, Bhubaneswar, Raipur, among others. We are moving steadily, but we have already got the first few partners in these markets. There are multiple reasons behind our focus on Tier-2 markets. For instance, Check Point wants to cater to SMBs and a lot of them are present in these markets. Likewise, Tableau wants us to focus on Tier-2 markets as well.

From our partner community, we work closely with 150 partners whom we classify as 'Aligned Partners'. We partner ecosystem covers 85 per cent of enterprise partners. We work with almost every type of partners. Some of our engagements are pretty deep and some are opportunistic. We also work with national SIs like TCS, Tech Mahindra, etc.

How is TechnoBind increasing partners' play in the market?

Partners are missing out a significant proportion of business in the market. Today, cloud has become a reality. For example, we can consider Microsoft Exchange. I would assume that more than 70 per cent customers have migrated to Office 365, implying that all the services and storage required to exchange on-premise is no more sold. Resellers have lost many business opportunities. SAP HANA and backup is moving in the same direction.

TechnoBind helps partners and their customers to know different technology tools that can be used in the existing systems. We utilise the power of partners in their respective areas of specialisation. We invest a lot of time on channel and business development and conduct marketing activities, webinars on behalf of partners.

Though we have huge services portfolio, our partners who don't have the skills can utilise our engineers, pay us some share, keeping deal with them. Reselling partners or downstream partners want to offer professional services. We don't want to compete with our vendors and reselling partners. Instead, we will bring new technologies to the market. Presently, we can go for a framework in terms of what technology we are going to take in, but we are not working on building any IP kind of a system for ourselves.

In a short span of time, TechnoBind has seen huge success. Could you mention the key initiatives that have driven this growth?

Our GTM strategy has helped us achieve this success in a short span of time. We follow the use-case approach, wherein we figure out the use cases, business problems and challenges, and the relevant customer segment. For instance, in the e-commerce space, we identified top seven companies and closed deals with five companies. Similarly, we identified eight-nine retail companies in the country and closed deals with all of them.

In 2016, eIDA introduced a



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UNTIL LAST YEAR, WE WERE WORKING IN EIGHT MAJOR CITIES INCLUDING MUMBAI, BENGALURU, CHENNAI, DELHI, KOLKATA, HYDERABAD, AND PUNE. THIS YEAR, WE ESTABLISHED A STRONG FOCUS ON TIER-2 MARKETS AS WELL, SUCH AS CHANDIGARH, KOCHI, TRIVANDRUM, COIMBATORE, BHUBANESWAR, RAIPUR, AMONG OTHERS

PRASHANTH GJ,
CEO, TECHNOBIND

regulation, wherein any insurance policy of more than 10 lakh needed to be digitally signed and the digital signature has to be stored in a hardware encrypted device. We approached our partner Safenet – which has one of the best hardware encryption technologies – for putting together a solution docket for us. We

provided Safenet foray into 26 insurance companies. This is the marketing intelligence that we maintain. For our vendors, this acts as a value-addition. The use-case approach has been significantly helping us. Partners who work closely with us, have also started following this mantra.

Over the years, sales has a changed a lot. Earlier, companies used to learn about new technologies from the sales team. Whereas, now customers know about all the solutions/technologies, which requires the sales methodology to be changed. We always choose customers based on use cases. For example, we are focusing on customers who have bought Office 365, and partners who have sold out Office 365.

Another success driver has been our dependency on the process and focus on education. We have a model called "38.11" model. The partner needs to qualify all the steps to be onboard, especially to be part of our Aligned Partners. We focus on process and execution of the plan, wherein we give them a 90-day plan and the right technical resource.

What's the company's growth roadmap for the future?

We have been growing at a high rate, which includes both organic and inorganic. In terms of inorganic growth, new alliances are coming on board. For example, we signed up with Quest and Micro Focus as additional vendors. This will result in two-fold increase in our addressable market size. Our focus on business development is also increasing. We haven't billed our customers directly till now, but now we want to. Until now, our sales team was spending 40 per cent of its time with customers or partners to discuss the challenges. However, now we have a different team for that, opening new roads of success for us. We give our sales guys half yearly numbers instead of yearly and we keep increasing that percentage. In terms of expansion, we are increasing our footprint. For instance, we expanded to Kolkata; we have entered in the SAARC region as well. We have a pre-sales resource in Dhaka.

ARRAY NETWORKS REITERATES ITS COMMITMENT TO THE INDIAN MARKET

In an interaction with CRN India, **Shibu Paul**, Regional Sales Director – APAC, Array Networks, highlights the company's business strategies in India, its contribution to the hyper convergence market, and the focus on long-term relationship with customers.

By Nivedan Prakash

What is your perception of Array Networks' business growth in India, when the market is undergoing a lot change and witnessing a slowdown?

We are growing at a positive rate of 35 per cent YOY. 2018 has been a rewarding year for Array and we should exceed our revenue numbers. The colossal growth is backed by the significant deals in BFSI, Government and enterprises. We have invested heavily in all the verticals.

Besides, our newly launched hyper converged networking and security platform solution, AVX, has received great reception from channel partners as well as customers. Recently, we even had a large enterprise deployment for our hyper converged network infrastructure solution. Also, our selected channel partners have been trained well to take Array's hyper converged infrastructure solution into the market.

How is the market for hyper convergence evolving? What has been your contribution to address new customer requirements?

We can't deny the fact that hyper convergence is taking over the market at a high pace. Companies are increasingly embracing hyper-

converged infrastructure as a go-to technology platform to address security, productivity and other concerns. It not only delivers the performance companies are looking for, but also brings other benefits, including less networking, storage or physical equipment. It lowers IT costs, accelerates speed to market and reduces complexity related to the IT environment and the business as a whole.

Working on the same lines, we developed AVX Series Network Functions Platforms. Array's AVX Series Network Functions Platforms address the challenges of both VARs and MSPs through hyperconverged platforms that offer the agility of virtual appliances with the performance of dedicated appliances. Each platform supports multiple instances of Array or third-party networking and security functions. VARs can develop new best-of-breed security and networking packages to differentiate their offerings while consolidating multiple discreet appliances into just one or two rack units; end-customers benefit from reduced rack space, power, cooling and cabling requirements.

We are committed to the Indian market and have lined up investments to support and serve our customers

efficiently with high breed solutions. Having said, we are all set to inaugurate Array innovation labs in Bangalore with a world class testing lab for third party networking and security functions by December 2018.

Where are you planning to set up these innovation labs?

We will have our central innovation laboratory in Bangalore following extended lab setups in other metro cities, namely, Mumbai and Delhi. These innovation labs will primarily focus on building products in the security, analytics and reporting space, which is the current requirement of end customers.

We have the budgets approved and we have been looking to hire the right skilled talent who can help us in making this journey productive. We are basically looking at candidates with engineering knowledge, who have worked with end customers and large OEMs in the past. The key objective is to have a core team focusing on local and global customer requirements. There is a huge potential in the market and we want to be well equipped and armed to address the various opportunities.

What are your views regarding

the increasing global investments made in the Indian market. Where do you see the opportunities?

Array acknowledges that India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and continues to propel in the coming years.

Today, the Indian market is on the target list of a lot of organisations who are looking to invest. Being in the market for so long, we understand the dynamics and have already started investing heavily in security and infrastructure solutions. To stay ahead in the game we have planned to have a development hub in India to cater for future products to the global and local markets.

Array Networks has a very stable customer base. What are the factors that have contributed in this strong customer loyalty over the years?

Array Networks has crossed more than 300 enterprise customers in India. One of our core strengths has been dedicated local support ecosystem. The support team has been increasing with the increasing customer count. We have a regional support system to address the issues across India.

Besides, Array was one of the first and few vendors to setup local RMA and local support infrastructure. Now we will be investing in local development teams to bring global innovative solutions to Indian customers. We have been able to manage the implementation timeline, in the given time frame which has favoured us a lot.

Most of our customers have been with us for a long time and we believe that our alliances will continue to grow in the future as well. Array's customer retention has been one of the highest in our segment and adds one more feather to our cap.

What have been your channel expansion and investment plans?

We have a dedicated channel ecosystem. With support of our channel partners, we are focused on developing a skilled pool of resources. We have various channel schemes that have



Since you provide dedicated hardware and infrastructure for your customers, do you have any plans to spin this as a service model through your partners?

Our strategy is to offer services through the leading CSP's in the country. We are already working with CSPs like Netmagic to provide services through them. We will help the CSP's to create an infrastructure which could offer our services at attractive price points. Besides, we will introduce a service model specifically for government customers as per the guidelines along with CSPs.

What kind of qualities do you look for while partnering with channel partners? Are you looking to expand your network?

We have more than 60 channel partners currently. Since our solutions include NFV and hyper convergence in networking and security, we look at the partner's knowledge in networking, virtualisation and security. These three things need to fall in place.

In the near future, we will add large SI's with a good skill sets in virtualisation, security and networking to train them on our AVX platform. Array supports SI's who wants to put up a lab for array commercially and technically. We have few partners who have already invested in setting up the labs for Array. In addition, channel partners who are already selling HCI solutions from Nutanix make a good fit as we are complementing each other.

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TODAY, THE INDIAN MARKET IS ON THE TARGET LIST OF A LOT OF ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE LOOKING TO INVEST. BEING IN THE MARKET FOR SO LONG, WE UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS AND HAVE ALREADY STARTED INVESTING HEAVILY IN SECURITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS

been recognised and well accepted by our partners. Schemes include assured margin program, assured incentive programs for leads, PoC's, ales to name a few. Our objective has been to ensure that channel partners are rewarded for every effort and not just for sales. There is a concentrated effort to enhance training activities for channel partners to develop and certify them.

We are looking to add more partners for our hyper convergence business. We are creating an infrastructure today for tomorrow.

Apart from government and BFSI, which are the other verticals you would want to focus on?

Apart from the Government and BFSI, enterprise has been our focus area. With our AVX network and security virtualised platform, we expect to make great inroads into the large and medium enterprise customers. 2018 has seen a phenomenal contribution from the enterprise customers with AVX. Another segment we see potential is the service providers. From SI perspective, we would want to partner with SI's who are addressing the global markets.

UIPATH LOOKS AT ONBOARDING SPECIALISED PARTNERS IN INDIA

RPA is a new and trending segment in the overall enterprise IT industry. This emerging technology gained prominence about two years ago, prior to which it was only leveraged by the business processing industry. The global RPA industry is experiencing huge growth and UiPath, as a global leader in this domain, enjoys a large part of it. In an exclusive interaction with Mohit Rathod, **Ashutosh Kapoor**, VP – Channel Ecosystem, UiPath, shares how the company is betting big on the channel ecosystem to expand its footprint in the country

Tell us briefly about RPA as an emerging technology and how UiPath is capitalising on it?

A unique feature of RPA is collection of data from the screen, without getting into the system. Moreover the implementation time is just five to six weeks, whereas the RoI can be realised within three months. This ensures significant cost and time savings. Behind the emergence of this technology is its simplicity and impact – it solves a lot of technology and business processing problems. As part of our channel building strategy, we want to have a completely channel-driven business.

One of the examples that we often encounter, is that of the finance and accounting sector, which deals with large number of different invoices. With Artificial Intelligence, (AI) Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP), RPA can churn out an excel sheet by collecting data from the invoices. Similarly this can be replicated across other domains such as HR. Over the last two years, enterprises have realised that repetitive processes can be addressed by bots; and UiPath is well positioned to cater to this market.

GLOBALLY, WE HAVE AN ALLIANCE STRATEGY, BUT INDIA IS THE FIRST COUNTRY, WHEREIN WE HAVE STARTED THE DISTRIBUTOR MODEL. WE HAVE JUST ONBOARDED INGRAM MICRO AS OUR NATIONAL DISTRIBUTOR TO DRIVE BUSINESS GROWTH

The sustainability, reliability and security of our product have been success drivers for the company. In the last three years, we have grown bigger than our next two competitors. We are also probably the fastest company to reach a valuation of US\$ 3 billion.

We differentiate ourselves basis our products and go-to-market strategy, involving a partner-first approach. We had been directly interacting with customers, but as part of our GTM strategy, we are now looking at a specific set of partners. We believe there are big opportunities for partners dealing with RPA, AI and ML. Although

we have been present in the India market, we are ramping up in terms of leadership and strategy. Earlier our focus was on large enterprises and BPOs; whereas now we are also tapping the domestic market. We have a strong channel portion which includes boutique partners, ISVs, etc. However, we want to let the channel ecosystem realise the potential of the RPA market, and UiPath's role in their growth stories. Additionally, we don't compete with our partners in terms of implementation; we are purely a product company.

When had the company initiated scouting for partners?

We are currently in the phase of onboarding partners. We have had 10-15 partners over the last two years in India, who have already implemented several projects – each partner bring in its own skillset. UiPath, through its boutique partners, has already done business with almost 50 domestic customers in India. One of our focus is to grow the specialised skillsets of these partner, because customisation and implementation forms an important part of the business, wherein partners

generate money. This requires certified and trained people with hands-on experience.

Was there a challenge for onboarding partners?

Getting partners was not a challenge for us, because the partner community was familiar with RPA as well as UiPath. However, we are looking at different sets of partners with specialised skillsets, having their own set of niche customers. To create this ecosystem of partners, we need to ramp up rapidly. We will have a complete ecosystem which will include ISVs, distributors, boutique partners. In the upcoming quarter, we are launching partner portals globally, to ensure that we have a good set of partners who are ready to invest with us. India is critical for us, because our worldwide product support is operated from Bengaluru.

Globally, we have an alliance strategy, but India is the first country, wherein we have started the distributor model. We have just onboarded Ingram Micro as our national distributor to drive business growth.

Please shed light on UiPath's training and enablement programs.

We conduct individual training, support and marketing activities for our partners. These programs provide an organised platform for partner enablement and marketing. While we were doing training and enablement for a few partners, partner programs have helped us to extend this to a large base of partners. In 2019, we will do this on a larger scale, with the support from trainers.

Does the investments in the India market also include channel expansion?

Globally, we have announced US\$ 20 million fund for partners, which will encompass partners who want to develop products embedded with RPA. We will also invest in channel expansion, marketing, partner enablement in India – not just for the channel ecosystem, but also for the student community. We also have



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CURRENTLY, WE HAVE 250,000 UIPATH CERTIFIED PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD AND WE PLAN TO INCREASE THIS TO ONE MILLION, WITH INDIA CONTRIBUTING A LARGE PORTION

ASHUTOSH KAPOOR, VICE PRESIDENT – CHANNEL ECOSYSTEM, UIPATH

UiPath Academy, but the focus is on online certification, which also includes sales enablement sessions. We have a three-week online self learning program; anyone with basic understanding of programming can learn the first three levels of the program. Currently, we have 250,000 UiPath certified people across the world and we plan to increase this to one million, with India contributing a large portion. Presently, we have partners who have multi-city presence, but we are also finding specialised partners who are focused on a specific city. For us, the number of partners doesn't matter; we are focusing on market coverage.

BPO sector has been a huge adopter of RPA. Do you see RPA adoptions increasing in other industries?

BPOs and GICs remain high performing sectors for the RPA market, but the technology has definitely

moved to other sectors as well: for instance, banks, insurance and pharmaceuticals companies, etc. RPA is not confined to a particular domain; using RPA, specific products can be built for a particular domain. In terms of Indian enterprises, RPA is a huge accelerator for digital transformation.

How important would be the role of the partner ecosystem to drive growth for UiPath; and what are your expectations from partners?

We haven't set a number for growth. Globally, we cater to 3,000 customers and we are looking to raise the mark to 5,000 customers in 2019. Partners form a critical component to achieve this growth. While many partners are interested in associating with us, we need to find only the right ones. Our primary expectation from partners is awareness about the RPA industry and skillsets. Secondly, partners should have their own niche set of customers.

NETRACK: LINKING SUCCESS WITH SERVICE RESPONSE

RaviRaj, CEO, NetRack Enclosures, in an interview with Rachana Jha, speaks about the company's growth in the Indian market, the focus on following Make in India initiative, and constant innovation as per the industry and market requirements

What has been the growth profile of NetRack in the Indian market ?

Since past one decade NetRack has witnessed consistent growth of 20-25 per cent Y-o-Y in the Indian market. This FY 2018, we are expecting 40 per cent growth as we have introduced new product line-up of racks which align to intelligent air-flow management for data centers. These cooling racks are getting more attention from SMB IT sectors. Thus, things have been going good for NetRack in the Indian market.

What are the factors that have been driving the growth?

IT companies is the key segment that contribute the most to our growth, along with banking and pharma. Through channel partners in India and abroad, we get business from across the world.

How do you replicate Make in India initiative?

We are aligned to Make in India initiative from the very beginning. All the products made for local and global markets are built in our Bangalore production warehouse/factory.

Apart from India, which are the countries you are planning to venture NetRack? What is the key for smooth overseas expansion?

The most focused countries are the UK, Europe, Qatar, Oman for NetRack and we have already started our services in these countries. We also have plans to open our own office in Dubai. As people look for direct presence, it's high-time to leverage the opportunity and have our brand



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WE ARE ALIGNED TO MAKE IN INDIA INITIATIVE FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. ALL THE PRODUCTS MADE FOR LOCAL AND GLOBAL MARKETS ARE BUILT IN OUR BANGALORE PRODUCTION WAREHOUSE/FACTORY

recognition in Dubai, by opening a local sales office.

NetRack completely believes that success is directly connected to your service response. In case of any enquiries, how fast you respond and support/serve matters a lot to retain the clients.

What is your success mantra?

The following factors have contributed majorly to our success:

- Efficiently priced customised product
- Quick response/support/service to the customer queries
- Smooth closing of the contract/order
- Faster supply of the ordered products
- Good product quality
- Delivery commitments were honored
- Fantastic pre and after sales support
- Team working

What are your future plans? Any new announcement?

We have appointed a support person in each region across the world. Now we are planning to appoint more distributors across GCC region as we sense a positive market.

We can see a quality growth in data centers in the Indian market, how are you tweaking your products to align with the emerging trends in the market ?

We are bringing innovations to our products as per the industry and market requirements. Racks and cabling come under passive market. Switching computing and storage are the active components to the data center market. So, we have recently tied up with active component service providers to provide complete data center solution to the companies.

Complete solution includes racks, cooling, containment, PDUs and the software. We can assemble most of the products inside the data center and offer as a package to the companies.

R&M TO FOCUS ON TELCOS AND ENTERPRISES IN 2019

R&M is one of the significant players in the structured cabling market. In an interaction with CRN's Rachana Jha, **Gaurav Ahluwalia**, Managing Director, R&M India, discussed the company's expansion plans for India and how they are differently positioned in the market

The structured cabling market has managed to register a booming growth rate. In the coming years also, this market is expected to witness marked growth. Upcoming technologies like 5G in India, will boost this growth and bring a lot of opportunities for players working in this field, R&M being one of them. R&M implements cabling solutions for a large array of requirements. As per Gaurav Ahluwalia, Managing Director, R&M India, Swiss standard quality products are their key differentiator. "The three main components of structured cabling i.e. cable, information outlet, and patch cord are built with Swiss innovation, durability with future-go strategy, which adds to the performance of the cabling," says Ahluwalia. Besides, product pricing also differentiates them in the market.

Expansion plans for India

For expansion in India, R&M is hiring a National Sales Director in the month of November and more staff focusing on the channel business. "Going forward we are adding more national distributors," he adds. Currently, they have 11 resellers. By next year, they are planning to increase the number to 30. According to Ahluwalia, this will enable them to gain more visibility in untapped regions of the Indian market. In the next two years, they can witness even the channel contributing to global statistics of R&M.

Roadmap and investment strategy

The company has opened a production facility in Bengaluru, and will



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THE THREE MAIN COMPONENTS OF STRUCTURED CABLING, I.E. CABLE, INFORMATION OUTLET, AND PATCH CORD ARE BUILT WITH SWISS INNOVATION, DURABILITY WITH FUTURE-GO STRATEGY, WHICH ADDS TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CABLING

investing in purchasing more equipment, which can increase the capacity to clock 750,000 man hours," explains Ahluwalia. He also adds, "The Bengaluru production plant currently has five lines. We aim to increase it to eight lines. In fact, we have invested in purchasing a new place to deploy the new equipment, so that we can get more space to add new product lines in this particular plant." The company will focus on telcos and enterprises in 2019. Among government telcos, BSNL will be the focus for 5G implementation.

Growth path

"After the acquisition of ATS, we expected we would be losing the manpower, due to some geographical locations of R&M office, which is far away from the city. But, the great achievement is no employee has left the company. I am proud to say, we achieved 100 per cent retention of our blue colour employees and high-level management. This states that people want to work with the company," he says.

In the future

R&M will be closing this FY 2018 with ₹150 crores. FY 2019 target is ₹180-200 crores. And, FY 2020 target is ₹250 crores. The company will also focus on headcount, which will be increased from 220 to 300. There will be new product launches in the month of November. R&M Bengaluru plant will be focusing on India-India as well as India-global distribution of products.

be increasing the headcount in this unit. "Currently, the plant is running on 400,000 man hours. We will be increasing the headcount as well as

NETMAGIC ABREASTS PARTNERS ON SCALING UP APPLICATIONS IN A CLOUD & MOBILE-FIRST WORLD



In the wake of more cloud players emerging in India's IT channel space, Shantaram Shinde, VP & National Head – Channel Business, Netmagic Solutions gives insights into the company's engagement with regional partner communities across India

CRN India held its maiden event under the CRN Channel Series umbrella, in association with Netmagic Solutions. The one-day conference, held on November 2, 2018, in Pune was brought together leading partners from the city to derive deeper insights into Netmagic's cloud products and solutions.

While a large number of enterprises have started their cloud journey, there lies a significant segment in the market which represents huge opportunities for partners in cloud business. Compared to a decade ago, discussions have moved into deeper aspects of cloud such as multi-cloud adoption. In accordance with business requirements, enterprises are not restricting themselves to the limitations of a single cloud infrastructure.

To be able to address their customers concerns and requirements, partners learned how Netmagic's offerings can help them and gain a larger hold in the market.

In a session, Dipak Karkhanis, Director, Leon Computers (a Pune-based cloud partner), took the audience through his company's journey as a system integrator (SI) to being one of the leading cloud partners for Netmagic. Karkhanis said, "We started as an SI partner in 1997, and gradually stepped into IT services, and our goal is to become an ISV. In the space of cloud, we started developing solutions from 2013, as we observed that cloud is more flexible which meets a lot of our customers' needs. Additionally, cloud offers the benefits of costs, collaboration, availability of APIs, time-to-market, among many more."

Karkhanis, in his session, further went on to educate the attendees about the various cloud environments that are available, offering vast opportunities for partners.

Providing a holistic view of Netmagic's market positioning, offerings and opportunities for partners, Shantaram Shinde, VP & National Head – Channel Business, Netmagic Solutions, spoke about the market potential for cloud business and how Netmagic is providing support to partners to grow this segment. Shinde stated, "We have a multi-cloud practice and we also sell other cloud providers' services, alongside our own cloud. Cloud is a buyer-defined market – that's the beauty of cloud. We have over 2000 customers in India and we have observed the increase in demand for cloud and managed services," adding that the company has seven data centres in the country, with two more in the pipeline.

Shedding light on Netmagic's existing partner ecosystem, Shinde informed that 30 per cent of the partners have multi-city presence and 67 per cent of partners are SI capable. The company also has over 20 partners for application services, which further strengthens Netmagic's capabilities to cater to customer needs. In an interactive engagement with the audience, Shinde answered queries from the partners.

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- 6. PEACE OF MIND.** Knowing this is from CRN and the Indian Express Group, organisers of events like CRN Channel Leadership Summit, TechnologySabha and TechnologySenate.



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