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## COPING WITH THE NEXT DECADE, DIGITALISATION OF HUMAN SKILLS

The word digitilisation is a mouthful and its origins are unknown. But its intent is clear – digitally enabled transformation. Post pandemic, business enabling ecosystems from supply chain, real estate, transportation, energy, utilities, retail, are struggling to keep abreast with the exploding demands of recovery and pent up investment that went nowhere for more than 24 months.

Aviation transportation hubs are overflowing to the edges. Passengers are queuing up for hours outside European and Asian hubs to enter. Ground crews are offloading baggage to the side to catch up with passengers days later. Containers ships are waiting for weeks for loading on the East coast of China and offloading on the West coast of US and many European ports. E-commerce deliveries and Christmas season stocks may not reach in time.

Everyone adopted cloud and digital transformation solutions during the pandemic. Recovery should have been smooth, agile and scalable. Pre-pandemic industry levels should have been a cake-walk to scale up to once things were normalized. It did not. So what went wrong?

One glaring fact. Too much focus and investment on the process and technology infrastructure. Not enough focus on mechanization, industrialization and automation of human functions.

Human beings can never be replaced by a machine, but their tasks can. Dedicated mechanisation functions with high degree of automation, intelligence and self-learning are the way to recover from the highs and lows of industry, pandemics, climate change, conflicts and so on. The future in the next decade promises a very high level occurrence of these extreme challenges.

Floods, hurricanes, droughts, fires, amongst others need armies of ground, airborne, waterborne, automated machines to tackle. The extremes of the next decade will swing violently from one polarity to the other. No level of human skills has the anticipation and endurance to manage these challenges.

In this month's special Gitex edition we carry the opinions of twenty plus top enterprises on business and digital transformation including Alteryx, AMD, AVEVA, Beyond Technology, Ciena, Cloud Box Technologies, Dell Technologies, Eaton, Equinix, Forescout, Gulf Business Machines, Heriot Watt Online, IceWarp, IFS, Injazat, Kaspersky, Kyndryl, OutSystems, PFU, Red Hat, Siemon, Sitecore. Also a deep dive into how security specialist Help AG is transforming its vision and operations into a pure play services company.

Best of luck for your networking and business returns during Gitex 2022.

**Arun Shankar**  
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# ANSWERS TO MANY LIFE'S QUESTIONS LIE IN OUR DATA

At a profound level, it is a positive thought to think that we may have the answers to many of life's unanswerable questions, it is right there in the data.



**DANNY ALLAN**

Chief Technology Officer,  
Veeam.

**S**o often in the technology industry we talk about how data can benefit businesses. And rightly so because data is arguably the most valuable asset a business has. However, we do not always talk enough about how data makes life better for people. When ultimately, this is its purpose.

A great example of this comes from a personal story about how a group of fellow technical scuba-diver friends and I have been able to solve a mystery of the ages using data. Data that has been available for a long time, but simply hadn't been analysed with sophisticated enough tools to provide the answers.

The mystery was that of a shipwreck off Portsmouth, Maine, which I first learned about in a book called *Due to Enemy Action*. It was the last US Navy warship sunk in the Atlantic

Ocean during World War II – two weeks before the war ended. A few of the 13 survivors claimed to have spotted a German U-boat after their ship exploded, but the Navy dismissed these accounts, believing there to have been no U-boats operating so close to the US coastline at this stage of the war.

No one ever found that ship, so my friends and I began an audacious mission to do so. As well as find the wreck, we wanted to answer the question of whether it was torpedoed by a German U-boat – the scenario the authorities had dismissed as impossible. Or, whether it had sunk due to a boiler explosion – an assumption will have had tragic implications for the engineers working on the ship and survivors of the tragedy.

After a five-year search, we found the ship. We also found the boilers were still intact, but no evidence of a torpedo strike at the stern of the ship. This has had life changing consequences for the victims, survivors and their families.

Much of the data we used to find the wreck had already been collected. It already existed. What had not been available to those who searched for it before we did, was the cloud and advanced data analytics tools. Data found the ship, and thankfully I get to tell the story.

At a profound level, it is a positive thought to think that

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Much of the data we used to find the wreck had already been collected.
- What had not been available to those who searched before, was the cloud and advanced data analytics tools.
- It is a positive thought to think that we may have the answers to so many of life's unanswerable questions.
- It is right there in the data, but we just have not found it yet.

we may have the answers to so many of life's seemingly unanswerable questions. It is right there in the data – we have it – but we just have not found it yet.

That is why it is so important we manage and protect the data we have. It is an invaluable resource for business, a unique identifier for us as humans, and a resource that grows in value every day. As data's volume and value grows, so do the threats to its security and privacy. After all, if we had lost the data we used to find that ship, we would have lost a piece of history – possibly forever. ■

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# EMIRATIS WILL DRIVE FUTURE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN UAE

The time is right for technology companies to strive towards becoming employer of choice for emerging Emirati talent by prioritising upskilling of UAE nationals.



**IBRAHIM NASSIR**

Chief Human Resources Officer and Supporting Services Officer, du.

**W**hen examining what awaits while considering the unprecedented

transformation currently unfolding, there is little doubt that, professionally speaking, today's rising stars and tomorrow's generations from the Emirati talent pool will be presented with many opportunities to explore diverse career paths and fulfil their full potential.

With visionary agendas like the UAE Centennial 2071 Plan and Towards the Next 50 Project gaining sustained traction nationwide, new foundations are now being laid that will empower UAE nationals for decades to come. However, prudently positioning them to innovate, ascend professional ladders, and make invaluable contributions to their employers, industries, and the nation requires training of the highest calibre, a requirement being proactively embraced given

the possibilities at hand.

Events such as Ru'ya, Careers Redefined offers a platform for homegrown Emirati talent to benefit from career-defining discussions, live performances, interactive workshops and opportunities to engage with leading employers.

In line with the government's Emiratisation directive, which mandates the widespread inclusion of Emiratis to overcome structural labour market divisions, spur jobs creation, foster entrepreneurship, and drive economic contributions, business communities have rallied in this direction, prioritising avenues for entry for homegrown talent.

For example, it was only recently that UAE private sector companies were bound by an aspirational economic reform objective. By 2026, 10% of all positions are required to be occupied by Emiratis, with other incentives such as salary increases, training grants, and pension subsidies also requirements.

While the UAE has traditionally relied on the expatriate community to take up positions across sectors, the next five decades will undoubtedly curb this tendency. Rather than onboarding from abroad, more and more positions will be occupied from within. Emiratisation targets like the private sector commitment mentioned above will eventually

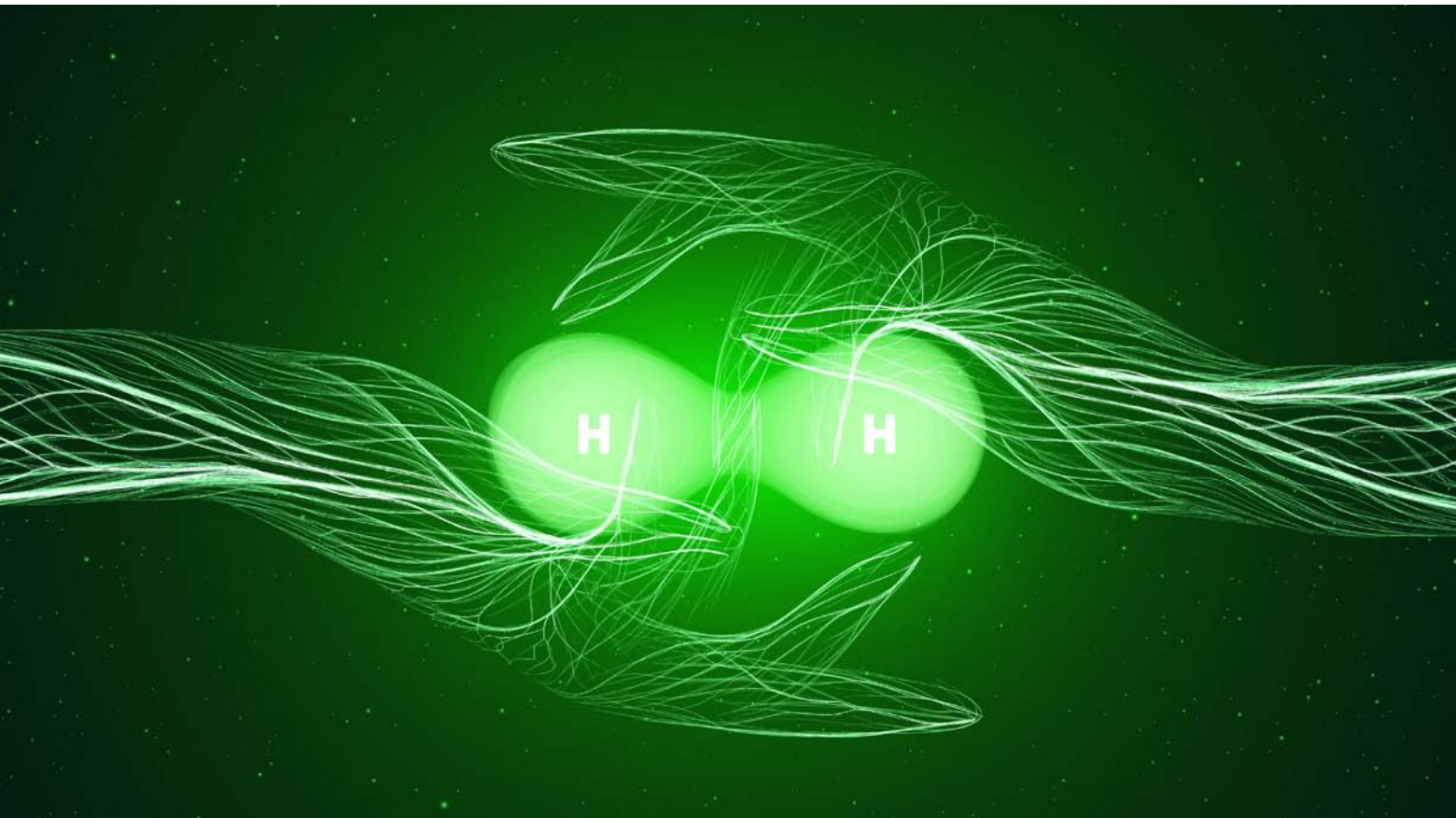
prove to be just the beginning of UAE nationals thriving in professional life, with all sectors certain to increase employment opportunities for Emiratis. For the technology industry, this is particularly relevant and important.

After all, the digital revolution has, in some ways, only just begun. And as the technology landscape continues evolving and digital transformation and smart cities development demands grow, record numbers of career positions will manifest, although the UAE's upcoming best and brightest do and will require essential training to flourish. The time is right for technology companies to strive towards becoming an employer of choice for emerging Emirati talent by prioritising the training, development and upskilling of UAE nationals.

Further, organisations can look into establishing industry partnerships with leading companies in the ICT sector to support the UAE's local agenda by developing homegrown talent.

Only an agile, forward-thinking organisation that is able to adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by the acceleration of digital technologies can build a futuristic, engaging and a digital-first workplace.

Ultimately, the individual and collective success of these programs rests with talent driving them, and these programs alone emphasize the scale of opportunity that awaits Emirati talent in the coming decades and beyond. ■



# UTILITIES WELL POSITIONED TO ENTER GREEN HYDROGEN CHAIN

Owing to complexities of future hydrogen ecosystem, leveraging real-time data and analytics will be fundamental to optimisation of the process.

**H**ydrogen represents a key part of the energy mix on the global path towards carbon neutrality. This emergent fuel is a leading contender to be a sustainable, seasonal energy storage solution. It could be used to balance the short-term intermittency of wind and solar and easily transported using modified natural gas infrastructure.

However, the green hydrogen value chain is set to be more complicated than any current energy-carrying vector. It will be broader, more complex, and have more stakeholders. Therefore, optimising green hydrogen production will rely on visibility across the value chain.

The concept of hydrogen energy storage is based on the ability to use excess renewable electricity to run the hydrogen production process. Hydrogen

can be safely stored in underground caverns and eventually re-electrified when needed. The stored hydrogen can produce electricity from a fuel cell or by flowing into a specially designed turbine.

Projects in the 100 MW range have already been installed in the UAE, Australia, and China. The largest project is being developed in Utah, US, and aims to store enough hydrogen in salt caverns to produce up to 1,000 MW of electricity.

But while the utility industry understands the potential for green hydrogen in power generation, it is only just starting to embrace hydrogen's wider uses and the role utilities could play in an expanded value chain.

As green hydrogen matures, utilities are well positioned to own hydrogen production facilities, transport hydrogen in existing natural gas pipelines, build new hydrogen infrastructure, or



**DOUGLAS NUNEZ**  
Global Power Industry  
Expert, AVEVA.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- As green hydrogen matures, utilities are well positioned to transport hydrogen in existing natural gas pipelines.
- Opportunities exist to supply hydrogen for building heating, a blend of hydrogen and methane.
- Nearly half of respondents agree that green hydrogen is a significant revenue opportunity but only 19% have a clearly defined strategy.
- The green hydrogen value chain is set to be more complicated than any current energy-carrying vector.
- Optimising green hydrogen production will rely on visibility across the value chain.

own hydrogen-fired generation assets. Other opportunities exist to supply hydrogen for building heating, a blend of hydrogen and methane, or for combined heat and power plants.

According to a recent global survey of 112 utilities, nearly half of respondents agree that green hydrogen is a significant revenue opportunity but only 19% have a clearly defined strategy for the upcoming fuel.

But while it is uncertain what the green hydrogen value chain will look like in a decade's time, the utilities industry should not press pause on development. If anything, future uncertainty makes upfront planning even more of a priority.

Each new green hydrogen project teaches more about electrolysis technology and its infrastructure requirements and makes the future that much clearer. The challenge for the industry in general, as well as for individual utilities, is to gain knowledge from current projects, learn more about the most viable technologies, and decide on what role to play in the future green hydrogen ecosystem.

Some utilities are planning to own a significant proportion of the value chain; in other markets, there may be four or five companies involved just in its production, storage, and transport, and in green hydrogen-fired generation.

Green hydrogen's promise – should the current research be successful – is to help utilities achieve decarbonisation goals while providing reliable and affordable electricity.

More than anything, the long-term viability of green hydrogen will demand a strong data foundation. Knowing when

to profitably produce, transport, and store hydrogen or when to convert it into other chemicals will be dictated by many factors.

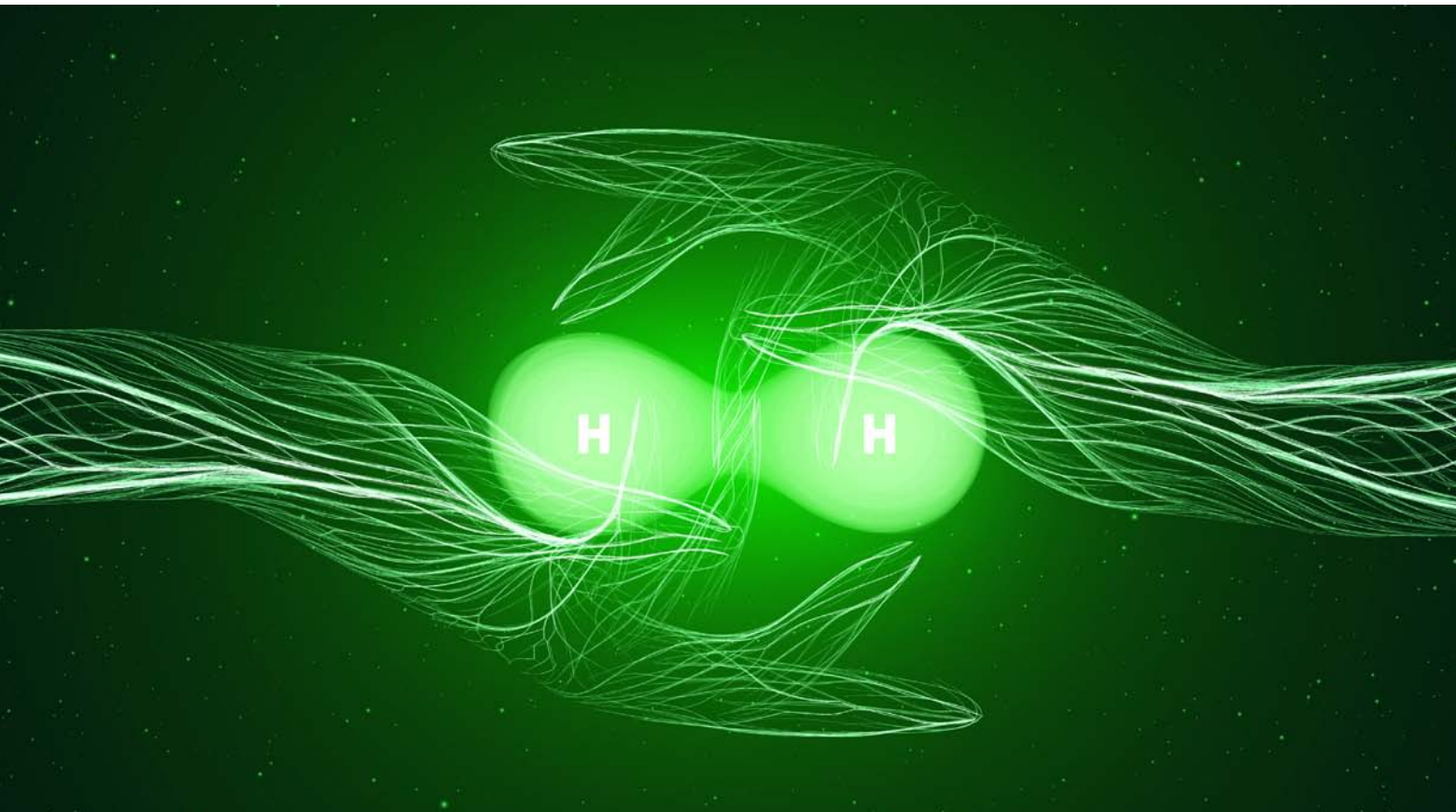
These include an oversupply of renewables generation, steel, ammonia, or fertilizer prices, or regulated hydrogen reserve levels. A robust data infrastructure will provide all stakeholders with the enterprise-level situational awareness required to make the right choices at the right time.

Owing to the complexities of the future hydrogen ecosystem, modern technologies capable of leveraging real-time data and analytics will be fundamental to the optimisation of the overall process. End-to-end situational awareness of the green hydrogen value chain will enable stakeholders to make insights-driven business decisions.

Situational awareness relies on a robust data infrastructure that manages a wide range of data types including market-related, critical operational support, asset management, predictive maintenance, long-term planning, and business process optimisation.

The industry is at the beginning of its learning journey, but there is a risk that its focus will be mostly on developing electrolysis proofs of concept or modifying natural gas delivery systems to transport hydrogen.

These innovative ambitions should be similarly matched with the development of a common information infrastructure and analytics. The future viability of the green hydrogen economy relies on optimised data flow across all stakeholders. ■



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## Aster Hospitals adopts 3M's M\*Modal Fluency Direct speech recognition solution across UAE

Aster Hospitals in a strategic collaboration with 3M, announced it has successfully adopted 3M M\*Modal Fluency Direct, the latest speech and

artificial intelligence-powered technology. The technology went live across Aster's facilities in the UAE last month.

The all-in-one solution will enable physicians of any medical specialty to conversationally create, review, edit and sign clinical notes directly within electronic health records. This technology will ensure standardisation and acceleration of clinical documentation processes across Aster hospitals and will reduce the administrative burden on healthcare professionals. Furthermore, it will help to improve the clinician and patient experience and drive productivity in the healthcare sector.

The technology uses artificial intelligence to deliver proactive nudges to clinicians as they document patient encounters in the electronic health records, which enables them to proactively address any common documentation deficiencies, at the time of note creation. This will improve the quality of documentation, enable more accurate coding and appropriate reimbursement, in addition to improving patient safety.

## King Faisal Specialist Hospital in Riyadh signs MoU with Oracle Cerner in the field of AI

King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre has inked a non-binding memorandum of understanding with Oracle Cerner to strengthen their collaboration in developing shared ideas and research in the fields of data and artificial intelligence. In line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, the collaboration aims to support the creation of a data-driven and artificial intelligence-supported nation, which in turn will create employment opportunities for the people of Saudi Arabia.

The signing was announced during the Global AI Summit 2022 held by the Saudi Authority for Data and Artificial Intelligence in Riyadh. The MoU covers healthcare information systems, enterprise resource planning, business continuity plans, and artificial intelligence innovations focused on



(Left to right) Osama Alswailem, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre and Akram Sami, Vice President and Managing Director, Oracle Cerner Middle East and Africa.

providing healthcare practices that serve the Saudi population.

This announcement aligns with the country's aspirations to realise the value of data as a key driver and an asset that will build a digital government, powered by artificial intelligence. Enabling further healthcare innovations and advancements will be possible by creating and implementing innovative projects that leverage the power of data. In addition, the MoU will reinforce King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre's digital transformation and help build new skills and capabilities that cement the organisation's position as a thriving leader in research and innovation in the region.

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## SITA launches online portal for partnerships in security, analytics, alternative energy

SITA, the IT provider to the air transport industry, announced the launch of a partnership program aimed at joining hands with key partners as it embarks on a new path to growth. Through the new partner platform, Launchpad, SITA has outlined four key areas where it seeks to build new partnerships: digital identities, advanced analytics and data management, security and safety at airports, and sustainable alternative energy sources. Each of these areas is in response to the changing demands of air travel today and where SITA has already made notable strides in innovation and development.

Over the past two years, airlines and airports have faced significant challenges and changing passenger behaviours,



requiring the industry to adapt how it operates. Surging fuel prices and volatility have increased sharply while passengers demand the same digital experience when traveling that dominates every aspect of their everyday life.

To meet this demand, SITA is accelerating its investment in new solutions that deliver smarter ways of working using existing and new technologies. At the same time, SITA is looking to collaborate with partners inside and outside the air transport industry to complement SITA's expertise, drive innovation, or trial new sustainable solutions within their operations.

## Dubai Municipality completes 85% of Dubai Waste Management Centre, waste-to-energy project

Dubai Municipality announced that 85% of Dubai Waste Management Centre, the world's largest waste-to-energy project, has been completed. Construction of the landmark project began in 2021, in line with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to raise the emirate's profile as a global model for sustainable development and consolidate its position as the best city to live and work in.

DWMC reflects Dubai's commitment to achieving sustainable development goals and reducing the emirate's carbon footprint. The project will contribute to Dubai Municipality's strategic objective of reducing and completely diverting waste from landfills by 2030. Located in Dubai's Al Warsan area, the first-of-its-kind project will convert 45% of the emirate's



municipal waste into renewable energy once complete.

The construction of the waste management centre is on schedule. The first phase of the world's most efficient energy project will be ready by 2023, while the entire project is scheduled to finish by 2024. With Dubai's population expected to continue growing at an increasingly rapid pace thanks to a surge in economic activities, the project would significantly minimise the potential volume of municipal waste in landfills and create alternative energy sources.

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### **Kimberley Pierce joins King's College Hospital London in Dubai as CEO**

King's College Hospital London, Dubai, is pleased to announce that Kimberley Ann Pierce has joined as Chief Executive Officer. Kimberley comes with a wealth of experience as a top-tier leader in healthcare. Over the years she has led an extensive portfolio of healthcare organisations crossing three continents. With this track record, she is bringing a unique healthcare management approach to King's Dubai, and the UAE in general, stemming from her background as a registered nurse.



### **Jamal Salem Al Dhaheri joins Abu Dhabi Airports as MD, CEO driving Midfield Terminal, air cargo**

Abu Dhabi Airports has appointed HE Jamal Salem Al Dhaheri as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer. A seasoned business leader, Al Dhaheri's appointment will continue the journey of success achieved by Shareef Hashim Al Hashmi for Abu Dhabi Airports, taking the organisation to the next phase of transformation to become a regional leader in airport management and operations



### **Michael Campbell, James Lawton, Claire Rutkowski, Suzanne Little join Bentley Systems**

Bentley Systems announced that Michael Campbell has been appointed chief product officer and will lead more than 1,500 colleagues in the company's product advancement group. Campbell joins Bentley from product engineering software leader PTC, where he has spent his whole career since earning his mechanical

engineering degree from Boston University in 1995.

He has had product leadership responsibility for PTC's mainstream design applications and for its IoT acquisitions, and most recently served as executive vice president and general manager for its augmented reality offerings. Campbell will be responsible for defining Bentley's product strategy and for managing product development to advance the company's leadership in infrastructure engineering software. He will report to Chief Operating Officer Nicholas Cumins.



### **ACWA Power reshuffles portfolios for Kashif Rana, Abdulhameed Al Muhaidib**

ACWA Power, Saudi developer, investor, and operator of power generation, water desalination and green hydrogen plants worldwide, announced changes at the executive leadership level. Kashif Rana, formerly the company's Chief Financial Officer, has assumed the role of Chief Portfolio Management Officer. An energy

industry veteran with over two decades of experience in the sector, Rana has been with ACWA Power for 13 years, and led the CFO function since 2014. As CFO, he oversaw the company's public listing on the Saudi Stock Exchange (Tadawul) in 2021, as well as managing the transition towards operating as a listed company.

His new mandate will include driving the development and implementation of an effective portfolio-management strategy for the company's expanding global portfolio of 60+ projects in 13 markets; further enhancing the asset management function; and achieving optimal assets performance while maximising return on investment; ensuring value creation while managing risk; and maintaining adherence to contractual and regulatory commitments.

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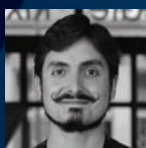
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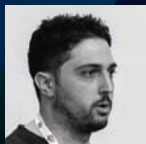
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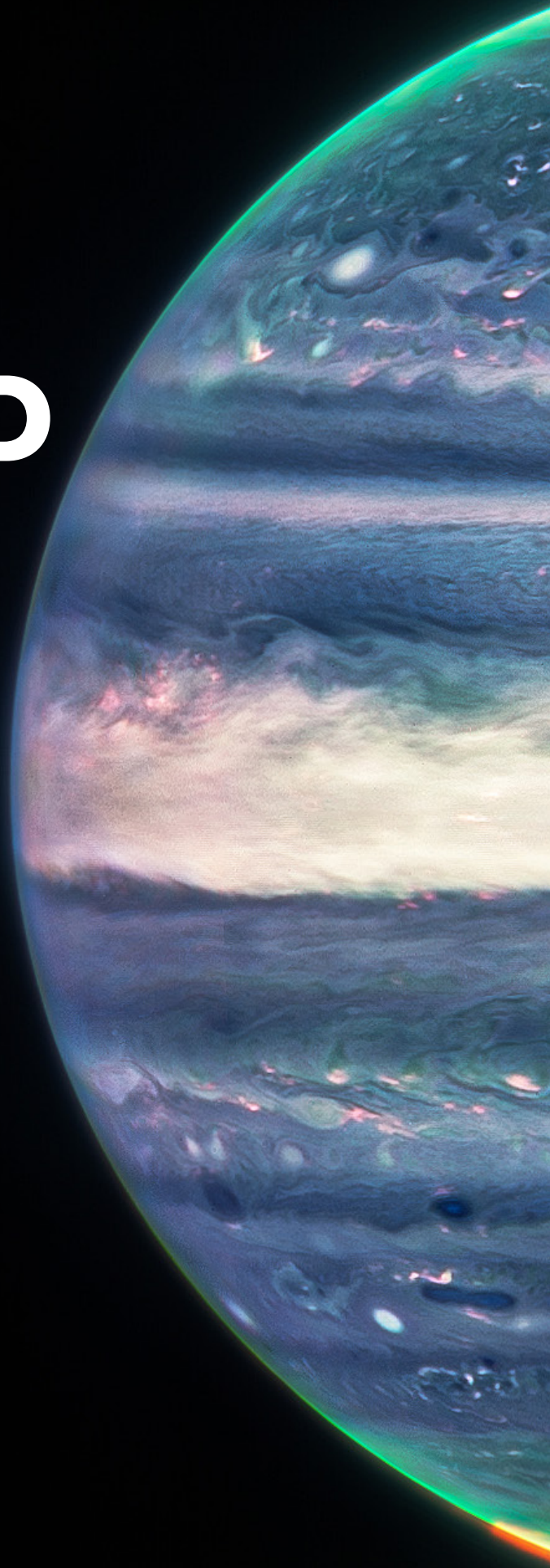


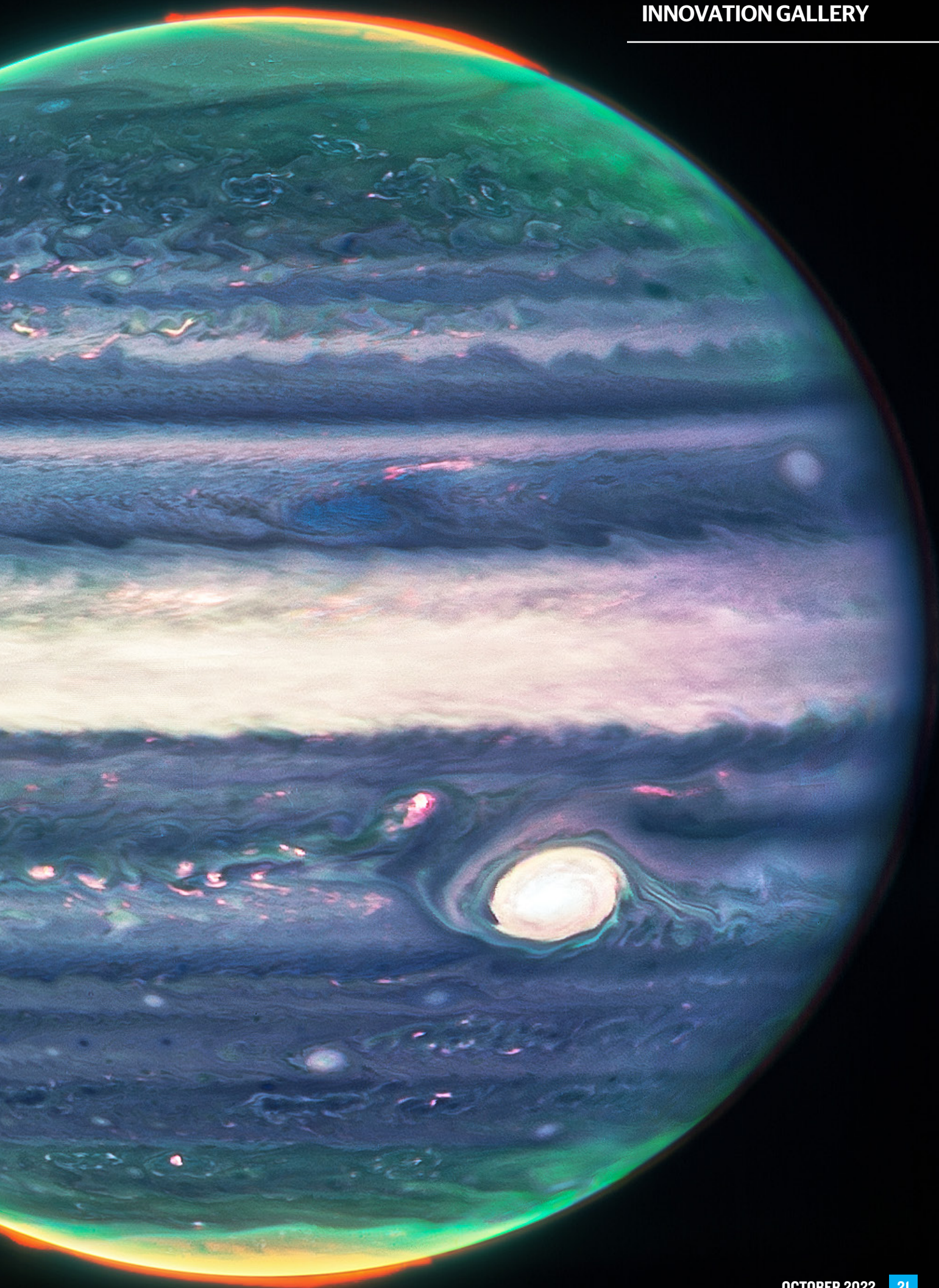
# JUPITER IN INFRARED LIGHT

NASA's James Webb Space Telescope has captured new images of the Jupiter. This image comes from the observatory's Near-Infrared Camera, which has three specialized infrared filters that showcase details of the planet. Since infrared light is invisible to the human eye, the light has been mapped onto the visible spectrum.

In this standalone view of Jupiter, created from a composite of several images from Webb, auroras extend to high altitudes above both the northern and southern poles of Jupiter. A different filter, mapped to yellows and greens, shows hazes swirling around the northern and southern poles. A third filter, mapped to blues, showcases light that is reflected from a deeper main cloud.

The Great Red Spot, a famous storm so big it could swallow Earth, appears white in these views, as do other clouds, because they are reflecting a lot of sunlight.





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**STEPHAN BERNER**

Chief Executive Officer, Help AG.

**HELP AG**

# PERFORMING **WHILE** TRANSFORMING

Help AG, the cyber security arm of e& enterprise, has built a comprehensive portfolio shaped by its advanced service-centric model to drive market scale and reach while providing financial returns for shareholders.

**H**elp AG is the biggest cyber security service provider in the region, with an experience that spans over 25 years. Founded in Germany in 1995, Help AG has been operating in the Middle East since 2004, and was strategically acquired in February 2020 by e&, formerly known as Etisalat Group, to become the cyber security arm of e& enterprise, formerly Etisalat Digital.

Help AG has taken on the role of market evangelist when it comes to adopting and delivering new technologies, enabling enterprises through the following lines: cyber security services, managed cyber defence, zero trust solutions, and next generation platforms. The company expanded into Saudi Arabia in 2015 and has recently established an independent state-of-the-art cyber security operations centre (CSOC), building on the expertise and capabilities of the UAE CSOC.

Help AG provides future-ready, end-to-end services that include secure cloud enablement, OT and IoT security, machine learning for agility and automation, penetration testing, digital forensics and incident response, breach investigation, cyber insurance, governance, risk and compliance, managed detection and response, managed threat intelligence amongst others.

### As a service offering

As a leading regional cyber security services company, Help AG has been setting the bar for the rest of the market and has repositioned and transformed itself in the last five years. The company launched 'Help AG as a Service' last year – the culmination of its transition from technology delivery to a service-centric model, placing it in the best position to offer the entire cyber security lifecycle, from 'Assess' to 'Defend' to 'Respond,' as-a-service.

"Help AG has been one of the region's most experienced and trusted cyber security partners for more than 18 years, and with 'Help AG as a Service', we have truly cemented our place as a thought leader in the regional cyber security industry. The future of cyber security will be service-led, and Help AG is at the helm of this evolution," says Stephan Berner, Chief Executive Officer, Help AG.

Help AG's primary mandate is delivering cyber security services and solutions to large

enterprises, private customers, and governments, whether it is federal or local.

After the acquisition by the e& Group, Help AG has further strengthened its market reach, hence accelerating its growth whilst giving the right setting for developing and offering an even larger specialised services portfolio, leveraging in-country service provider infrastructure.

In terms of number of employees, Help AG is now 370+ and has been performing at 40%+ revenue growth for the last three years. "This is driven very much by delivering advanced cyber security services to the marketplace," says Berner.

Another strong market differentiator and a factor that is helping boost its revenue growth and profitability is the change in ratio of sales from vendor based products and solutions to sales from advanced cyber security services. Vendor based products and solutions include product related hardware and software, on-premises subscription licenses and others.

Berner indicates that five years ago this ratio was 82% vendor products and solutions driven versus 18% Help AG's value services. "At the end of 2022, I expect for the first time that we will sell more services than solutions. And five years from now, I am confident that 90% of our business will be delivered from Help AG as a service."

Data from IDC and Gartner indicates that the cyber security market growth in UAE and Saudi Arabia is trending between 7% to 11% YoY. So if Help AG is growing at 40% YoY that means it is capturing market share from the rest of the incumbent players. "And I think that is actually what is happening," Berner reaffirms. There are a number of drivers that are fuelling Help AG's success in delivering an, as a services approach.

The over proliferation of vendor based cyber security tools and lack of skilled resources to ensure that they deliver a high level of return on investment in terms of internal robustness and security profile of the enterprise, has been well documented. This significant and consistent pain point of CISOs inside their enterprise is also a door opener for Help AG's service offerings.

"There are way too many cyber security vendors in the market. We foresee a strong consolidation of the installed base. That of course, can only happen with a trusted cyber security partner who understands how to consolidate, integrate, optimize, and manage the entire cyber security operation," says Berner.

Another driver for regional enterprises opting for this approach is the widening gap between available budget for cyber security and the optimal investment required to shore up their defences. “Customers cannot always avail the right budgets and so, what many organizations like to do is to move from CapEx to OpEx spending,” points out Berner.

“We have a system in place that literally combines three years of budget spending of a customer into an end-to-end services stack and allows the customers to pay us in monthly instalments. That is very welcome and resonates well with both federal organizations and enterprise clients,” he adds.

And the final nail in the board, driving adoption of value based services was the pandemic. This enormously raised the profile and benefits of cloud as a platform for business, agility, resilience, and continuity.

Today, Help AG as a service, includes everything in cyber security – end-to-end zero trust infrastructure, governance, risk and compliance, consultancy, offensive cyber security, penetration testing, managed detection and response, extended detected and response and more, all combined and delivered as a stack of services on a subscription basis.

This also represents a win-win situation for both enterprises and Help AG. The enterprise gains a robust and consistent security posture, while Help AG onboards the enterprises’ budget and engagement for a period of three to five years.

“Help AG truly believes that a service-centric business approach is creating value for end customers,” says Berner.

## Role of automation

Help AG continues to adopt the latest trends in artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation embedded into its managed services business. In 2015, Help AG set up its first cyber security operations centre in UAE. Today that service offering has expanded to Saudi Arabia as well. Both of these in-country operations are fully compliant with local regulations of the central bank

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*In terms of number of employees, Help AG is now 370+ and has been performing at*

**40%+**  
*revenue growth for the last three years*

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and the government as well as ISO and global standards.

Be it the ability to derive valuable and focused insights from threat intelligence, or leverage security orchestration, automation and response (SOAR) capabilities, five years ago these were just buzzwords. Three years ago, Help AG was already planning on how to embed these into its services and offerings.

“Today the platform is running in the back end and is fully enabled,” says Berner. SOAR as a service is delivered to Help AG customers by default when they subscribe to the managed detection and response (MDR) service. And Help AG’s CSOC based MDR includes proactive security event management, 24x7 security monitoring, and advanced threat hunting capabilities.

In the realm of cyber security, artificial intelligence is really machine learning that scans vaults of incident and network data. Through machine learning, playbooks, and workflows, the reliability on the human analyst working in a night shift to deliver



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***There are way too many cyber security vendors in the market. We foresee a strong consolidation of the installed base***  
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and respond is becoming less and less.

“We are curating in-house advanced threat intelligence and building use case libraries,” says Berner, which help to reduce the manual workload on the analysts. “Those kinds of information are extremely important because sometimes it means we are going to get information about an incident, much faster through the ecosystem, in which we are embedded,” he adds.

Can Help AG’s as a service offering be segregated into broadline and value, a standard approach for sell-out in the channel? Berner dismisses this approach.

“It is very difficult to say you have a commodity aspect versus an advanced aspect. If you missed out one window, that could impact hundred percent of the attack surface,” he indicates. And missing

out even one clue in the remediation and forensic process means failure to prevent, protect or detect for the enterprise.

Commoditization would therefore only apply to Help AG’s offerings around vendor-based products and solutions, because of over proliferation.

As a business model, demand for cyber security services remains extraordinarily robust and resilient. Enterprises have to invest in it, have to educate and build awareness of it, and have to continuously remain compliant.

In the past it used to be about governance, risk, and compliance. Today, it includes privacy as well. “That is another topic which is opening a lot of more new opportunities,” anticipates Berner.

## Transforming role of CISO

The role of the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) has been incorporated into regional enterprises over the last 5 to 10 years. This role is a challenging one, because on one hand they need to protect and safeguard the business of the enterprise. On the other hand, they are looked at, as an internal department that is not really helping with business, because of the number of checks and questions that they ask.

“If you look into cyber security and the CISO function, the most interesting aspect is, it is actually a business enabler,” says Berner.

The role of the CISO is no longer about just protecting their enterprise. It is also about proactive protection by predicting what will happen tomorrow and how to respond to it. “Cyber security is therefore an integral part of business only if they are going to play together,” he adds. “If business and the CISO are aligned then cyber security can actually become a powerhouse for business performance.”

The role of the CISO has also advanced further with the challenge of managing digital transformation. With digital transformation, business

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 and  
 governments,  
 whether it  
 is federal or  
 local**  
 ”

processes are going to adapt to an advanced model of technology to deliver more secure, faster and more scalable services.

In essence, Berner feels digital transformation is taking the role of the CISO into human resources, supply chain and business processes.

“I do believe that we will see CISO function one, CISO function two, CISO function three being established within the coming years. What is expected by an individual CISO in a large enterprise organization is simply too much and you have to segregate the responsibility,” stresses Berner.

The CISO function will therefore continue to evolve in the coming years, and two years from now, the job profile and segregation of duties will be different.

### Working through a breach

Research from leading global agencies also indicate that security breaches inside enterprises are difficult to detect and often go unnoticed for days, weeks, and even months.

This pain point of security administrators has led to the emergence of cyber resilience. This differs from cyber security in the sense that it anticipates that a cyber breach has occurred and looks at the readiness of an enterprise to manage the consequences of that breach.

“The goal around cyber resilience is to make sure that the organization maintains critical business operations when an incident actually happens. It is all about getting ahead of the breach,” explains Berner.

Cyber resilience is a proactive framework that uses different kinds of pillars for its effectiveness. It focuses on threat modelling and understanding the enterprises' risk exposure. It anticipates threat actors and their disruptive impact.

And finally, how the enterprise will react, respond and adapt and what its learning points will be.

Cyber resilience requires a complete change of mindset inside the enterprise. From preventing and detecting the breach to managing the breach. “It is having the mindset within an organization, from management to each and every role and function – on how you are going to respond to it,” says Berner.

Another confusion that emerges is the distinction between disaster recovery and cyber resilience. While disaster recovery is focused around protecting and recovering the crown jewels of an enterprise, namely data, cyber resilience is focused on an enterprises' services and work streams.

Berner points out, that there is a big difference between the two and cyber resilience works in conjunction with disaster recovery and supplements it. For this reason, it is also important to move cyber security into the front row of the enterprise, to be embedded with business strategy from the very beginning.

“Cyber security used to be an afterthought when something happens. Now we talk about Day Zero and Beyond. That is pretty much one of Help AG's terms, which we are announcing to the marketplace,” points out Berner.

Looking into the future, e& acquired Help AG because they wanted the fastest growing, best performing, and leading cyber security services and solutions provider in UAE and Saudi Arabia. “We are a specialist arm, and we are going to remain a cyber security specialist, driving a service-centric business model because that is the future. This is where we can continue to scale our business, create value for our customers and significant return on investment for the shareholders of the group,” Berner reflects. ■

# The future of cybersecurity is cybersecurity as a service.



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ALTERYX

# BOOSTING NATIONAL ECONOMIES WITH AUTOMATION

Winners and losers in any industry will be defined by those upskilling their workforce to leverage analytics for business insights and those that are not.

**T**raditionally, the early departmental adopters of digitally transformative solutions have been the departments with historically high volumes of data: IT, sales, customer service, and marketing, for example. Improving customer experience through AI, chatbots, and

digital technology is a highly effective strategy. The more recent areas of adoption are in departments with high levels of regulation and compliance like accountancy.

One Alteryx Customer, Al Futtaim Automotive, automated 300,000 tax-applicable transactions each month, saving huge amounts of back-

office time. The ability to take a manual repetitive task and then automate it can drastically reduce the potential for human error while simultaneously streamlining the reporting process.

One of the biggest blockers stalling digital initiatives in the Middle East is, ironically, the technology. Organisations



can sometimes overinvest in the latest technological system at the expense of the actual humans who are expected to use it. Layering on technology after a technology is a strategy with rapidly diminishing returns if the technology is not accessible or the necessary people are not fully upskilled to use it.

Ultimately any new technology integration needs to have an associated change management period, one where staff are brought on board for the journey the company is going on, and where they are actively incentivised to make the best use of these new systems.

If an urgent challenge appears, businesses cannot afford to respond a week later. The biggest hurdle that business leaders need to overcome in the next few years will be making decisions at the necessary speed to do business in our modern operating environment.

Increasing the pace of insight generation, while increasing resiliency to unexpected change, is going to be more important than ever by 2030. The winners and losers in any industry will continue to be defined by those upskilling their workforce to leverage analytics for business insights and those that are not.

AI and automation technology have the potential to be a huge economic boost in the Middle East. PwC sees it as a \$320 Billion opportunity for the region and a \$96 Billion opportunity for the UAE alone. The ability to take raw data and automatically turn it into business using insights is a huge competitive advantage that cannot be understated. ■



**KARL CROWTHER**  
Regional Vice President  
MEA, Alteryx.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- One of the biggest blockers stalling digital initiatives in the Middle East is ironically technology.
- AI Futtaim Automotive automated 300,000 transactions each month saving huge amounts of back office time.
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- The ability to take raw data and turn it into business driving insights is a huge competitive advantage.

AMD

# POWERING THE DIGITAL-ERA BUSINESS

High-performance adaptive computing and efficient data processing are critical for the enterprise digital transformation journey.

**M**any businesses, especially in the automotive, construction, healthcare, and retail sectors and the financial services industry have already started adopting digital transformation.

COVID-19 has been a huge accelerator driving transformation in the region. With a drop in coronavirus cases, the region is seeing rapid growth in digitalisation. Since the region has a young population, primarily millennials and Generation Z, the rate of digital adoption is likely to keep growing across the Middle East.

AMD provides solutions for businesses and enterprises to accelerate their digital transformation journey and expects governments and enterprises in the region to adopt digital transformation strategies.

UAE and Saudi Arabia

have been leading this transformation and have a very well-established digital transformation journey, enabling one to process the entire government transaction digitally. While there is a clear distinction between the two, both are moving in the same direction.

The Middle East region has all elements required to progress and is likely to accelerate its adoption with adequate guidance and direction from the government.

AMD has been driving and working closely with several governments across the region providing solutions that help accelerate, optimise, and enhance the digital transformation journey.

Businesses have been adjusting to the remote working model, which brings different challenges. Taking businesses to the cloud is one of the biggest challenges and

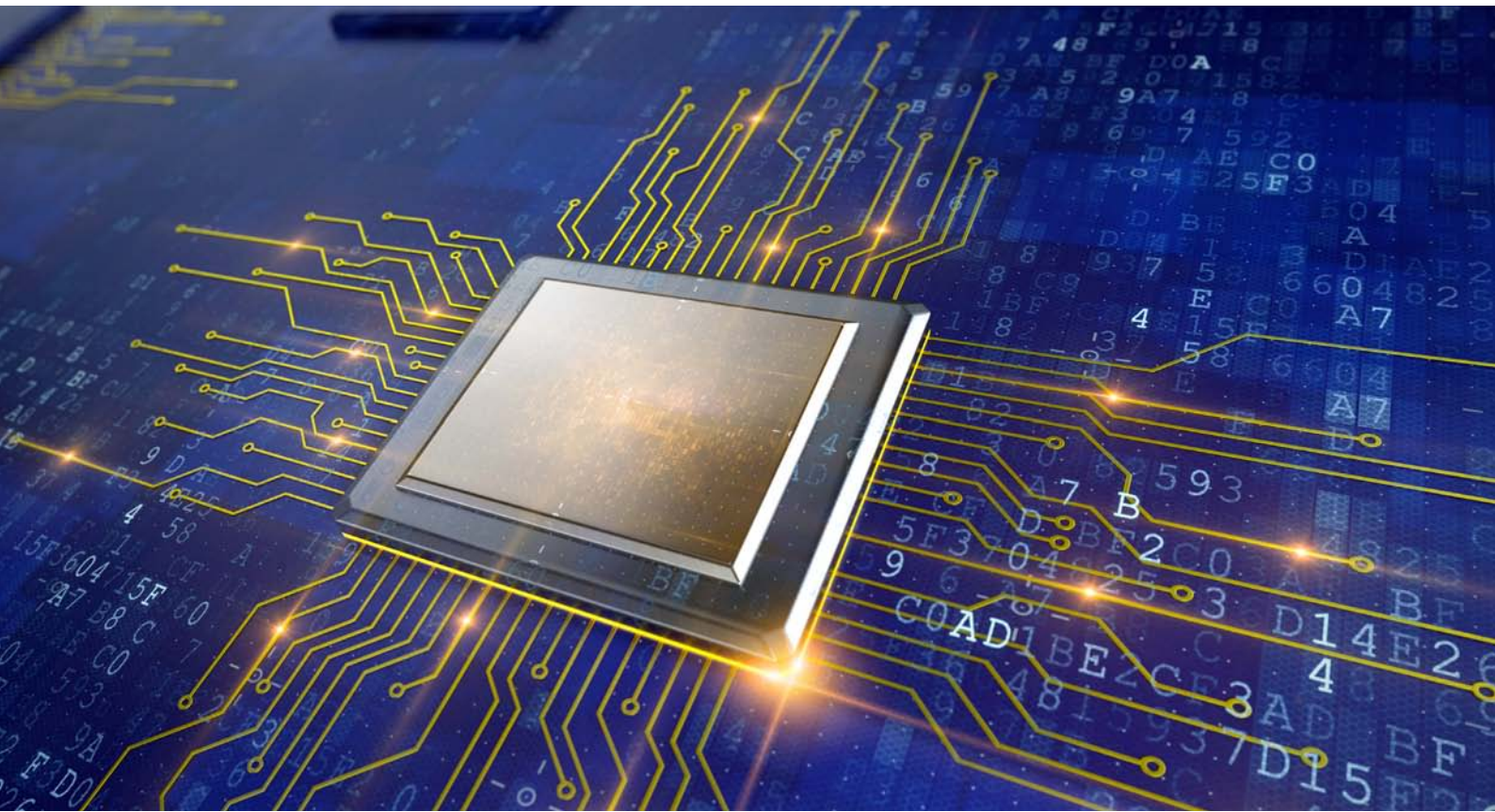


**ZAID GHATTAS**  
Senior Commercial Sales  
Leader, AMD META.

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AMD's high-performance CPUs, accelerators, and adaptive computing products help businesses achieve their transformation goals

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### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The pandemic has been a huge accelerator, driving digital transformation in the Middle East region.
- Organisations are trying to adapt to the remote working model, including taking their businesses to the cloud.
- Companies are struggling to provide power-efficient, high-performance devices to employees for better efficiency.

the company offers products to support this transition.

Organisations also face the challenge of providing power-efficient, high-performance devices to employees since the demand for longer battery life and better computing power to complete tasks effectively is high.

AMD Ryzen PRO processor provides both of these with its on-chip security features. This helps protect the employees and businesses as well.

The company also brings significant advancement with its portfolio of high-performance CPUs, accelerators, data processing units and adaptive computing products such as the latest AMD processors powered by Zen 4 cores.

Frontier, a supercomputer powered by AMD's optimised 3rd generation EPYC CPU and

its instinct accelerators is listed among the top players in the Top 500 list of supercomputers. It also tops the latest Green 500 list that measures the energy efficiency of supercomputers.

Creating a more sustainable business has become a key priority for organisations and more companies are now setting up sustainability and energy efficiency objectives. These organisations can learn from the innovative technologies deployed by some of the world's fastest supercomputers, particularly those developed by AMD.

Going ahead, the company aims to increase energy efficiency for its processors and Instinct GPU accelerators by 30x from 2020 to 2025. It is also driving a competitive energy efficiency goal and expects to achieve it before the deadline. ■

AVEVA

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# MAKING BUSINESSES MORE RESPONSIBLE AND GREENER

Digital technologies enable organisations to use energy efficiently and build low-carbon businesses to meet their sustainability goals.

**C**ompanies must partner to drive sustainability through co-innovation, complementary production across the value chain, and sharing best practices using the latest technologies. Today, technology and digitisation are

crucial to achieving company success.

Advancements in modern digital technologies are helping industries operate better than ever, boosting value generation and business competitiveness as they decarbonise their operations. In an unpredictable

business environment, enterprises are being forced to expedite the onboarding of solutions connected to data and automation to fulfil climate targets.

A new operational paradigm must be adopted to expand connected worker capabilities

AVEVA strives to ensure that its technological advances and offerings are responsible and sustainable. As part of the technology industry, the company can deploy solutions at scale and connect different organisations and initiatives through data. This helps in creating new insights that can be used to address and solve sustainability-related challenges.

To mitigate the current climate crisis, organisations must make maximum use of their existing technologies, as well as innovate to create new solutions that cater to international sustainability goals, too.

One of AVEVA objectives is





**NAYEF BOU  
CHAAYA**

Vice President MEA,  
AVEVA.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Modern technologies are helping industries create value, become competitive, and decarbonise their operations.
- Solutions from AVEVA can help create new insights to address and solve sustainability-related challenges.
- AI and Big Data have the potential to hasten the transformation of enterprises toward sustainability.
- AVEVA aims to help organisations save up to 30% in energy costs and lower their emissions by up to 15%.

to drive sustainability goals for customers and maximise their performance in the most environmentally efficient way. It believes that industries have a role to play in mitigating the climate crisis and the industrial software company recognises its role in monitoring its impact on the environment and regulating its carbon footprint.

Through its software, the company aims to help customers save up to 30% in energy costs and lower their emissions by up to 15%. Fuelling economies with clean energy and replacing coal, gas and oil-fired power stations with renewable energy sources such as wind or solar farms is another pivotal facet of AVEVA's approach.

To cut carbon emissions, businesses must use energy more effectively and less frequently. Despite how simple it may seem, it can be increasingly challenging, particularly in the absence of reliable data. Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, and digital technologies have the potential to hasten the transformation of enterprises toward sustainability.

AVEVA has been instrumental in assisting companies to create energy-related roadmaps and solutions that can lower greenhouse gas emissions. The transition toward low-carbon energy is a growing market and a major business opportunity.

As an industrial software player, the company can help customers use digitalisation to build more resilient businesses and prepare to thrive in a low-carbon future.

The past few months have seen jet fuel consumption drop

dramatically. However, the overall energy consumption has remained relatively stable and the electricity demand has grown. Electricity remains the most efficient way to distribute energy around the world. There is an acceleration of Industry 4.0 for energy distribution and energy supply chains, which in turn, is also accelerating the sustainability agenda.

AVEVA's strong presence in the energy sector provides it with a significant opportunity to help accelerate the global transition to a lower-carbon energy system. From design to operations and analytics, industrial software has a crucial and significant role to play in the energy transition across many industries.

It is interesting to note that organisations are using AVEVA software for different aspects of the energy transition, including emissions reductions, carbon capture and storage. Businesses are also using it for advancing the hydrogen economy, optimisation of biofuel production, and supporting renewable energy generation, transmission and management.

Global biofuels leader, Neste has implemented the AVEVA Unified Supply Chain in the cloud, where the team manages model-building, and production planning in one digital space, allowing them to make quick decisions from anywhere in the world.

The production is optimised and Neste is on the path to achieving its target to become carbon neutral by 2035, as emissions are reduced from the conventional refining and production of renewable diesel with this solution. ■



## BEYOND TECHNOLOGY

# GETTING READY FOR A METAVERSE-DRIVEN BUSINESS

It is time organisations get acquainted with the emerging immersive technology and decide how to tap the new opportunity.

**R**egional companies such as Emirates Airlines, Careem, Talabat, and Zomato, save time and bring in greater convenience as well as new possibilities that never existed before with their digital applications. With banking applications, there is no need to physically enter a bank for transactional and information needs,

saving time and costs.

The UAE E-Government initiatives have also been digital transformation trailblazers by any global standards. These programmes have led to substantial savings on organisations' operating costs. It has also enabled them to launch new services, increasing their revenues and profitability. These examples of digital transformation have substantially enriched the customers' experience in many ways while benefiting the organisation.

The UAE government also supports a thriving innovation ecosystem locally and, in the region, offering incentives to organisations that adopt business strategies embracing digital best practices.

There are many disruptive technologies, and their relevance has a different impact depending on the industry. At Beyond Technology there is a particular focus on Web 3.0, Cloud and virtualisation services and Artificial Intelligence applications in the workplace, Internet of Things, clean energy, metaverse, and cybersecurity to ensure that

the company becomes more technology dependent operating safely and securely.

The metaverse has the potential to change not only the way people live and socialise but also the way business is done. According to Bloomberg, the metaverse market is expected to reach \$800 Billion by 2024. However, there are many unknowns at the moment; metaverse has technical issues like interoperability and standardisation, etc. It also has ethical issues such as security and privacy. These need to be solved first.

Despite these challenges, Beyond Technology recommends that companies start getting acquainted with the metaverse by opening accounts, creating avatars, attending events and forums to see what other brands are doing, and then deciding how each company can tap into this new opportunity. There is nothing better than to be prepared for the metaverse to become a mature technology and ready to be capitalised.

Resistance to change is the most common reason for



slowing down or jeopardising digital transformation initiatives. Budget constraints and hiring the right team to execute the plans with minimal interference from the management are other challenges hampering transformation.

Digital Transformation initiatives must be well planned, with full support and commitment from all levels in an organisation. This also includes training the users on the new systems before taking them to the work environment. Studies have found that regular and senior-level communication during such strategic changes is essential for successful digital transformation projects.

There are some fundamental organisational changes that regional companies must put into play to take advantage of the adoption of digital technologies. Organisations need to create a clear and concise digital adoption strategy tailored to their industry and specific needs.

They should also create dedicated teams or departments to oversee the adoption and implementation process, and create a culture of innovation that encourages employees to experiment with new ideas and technologies. Besides, companies must invest in the right tools and infrastructure to support their digital adoption plans.

The pressure to deliver results in a digital world is immense, but so are the risks associated with not moving forward. Technology and business leaders plan, but companies need to

be confident in their strategies before implementing them.

Companies need help from experts they can trust to eliminate the risk factors. Consultative Technology companies, such as Beyond Technology, have already covered much of these technology implementations in different regions of the world and have substantial experience helping organisations in vendor selection, budget, execution and support.

In the next 3–5 years, governments will start to implement carbon taxes on an organisation's carbon footprint. We also expect greater consumer diligence on purchasing from responsible corporates. Therefore, the metaverse can be one of the alternatives for selling digitally.

Beyond Technology believes that the metaverse must be discussed to pave way for new proposals and raise awareness in the business sector. Hence, the first step for any organisation considering sustainability must be to understand all aspects of its operations, both internal and external. Companies should then assess their current production of toxic residues and carbon, as they need to identify functions that cause high carbon emissions within the organisation. Finally, they need to take regular initiatives to continuously reduce them.

This is important for companies to reduce future carbon taxes and financial impact. It also helps regional enterprises meet their responsibility toward the wellness of societies. ■



**ZOFF KHAN**  
CEO, Beyond Technology  
MEA.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digital transformation has helped organisations make substantial savings in operating costs and launch new services.
- Metaverse has the potential to change the way people live and socialise and also the way business is done.
- Bloomberg expects the metaverse market to reach \$800 Billion by 2024.
- Companies should start by opening metaverse accounts, creating avatars, and understanding what other brands are doing.
- Beyond Technology can help organisations in vendor selection, budget, execution and support.



CIENA

# BUILDING A RELIABLE NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE

Enterprises must evaluate their current network setup to identify intelligent, adaptive and sustainable upgrade options for future capacity needs.

**M**he healthcare sector has been ahead of the curve when it comes to successfully adopting digital solutions. Since the expansive growth of medical data due to the digitalisation of records and new technologies, regional institutions have been providing exemplary services to their patients

using infrastructure that supports high-performance communication.

The metro network infrastructure, an interconnected network of smaller medical devices, ensures quick and real-time transfer of information. Thanks to high-speed optical network connectivity and low latency 5G networks, the industry has been quick to recognise the potential of patient

care that digitalisation can provide, including the likes of remote consultations or even telesurgeries.

A considerable number of the stalled efforts can be narrowed down to inefficient data management. The core of this can be broken into three elements: insecure storage, ineffective delivery, and inaccuracy of data. Experts at Ciena have noted that it often happens in cases where the network is not able to support massive capacities of data and respond to unpredictable bandwidth demands.

The purpose of technology is to build an efficient ecosystem for enterprises. By fusing software-defined control and adaptation with big data analytics, intelligent automation enables service providers to employ in-depth network knowledge to drive adaptive automation of their services and operations. For example, the



operational environment for service providers is becoming more complicated.

Network operators can make truly intelligent automation feasible and manage their organisations more intelligently and effectively by utilising software specifically designed for dynamic Network Functions Virtualisation and Software-defined Networking environments.

While the demands in a new digital world are ever-growing, unreliable network performance is globally a leading obstacle in the digital transformation journey. Executives can stay ahead of the curve by asking whether the current network is static or whether the NOCs have the required technical support in place.

The Adaptive Network from Ciena delivers tailor-made solutions to current, urgent, and emerging needs with strategic network consulting, insights, and optimisation services.

There has been an increasing amount of interest in Web 3.0, especially the metaverse. While the fusion of virtual and real worlds had been in motion for over a decade the pandemic served as a catalyst. With increasing demand to meet virtually, the younger generation has become accustomed to the convenience that the metaverse can provide.

The metaverse offers enhanced experiences and has the potential to change how organisations communicate, from shopping experiences and gaming to how business meetings are conducted and adapted for the virtual

world. With rapidly unfolding technology and constantly evolving demands of end-users, businesses need to adapt their solutions to accommodate the metaverse.

The first step toward building a sustainable metaverse is network reliability. By evaluating the current network setup, an enterprise can identify upgrade opportunities for future capacity needs of creating a stable and reliable network. A survey by Ciena offers insights into emerging metaverse trends in the Middle East.

It is anticipated that the ICT sector will emit up to 5.5% of all carbon emissions by 2025. Further growth in emission levels can be expected as Internet usage becomes more integrated with daily tasks and lives. Therefore, businesses need to evaluate their internal operations and the impact on their carbon footprint.

Ciena's WaveLogic product line has prevented more than 4.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from entering the environment over the course of more than ten years. The WaveLogic 5 Extreme and WaveLogic 5 Nano have also led to over 50% reduction in space and power consumption, compared to the previous generations of technology.

For network operators, relying on sustainably-designed yet power-efficient networks can benefit not only the environment but the financial investments made by their customers. Ciena has also committed to being carbon neutral across global operations by 2024. ■



**PETE HALL**

Regional Managing Director,  
Ciena.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Unreliable network performance can severely hamper the organisation's digital transformation initiatives.
- As the Internet becomes more integrated, businesses will need to evaluate the carbon emission from internal operations.
- Ciena's Adaptive Network delivers tailor-made solutions for existing, urgent, and emerging network needs.
- Intelligent automation can help service providers employ in-depth network knowledge for adaptive automation of their services and operations.

## CLOUD BOX TECHNOLOGIES

# INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY WITH BUSINESS GOALS

Organisations must understand the technologies and how to adopt them for business gains before kicking off their transformation journey.

**A** big drawback of many organisations can be their failure to understand the depth of digital transformation. The current trends of work-from-home, automation, etc. are sometimes mistaken for overall transformation. These are only elements of transformation.

Companies need to understand the distinct components of digital transformation, plan and then implement the concept across the organisation, be it in people or processes.

Transformation is a journey, and each milestone has a different set of criteria. Companies must draw their

strategic plans and allocate the right resources, along with effective applications and software to achieve digital transformation.

Systems integrators such as Cloud Box Technologies can put together the correct blend of requirements to suit the customers' needs within the budget, thanks to their vast experience and partnerships with world-class vendors.

At the start, every member of the organisation must have a good understanding of what are the changes that digital transformation will bring and how it will

support daily activities. They need to understand how the transformation will increase productivity and efficiency, and thereby profitability.

Should there be a dearth of in-house competencies, systems integrators can offer consultancy to enable businesses to understand, strategise, plan and implement these technologies.

The transformation process may, however, need to be adjusted with the changes in technology and adjusted according to the customer's business goals. Hence, one of the biggest challenges of digital transformation is cost estimation and budget.





Organisations need to keep an eye on technologies around IoT and AI and the way it is evolving



It is also important that organisations understand the technology and how to adopt them for business gains. While they may be very attractive there has to be a balance of practicality in their adoption. Having key resources in place is a must while working towards digital transformation; the skills gap can prove to be a major hindrance.

Organisations must also keep an eye on technologies around the Internet of Things and the way it is changing. Another technology that goes hand in hand with IoT is Artificial Intelligent. The world is already witnessing the power of AI across manufacturing, healthcare, banking and finance, logistics, and retail sectors.

It is recommended that organisations tackle their growing business requirements and minimise their electronic footprint to achieve their sustainability goals. For example, they can reduce the carbon footprint of datacentres with efficient hardware and software that can have a significant impact on their objectives.

Yet another approach is to migrate to cloud solutions where on-prem assets are minimised and can have a positive impact on the sustainability journey. Several tools are available for organisations to choose from, and they can be used across the organisation not only within the manufacturing processes but also within the aspects of HR, logistics and supply chain, etc. ■



**RANJITH KAIPPADA**  
Managing Director,  
Cloud Box Technologies.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Many organisations misinterpret work-from-home and automation as digital transformation.
- Experts can help businesses to understand, strategise, plan and implement new technologies.
- Teams must understand how digital transformation will increase productivity and profitability.



DELL TECHNOLOGIES

# DRIVING ENTERPRISE BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Automation of operations, optimisation of employee productivity, and transformation of customer engagement are critical for next-gen enterprises.

**M**any organisations in the region are ahead of their global counterparts in terms of their digital transformation plans. The Dell Technologies Digital Transformation Index study 2021 found that 90% of organisations in UAE and Saudi Arabia have accelerated at least some of their digital transformation programmes, ahead of the global benchmark of 80%.

These forward-looking organisations accomplished in a few months what normally takes years. Among other areas, these regional businesses successfully implemented solutions for the automation of their operations, optimisation of employee productivity, and transformation of customer engagement.

They have subsequently gained business agility, new competitive advantages, and revenue growth.

Some organisations struggle while taking up

digital transformation projects due to limited time and resources. There is also a need to change internal culture and mindsets, have the right skill sets and expertise, and get the right technology partners.

Letting go of old systems is also important, but organisations need to take care of vendor lock-in and hidden legacy systems. Moreover, understanding and analysing new trends allow businesses to prepare for new opportunities and grasp them.

Instead of transforming by adopting multiple technologies, focusing on changes that align with business priorities results in a real competitive advantage. Having customer-centric goals is also essential and it can increase the value of the products or services offered, enabling resiliency and business continuity.

Digital transformation brings a new opportunity to every department within an organisation. Dell research shows that globally, more than half of the employees may not always have the motivation or energy to act on digital transformation in

the workplace.

Human progress is integral to digital progress. To maximise this potential, organisations need to ensure that internal skills capabilities are developed at scale and speed.

Attaining the C-suite's full backing of digital transformation strategies can help make the most of these investments, spurring an internal culture of digital innovation. Implementing appropriate change management and employee training initiatives throughout the transformation process is also equally essential.

Modernising an enterprise requires placing people, processes, and technology in the best positions for success. At the centre of this equation are people. When technology and human ingenuity are aligned, they can have a powerful transformative effect. However, many executives are still struggling to close the digital skill gaps while some are facing a lack of employee buy-in and a workforce culture that is resistant to change.

Keeping up with disruptive and emerging technologies is

essential to staying ahead. There are a few things IT leaders can do to stay up to date with the wealth of information. They can start by engaging with their technical or engineering teams on recent disruptive or useful technologies. They can also research newer technologies that can solve existing business problems; these challenges can be the drivers behind quick technology adoption.

The technologies of tomorrow will enable us to reimagine the way the world connects and collaborates. One can foresee great advancements in areas such as quantum computing, the use of digital twins, robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and edge computing.

These abilities will ultimately underpin new human-machine partnerships that enable organisations to provide goods and services that are truly innovative.

Metaverse essentially describes an alternative place or space, something distinct from reality. However, it also has more to do with the mixing of the physical and digital in real-time to create truly immersive experiences. Hence, the use of the metaverse experiences may expand significantly, from gaming to retail, healthcare, automotive, and other verticals.

These experiences are best developed with an intelligence-driven platform and a compute everywhere IT infrastructure. An intelligence-driven platform is a digital workspace that can securely manage devices, applications, content, and infrastructure.

The concept of compute everywhere IT infrastructure is also about moving to decentralised, real-time computation. This enables the interconnectivity and interoperability that will define immersive metaverse experiences.

While there's a lot of work ahead, investing in digital infrastructure across cloud and edge environments can give enterprises a definite head start.

Another big concern is climate change which affects everyone. Strong environmental, social, and governance frameworks are the starting point for all organisations to develop and measure their performance. Achieving real progress requires thoughtful goal-setting and rigorous measurement. Dell Technologies, for example, emphasises Environmental, Social, and Governance or ESG measures. This ensures that the company achieves its business goals and also delivers positive results for all stakeholders.

A strong ESG strategy also helps organisations mitigate risks, innovate through challenges, and build trust.

Organisations can become role models by optimising their supply chains, leveraging green technologies and data centres, investing in circular innovation, and championing new ways of working. While the practicalities will vary for each organisation, it is essential that they listen to their customers, partners, investors, team members, and communities to understand where to focus and develop their efforts accordingly. ■



**MOHAMMED AMIN**  
SVP META,  
Dell Technologies.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Time and resource constraints often impact an organisation's digital transformation initiatives.
- For real competitive advantage, organisations should focus on changes that align with business priorities.
- Enterprises should focus on compute everywhere infrastructure for decentralised, real-time computation.
- Digital infrastructure across cloud and edge environments can help enterprises kickstart the transformation journey.
- Businesses also need to take care of vendor lock-in and hidden legacy systems.

EATON

# STEPPING UP FOR SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

A structured transformation strategy, well-defined digital policy, and clear technology vision minimise disruption as the business undergoes change.

**T**ransformation is hard, but digital change is harder. Businesses need to have the correct digital policies and vision in place. They need to have the correct guidelines and a plan to transform their journey on the digital landscape.

Non-traditional computing technologies cannot be ignored even as new technologies take over. Computing technologies have evolved from traditional to digital, and are now

moving towards becoming neuromorphic which will allow them to be more human-like.

DNA data storage tackles the challenge of massive data storage and longevity. This technology enables the storage of unprecedented amounts of data for thousands of years in a small space and a less corruptible form.

It does this by encoding binary data in the base pairs

of synthetic DNAs. Storage of petabytes, exabytes or even yottabytes of data in mere grams of synthetic DNA is possible.

Distributed cloud is where cloud services are distributed to different physical locations, but the operation, governance and evolution remain the responsibility of the public cloud provider. This means the services are where the customer needs them but are still the responsibility of the public cloud.

With more frequent





**ASHRAF YEHIA**  
Managing Director,  
Eaton Middle East.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Computing technologies have evolved from traditional to digital, and now becoming neuromorphic.
- Businesses are stepping up innovation and using technology to find climate change solutions.
- Employees are the key to change and organisations need to build employee capabilities for the future.

climate-related extreme weather scenarios hitting the headlines, the scramble to apply innovation, ambition and vision to the challenge of climate change is urgent. Many businesses are stepping up to find climate change solutions.

For business, there should not be any room for concessions in climate change initiatives, promoting a profound and stable sense of human responsibility, they need a rapid product design and rollout.

Achieving national net-zero targets will require extensive collaboration between central and local governments, industry and across supply chains. Cities are particularly well-placed to drive decarbonisation because they are where demand for infrastructure, services and goods are concentrated. Cities are where public, private and community agendas come together.

Regional enterprises have lacked a transformation mindset, whereas CEOs and CIOs need to help the business sell and support the project. They need to step up and spearhead the ambitions of the project, put the correct culture, change management and identify the resistors. They need to train them and turn them into digital transformation champions.

Employees are custodians of a company brand and organisations need to build capabilities of the workforce for the future and empower them to work in new ways. Having digital platforms mean



DNA data storage can tackle the challenge of massive data storage and longevity



more responsibility, therefore organisations will also need to communicate frequently via traditional and digital methods.

Companies may not have the right talent to move the digital transformation within an organisation. They need to bring in change agents who have worked in big efforts and pair them with business experts.

With organisational change strategies, companies can avoid stagnation while minimising disruption. Preparation is integral for success, especially during a change effort. But one cannot prepare without knowing the change happening around.

The best way is to understand what change management models exist and then figure out what best suits the company or the team. ■



EQUINIX

# LEADING BUSINESSES THROUGH DIGITAL DISRUPTION

Winners must adopt efficient digital processes and business models, and gain data-driven insight to maximise their digital transformation RoI.

**W**hile digitalisation during the pandemic was born out of necessity, digital-first business models appear set to continue into the new economic reality. According to the Equinix Global Tech Trends Survey, GTTS, 53% of UAE IT leaders said they are accelerating their company's digital evolution due to COVID-19.

Digital-first goes far beyond cloud-first. To drive a successful digital-first strategy, digital infrastructure must be designed to enable a business to be a disruptor and not one of the disruptions. This means it must meet the challenge through a combination of the digital core, digital ecosystems, and the digital edge in an automated, flexible, edge-to-cloud consumption model.

Successful leaders put digital technology at the centre of business strategy and competitive advantage. Businesses ought to adopt highly efficient digital processes, introduce revolutionary competencies to the workforce, and implement new business models to achieve digital transformation goals.

Businesses need to consider new strategies and gain data-driven insights to maximise their chances of digital transformation success.

Digital transformation requires a business-driven approach to cloud migration. Migrating to the cloud is not just about changing technologies; it is also about changing processes and how businesses provision their hybrid IT infrastructure.

For a successful digital transformation,

## TOP TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS

# BT



**KAMEL  
AL-TAWIL**  
Managing Director,  
Middle East and North  
Africa, Equinix.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 53% of UAE IT leaders indicate they have accelerated the company's digital evolution due to COVID-19.
- Digital-first goes far beyond cloud-first and is designed primarily to enable a business to be a disruptor.
- Migrating to the cloud requires changing the processes and defining how to provision the hybrid IT infrastructure.
- A modern, distributed digital infrastructure is critical for businesses to deliver the true promise of the metaverse.

## TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS

organisations need to team up with partners to find new skills and services. They also need to connect with customers to better understand their expectations and priorities and meet these expectations with the right digital products and services in the right places.

The transformation also requires interconnection as it enables private, dedicated connectivity between businesses and their partners or customers, helping them ensure reliability, low latency, and data security and privacy.

Due to the increase in companies rigorously adopting new digital business models, this technological boom has created a significant digital divide for businesses still operating with traditional digital infrastructure. Businesses may encounter agility, speed, and security challenges that prevent them from delivering world-class digital products or services to meet their customers' evolving needs.

It is a demanding process for digital leaders to innovate their existing business infrastructure. Equinix's on-demand and interconnection services help digital leaders to achieve their goals from anywhere and transform their digital infrastructure effectively.

As organisations move rapidly to the cloud and deliver services consumed at or near the edge, they also need high performance, security, choice, and access to applications, anywhere they do business globally. On the right platform, they can interconnect and bring together the foundational digital infrastructure required to modernise corporate IT and better utilise services such as Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things and Big Data.

The concept of the metaverse goes back decades, but the excitement around it has never been higher than it is now. Indeed, the metaverse is tomorrow's technology, and cannot be achieved using yesterday's IT

infrastructure. Until enterprises break free from the traditional approach to IT and replace it with modernised, distributed digital infrastructure, they will not be able to deliver the true promise of the metaverse.

Delivering the capabilities and capacity the metaverse demands will require an ecosystem of partners to work together. These include the cloud service providers that help quickly scale compute and enable rapid, reliable data migration; network service providers; and vendor-neutral interconnection partners that bring the whole thing together.

Edge computing holds the key to powering the metaverse. Edge computing reduces latency, improves response times and saves bandwidth, making it perfect for many metaverse use cases. It also puts applications and data close to users, giving users the local computing power necessary while minimising network-based latency and network-congestion risk.

Sustainability has become an important business priority. According to the latest Equinix Global Tech Trends Survey, 82% of tech decision-makers indicate that sustainability is now one of their organisation's most important drivers, and 85% say they are measuring and actively trying to limit the environmental impact of their IT equipment.

Legacy datacentres use a significant amount of energy to power digital business processes. This is why Equinix has deployed new technologies to help optimise energy consumption at every logical level in the datacentre, from HVAC units to virtual storage to server processors.

The company has also launched its first Co-Innovation Facility, enabling partners to work with the company and conduct trials and develop innovative solutions for the datacentre of the future. ■

# SETTING PRIORITIES FOR NEW MARKET NEEDS

**R**egional businesses are successful with digital and business transformation solutions when they keep the customer in mind and lead with innovation. Organisations that meet the evolving expectations of their customers and use innovation to stay relevant will rise above the competition and keep pace with the industry.

to automate to combat the cyber skills shortage. By automating processes and mapping that to customer priorities businesses can scale to meet the requirements of the future.

implementation they're looking for.

Additionally, an organisation's inherent culture plays a major role in making or breaking new initiatives. Regardless of changing products, internal operations or how a company engages with customers, digital transformation always needs to involve getting different groups together. Doing this cohesively and effectively can be difficult at times, leading to stalls in the digital or business





**IHAB MOAWAD**  
Vice President,  
Forescout, Middle East,  
Turkey, and Africa.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digital and business transformation requires organisations to adopt customers' first approach and lead with innovation.
- To leverage digital technologies effectively, businesses need to evaluate skillset gaps and plug them.
- Putting together a change management strategy and adopting new tools and processes can also be challenging.
- Automation of processes is critical for scaling up operations and meeting future business needs.

transformation initiative.

To leverage the adoption of digital technologies effectively, organisations need to address the skills shortage. This can be done by evaluating existing employee skillsets and the gaps that need to be filled.

In addition to the skills shortage, a confluence of internal and external challenges like the exponential growth of connected devices and rapidly evolving threat landscape can accelerate organisational timelines to automate. IT and OT convergence, siloed point security products, alert fatigue, and unactionable alerts also drive the change.

By identifying these gaps and acknowledging the investment they need to make, organisations can look to bring in the right talent and solutions needed to meet accelerating digital transformation.

When taking up a new initiative, organisations must consider everything, including how people will react to the change, its impact the customer relation, the cost, and how it can be aligned to the business goals.

The biggest challenge would be putting together a change management strategy and the adoption of new tools and processes. Having a strong change management culture is vital for success. The same goes with the adoption of new tools and processes; training and continuous support have to be provided to the employees to become productive and proficient, allowing them to understand the value of these



Training and continuous support help improve employee engagement for faster adoption of new processes



new processes.

The growth in Artificial Intelligence is playing a significant role in every organisation. Another breakthrough is the importance of security and privacy. The amount of data is growing, and so is the sophistication of threat actors, creating a perfect storm for security issues which challenge organisations to build disruptive solutions.

Similarly, the metaverse presents an ever-changing digital future that businesses will need to adapt to whether it is the expansion to 5G, AI or the cloudification of solutions and innovations.

To remain competitive in the industry, all businesses will need to build and maintain sustainable solutions and relationships with customers by identifying what the value proposition is and how it fits into the customer's goals and business objectives. ■



## GULF BUSINESS MACHINES

# SEEDING THE CLOUD FOR NEXT-GEN ENTERPRISES

Organisations must utilise cloud services to create an agile and scalable infrastructure for delivering a successful digital transformation.

**D**igital resiliency has been at the heart of the digital transformation journey for regional organisations. Many organisations are leveraging cloud services today to become digitally resilient and subsequently business resilient. The GBM Cloud Report released earlier this year indicates that 56% of surveyed regional organisations followed a cloud-first strategy in 2021.

Cloud services provide organisations with scalable, fast-to-deploy, integrated digital platforms for business continuity while enabling them to launch products faster and drive insight-led decisions from their data. Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Big

Data, and analytics are also being incorporated by organisations for developing future-ready IT infrastructure and reimagining how technology can improve their businesses.

Although most organisations are undergoing digital transformation, they are at different levels of maturity, stuck in a digital deadlock and unable to accelerate their initiative. As organisations strive to break out of this digital deadlock, they need to overcome significant organisational and technology barriers.

Companies must think long-term when adopting new technologies, by focusing on changes which support business priorities rather than adopting multiple technologies, all at once.

# BT

## TOP TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS



**AMR REFAAT**  
CEO Gulf Business  
Machines.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Organisations may get stuck in a digital deadlock, unable to accelerate their transformation initiatives.
- With scalable, fast-to-deploy, integrated platforms, the cloud can facilitate enterprise digital transformation.
- GBM Cloud Report indicates that 56% of regional organisations adopted the cloud-first strategy in 2021.
- Cloud allows businesses to scale up or down and deploy new applications quickly, thereby reducing energy usage.

## TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS

Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a surge in digital transformation initiatives among regional organisations. The focus is on upgrading legacy infrastructure and introducing emerging technologies such as AI, ML, and edge computing.

A key facilitator of digital transformation is also the increased adoption of the cloud, and the year's GBM cloud report shows that more than half of the surveyed organisations are utilising cloud services to create agile and scalable infrastructure, which is improving their ability to expand and optimise operations based on market requirement.

By continually transforming the legacy infrastructure and building a culture of innovation, organisations will be able to effectively integrate newer technologies with minimal disruption to their operations.

The IT landscape is constantly evolving and IT leaders must be agile and open to innovation to create a business model that continues to grow and push boundaries. Besides, the remote working model will drive organisations to focus on increased collaboration across the workforce through stronger channels of communication. It will also create a need for robust cybersecurity measures to protect the business and operations.

Globally, several countries have rolled out 5G services including the GCC which has been an early adopter. The coming years will see further uptake of the technology due to an increase in edge computing. 5G will enable unprecedented levels of connectivity and revolutionise the way people live and work. It is also expected to significantly boost the adoption of the latest technologies.

Metaverse is another technology that gained currency in the last year across industries with businesses exploring its potential to reach a wider audience base. However, companies

require sophisticated technological infrastructure to create their presence within the metaverse.

Cloud is a key driver for the metaverse, considering the storage and processing power required for companies to engage in this universe. Metaverse also brings together a range of other technologies including AI and the Internet of Things to connect the virtual world to reality and enable its scalability and automation.

Companies, however, need to ensure they have progressed substantially on the path to digital transformation before they decide to be a part of the metaverse.

The other key aspect of any technology adoption is sustainability, which is no longer just a good-to-have factor for the business. It has now become one of the pillars around which companies must design their operating models. What is also obvious is that sustainability is intrinsic to business continuity, as it enables digital transformation to take place in an environmentally-friendly manner while enhancing company performance in many aspects.

As regional enterprises look to fast-track sustainability into their business, organisations must consider incorporating technologies that can have the maximum impact on their sustainability goals. Emerging technologies such as AI and IoT enable intelligent automation, which in turn allows for the reduction of carbon emission and energy expenditures, and brings in deeper insights into enhancing operational performance.

Cloud is also a key technology that allows businesses to scale up or down and deploy new applications quickly, which can have a significant impact on energy usage and carbon reduction. ■

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# EMBRACING THE DIGITAL BUSINESS DRIVERS

**TOP  
TRANSFORMATION  
CHAMPIONS**

To reap the benefits of digital transformation, enterprises must revise their business strategies and increase employee engagement at all levels.

**W**hen it comes to adopting digital and business transformation solutions, the industrial and manufacturing sectors top the list. This is an international, as well as a regional trend, especially considering that Dubai and the GCC are home to leading multinational enterprises.

World Economic Forum report indicates the top five sectors leading the digital transformation in the manufacturing industry. These include semiconductor, electronics, pharmaceutical, energy and chemicals, and logistics sectors. In addition, the emergence of e-commerce leaders such as Amazon, Alibaba, and others has influenced traditional logistics companies to become more agile and flexible.

No wonder then, the logistics sector is expected

to go through a larger transformation in the years to come, especially with COVID-19 fuelling online shopping in a big way, globally.

The massive changes brought about by digital transformation also bring in their own set of concerns. Some of the most common challenges or reasons for failure include a lack of a clear strategy outlining business priorities, talent shortage, and resistance to change.

Research by McKinsey points out that 70% of all digital transformation programmes fail due to employee resistance and lack of support from management.

Digital and business transformation require collaboration between multiple stakeholders, teams, and departments. Failure to involve all departments in communication and decision-making leads to failed projects.

A common mistake that many enterprises make is to focus more on technology than on the people. Understanding how employees are evolving and adjusting to the change is key to the success of any technology-led transformative initiative.

Enterprises must also recognise the importance of involving CMOs, CIOs, and business units in technology initiatives. In other words, technology is no longer a domain that should be solely run by the IT department. Instead, a clear strategy, employee support, and collaboration are key to success in adopting digital and business solutions.

Top executives often face multiple challenges while adopting digital and business transformation solutions. To deal with these, business leaders should regularly update their management strategies to suit the current business climate.

It is expected that further adoption of technology and business solutions will lead to more changes in the way people work and conduct business. Hence, the management needs to be agile and adjust its system to accommodate further changes.

Besides updating management strategies, business leaders must also stay focused on evolving consumer needs. Also, company culture is often underestimated when it comes to business transformation; it is arguably the most important determinant of success.

Successful adoption of digital tools requires being ready to make big changes in the daily work process and embrace new ways of doing things. Enterprise leaders have a large role to play to ensure their employees are

well-supported.

Technologies that can simplify user experience will be one of the biggest disruptors in the next few years. For example, 5G technology is expected to make voice calls and video calls easier and more accessible. In addition, Unsupervised Machine Learning or UML will disrupt how we leverage data for predictions and intelligence.

UML works without data labelling or training and is therefore expected to enable insights not previously possible. Human intelligence-based robotics and automation will also significantly change jobs as we know them today and create another level of user experience.

Similarly, the metaverse is complex and the idea of emulating reality raises a lot of concerns about data privacy and security as well as the physical and psychological effects of this technology.

Enterprises must consider how the metaverse will impact labour and employment, and their operations. Most importantly, enterprises are often compelled to implement new and emerging technologies for marketing purposes. However, there is a need to have a long-term plan for the metaverse as it is expected to take at least a decade until it fully becomes a reality.

From a technical perspective, enterprises must examine the impact of technologies enabling the metaverse, including Artificial Intelligence, the Internet of Things, blockchain and Big Data on jobs and industries. This also raises questions about accountability in the virtual world, including legal and ethical adjustments. ■



### **PROFESSOR PAUL J HOPKINSON**

Head of the School of Social Sciences and Edinburgh Business School Dubai, Academic Director, Heriot-Watt Online.

### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Nearly 70% of all digital transformation programmes fail due to employee resistance and lack of management support.
- Lack of a clear strategy outlining business priorities and talent shortage impact enterprise digital initiatives.
- Culture, the biggest factor of success, is often underestimated when it comes to driving business transformation.
- Business leaders must regularly update their strategies as per consumer needs and business climate.
- Adoption of digital tools requires being ready for changes in the work process and the ability to embrace new ways of doing things.



ICEWARP

# CREATING MEANINGFUL VALUE FOR CUSTOMERS

For successful digital transformation, organisations need to adopt a fresh, cutting-edge approach to doing something that is core to the business.

**T**he economies, communities, and long-term viability of the Middle East are all being significantly impacted by digital. Regional entrepreneurs view the scale and speed of digital business transformation or DBT as both dangerous and exciting.

Digital transformation is fundamentally about both organisational and technological change. Regional enterprises in the retail, real estate, travel and tourism, manufacturing, and healthcare industries in the region have been able to strike the right balance to successfully adopt digital and business transformation solutions.

Today, digital transformation has come a long way from being a buzzword to becoming imperative for business success. However, its failures continue to plague businesses. Most

digital initiatives sputter before they take full effect due to several reasons, including lack of transformation goals, absence of a change management strategy and internal resistance. It is also impacted by the pace of change and poor adoption of new technologies.

Nevertheless, enterprises can take control and overturn the situation in the near to medium term with the right discipline and focus. Organisations can also leverage four key transformations while adopting digital technologies. These include process transformation, business model transformation, domain transformation, and cultural or organisational transformation.

Adopting new software, technology, and processes is just one aspect of digital transformation; organisations need to adopt a

## TOP TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS

# BT



**PRAMOD SHARDA**  
CEO, IceWarp Middle East and India.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digital transformation is fundamentally about both organisational and technological change
- Entrepreneurs view the scale and speed of digital business transformation as both dangerous and exciting.
- The B2B sector is dominated by emerging technologies like augmented reality and virtual reality.
- Edge computing can help organisations get cloud-like processing capacity with fewer latency issues.
- Technologies can enable businesses to reduce carbon emissions and hasten the transition to a circular economy.

## TRANSFORMATION CHAMPIONS

completely fresh, cutting-edge approach to doing something that is core to the business.

Lack of change management strategy, however, will continue to remain a challenge for the senior management of enterprises. The complexity of software and subsequent driving of the same technology, new tools and the process can raise concerns for the management to tackle without a digital transformation strategy in place.

The absence of proper IT skills, security concerns and budget constraints may also need to be solved by the top executives.

Transformation of business processes with technology and adoption of innovative business models is crucial for successful transformation. Also, one of the main contributors to successful digital transformation is the cultural transformation of the organisation.

Instilling collaboration into the system to empower employees and make them more agile as well as presenting them with growth opportunities is key to leveraging the benefits of the transformation.

The B2B sector is being dominated by emerging technologies like augmented reality and virtual reality. Edge computing will streamline the process of getting closer to cloud-like processing capacity with fewer latency difficulties, along with other predicted changes in the automotive and robotic sectors.

A much more realistic consumer experience for anything from fashion and technology to art will be made possible by the metaverse. It is understandable how one would think such cutting-edge technology may make cities and other physical areas obsolete. However, the truth is that this metaverse, like every significant previous wave

of the invention before it, complements locality rather than replaces it.

Physical location will become a crucial component of an enterprise, especially due to the future's dependency on the availability of advanced IT infrastructure. To attract and connect talent, businesses will need to think more strategically than ever before about where to locate their offices and innovation hubs, where to locate their retail locations to draw in customers and increase brand awareness, and more generally how to balance their physical and digital footprints.

The relationship between sustainability, technology, and business is a synergistic one. Resilience and sustainability performance must be included in business performance measurement for regional enterprises as well.

Businesses must move quickly to use technology that can reduce carbon emissions and hasten the transition to a circular economy. They have the power to promote sustainability not only internally but also throughout the broader industry ecosystem. They can affect the wider supply chain and offer their clients eco-friendly alternatives.

Companies can promote sustainability not only along their supply chains but also throughout the entire geographic scope of their operations by leveraging their economic weight and industry knowledge to create awareness, disseminate information, and introduce the technology needed to support sustainable business. ■

IFS

# ENABLING TANGIBLE SUSTAINABILITY OUTCOMES

To kick start the sustainability journey, businesses must define the target, and provide technology tools and training for teams to achieve it.

**T**here is an increasing awareness among businesses that they need to operate sustainably and that digital solutions can help them navigate the environmental goals they must achieve. There is also a realisation that digitalisation can enable greater visibility across business operations and help detect areas that need to be streamlined to optimise processes.

To kickstart their sustainability journey, organisations must begin a dialogue with vendors who have a similar outlook and can design a strategy with clearly identifiable and quantifiable goals. Technology providers on the other hand must be conscious of the value

they can deliver to achieve sustainable operations.

What matters is that organisations must start this journey regardless of how small it may seem. They must understand that sustainability is not a one-time process. It is a continuous drive, and efforts must be made to extend these processes across the business for an overall impact.

Companies must identify key advancements in technology and use them for their financial as well as environmental fitness since the two are often intrinsically linked. They can include Artificial Intelligence to help them in functions such as quality control, maintenance, logistics and fleet management, etc.

Companies can also use



**VINCENT  
CARVALHO**

Regional President,  
APJ and MEA, IFS.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digitalisation enables greater visibility across business operations and optimises processes.
- Businesses must use AI to help in functions such as quality control, maintenance, logistics, and fleet management.
- Technology tools can help organisations analyse and capture data on the impact of their sustainability efforts.
- Sustainability is not a one-time process; businesses must extend these to other functions across the organisation.

ERP systems to manage organisation-wide workings while taking care of other aspects such as supply chain management and HR. These practices also contribute toward tangible sustainability outcomes.

In today's digital age, organisations have a massive amount of data and more often, they are overwhelmed with the volume of information. Businesses must use the right tools to analyse and capture relevant statistics that will help in demonstrating their

sustainability results within and outside the organisation.

AI can play an important role in this and help provide effective tools to understand how the data is connected to ESG or environmental, social and governance. This will help create a better reporting system.

With the best minds working together alongside the most advanced and innovative solutions, the need is to have well-defined targets that the teams can look forward to achieving. ■

# HARNESSING THE POWER OF THE VIRTUAL WORLD

Businesses that can swiftly define policy to enable ownership of virtual assets and services will be the first ones to reap benefits from the metaverse.

**I**n an ever-changing digital landscape, adopting digital and business transformation solutions has helped regional enterprises keep up with the speed of change and succeed. From increased revenues to better customer service, it has made businesses more efficient and effective at what they do.

With digital technology, data and analytics, and a new digital business strategy, regional enterprises get a clearer insight to further improve and enhance their services. In manufacturing, supply chain costs are reduced with predictive analytics. Banking trends have evolved to cardless payments and branchless banking. Digitisation in retail and healthcare has improved customer experiences and patient care.

By 2027, the sixth generation of connectivity solutions will be taking over the tech sector paving a path for mixed and extended reality to become a norm across various industries in the region as well as further construction of smart cities. There is potential for technological disruptions in

healthcare with game-changers such as gene technology, telehealth, human-computer interfaces, and automation and robotics.

Among the new technologies, the metaverse is the next wave that businesses need to use to their advantage. The world has only just begun to understand the vast digital world and the opportunities that it has to offer for individuals and businesses alike.

The metaverse will encourage changes in consumer behaviour, more investments and an increase in the use of cryptocurrency. This disrupts the business as we know it as they will now have to exist across two different worlds, the physical and virtual. This will increase global connectivity and accessibility to education, healthcare, retail, business, and other services, virtually.

Implementation of the new business models has helped reduce costs while optimising operations and improving organisational capabilities. However, the implementation of new solutions also tends to be a hurdle to jump over for many enterprises. It usually boils down to the process, the people and the culture at the company.

Siloed ways of working,

limited funding or technological resources can also drive the transformation to a halt. Enterprises may also lack the skills required to see the business and digital transformations through from start to end.

For the success of any digital and business transformation initiatives, the team must be willing to incorporate the new solutions with the business model and adapt them. Resistance to change and risk aversion can hinder the process.

Organisational changes are usually difficult and complex. To streamline the process, there needs to be effective user onboarding and a well-thought-out strategy, including a digital-first culture so that the employees can be prepared to adopt new technologies. They also need to be aware of the role, importance, and benefits of digital and business transformation to assimilate new solutions into the business model.

Enterprises must also invest in learning and development to train the team to combine the new knowledge of data analysis with their existing knowledge of machines and processes. It is crucial to support the team through the transformation process to reduce organisational

aversion and adopt newer technologies and methodologies faster.

Similarly, organisations need to conduct internal workshops to engage employees at various levels to share plans and progress and discuss how their respective roles can contribute to the adoption of digital technologies.

The lack of a change management strategy is a key challenge as any organisation needs to have clear change management in place for better adoption of digital and business transformation solutions.

Like with all new processes and solutions, the top executives may face challenges when it comes to executing and adopting new business models. They will need to consider the skills of the team, hybrid working environments, cybersecurity threats, internal changes, and technology shortages.

The introduction of new transformational solutions calls for individuals with specialised technical skills to drive digital transformation. There will need to be tighter cybersecurity solutions to account for any hybrid working environments and larger digital infrastructures to manage cybersecurity threats. With the global IT chip shortage currently, executives would need to prepare their resources and plan as well.

For businesses to embrace the new virtual world, investing in upskilling and recruitment to have a specialised team with the right technical skills is important. They will have to keep up with the latest technologies in the market and stay ahead of the curve. Access to 5G, cloud computing and

supporting technologies will be a necessity.

A strategy needs to be in place to identify the gaps and opportunities in the metaverse for the business. Enterprises need to finetune their presence and have a policy around virtual assets to enable ownership of virtual items and services within the metaverse. Besides, organisations must put in place a framework to prepare and protect the business from cyberattacks, cyber fraud, and privacy threats.

Companies across industries also need to focus on environmental issues. Global business is a major cause of climate change, but it is also a driver of solutions. In assessing business performance, resilience and sustainability must be considered. As the world moves toward a circular economy, technology can play a key role in managing carbon emissions and accelerating progress.

The roadmap for incorporating sustainability in business is fairly simple. The journey begins with defining the vision, mission, and values, followed by benchmarking and assessing the current performance.

To plan and set sustainability goals, organisations must engage employees and set up a sustainability team. Implementing the plan, however, requires effective communication policies and practices. Analysis of results is equally important for celebrating successes and communicating them, as well as setting sustainability goals and improvement paths for the future.

It is recommended that regional enterprises adopt an annual sustainability goal and make visible achievements on the same with their employees and by engaging with communities at large. ■



**USSAMA  
DAHABIYEH**  
CEO Injazat.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 6G will take over the tech sector by 2027, paving the way for mixed and extended reality to become a norm.
- Gene technology, man-machine interface, automation, and robotics can transform the healthcare sector.
- Among the new technologies, the metaverse is the next wave that businesses need to use to their advantage.
- Siloed ways of working, limited funding or technological resources can halt the transformation drive.
- Businesses must put in place teams with the right technical skills before they embrace the new virtual world.

KASPERSKY

# BUILDING CITADEL FOR A SECURE DIGITAL ENTERPRISE

Securing digital assets can be challenging but the immunity-based approach can help create IT systems that are inherently secure and safe.



**C**ybersecurity, along with compliance and data usage, has become a key strategic priority and one of the main pillars of any digital transformation initiative. Enterprises may fail or stall due to the lack of security, IT security team under-staffing, and a lack of high-level expertise.

The world is faced with too many security incidents to process, analyse, triage, and respond to effectively within a limited timeframe. Trust and data sharing compliance issues increase as digital infrastructure broadens in scope. Enterprises also suffer from a lack of visibility and evidence collection challenges during post-breach analysis.

Today, top executives across the world are facing

the most sophisticated contemporary cyber threats. To deal with it, businesses must adapt to ongoing challenges. However, in a changing threat environment, the security operations centres are not fully equipped with advanced technologies or powered with threat intelligence, and most importantly staffed by professionals equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise.

A Security Operations Centre or SOC is the most important and successful part of the digital and business transformation process that is equipped with technologies, security intelligence and knowledge that help it to adapt to the ongoing challenges in a changing threat environment.



**AMIR KANAAN**  
Managing Director,  
Middle East, Turkey and  
Africa, Kaspersky.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There are too many security incidents to process, analyse, triage, and respond to effectively within a limited timeframe.
- Enterprises suffer from a lack of visibility and evidence collection challenges during post-breach analysis.
- The SOC is equipped with technologies and security intelligence to deal with changing threat environments.
- Kaspersky's immunity-based approach helps enterprises operate freely without the need for additional security features.

With over two decades of constant threat research and experience in complex cybersecurity projects, Kaspersky can power enterprise SOC at every level for greater efficiency in fighting increasingly sophisticated threats.

Cyber Immunity lies at the heart of Kaspersky's immunity-based approach that enables the creation of IT systems capable of performing their functions in an aggressive environment without additional and applied security features.

Most intelligent systems today are designed without security being considered a primary goal. The use of

vulnerable software in cyber-physical systems, which are multiplying, creates a situation where cyber threats increasingly endanger the safety of humans in the physical world.

Kaspersky decided to change this: the company's specialists created a concept for designing IT systems with innate immunity.

Cyber Immunity can help create IT systems that are inherently secure and safe. An information system can be said to be immune when most types of cyberattacks directed at it proves ineffective and cannot impact the key functions envisioned during the design phase. ■



KYNDRYL

# COMMUNICATION DRIVES THE CHANGE

To keep the team engaged and get user feedback, organisations must communicate the change agenda, and the start and finish line.

**H**aving a coherent structure will help enterprises with their digital transformation. First and foremost, it is fundamental that regional businesses set accurate digitisation objectives. These digitisation objectives need to closely align with the business model.

So far, regional enterprises have been successful in prioritising productivity, increasing sales, reducing time to market, and reducing costs through digitisation. In retrospect, enterprises should always keep in mind that digital transformation begins and ends with the business.

A few elements that can lead to the failure of any transformation

initiatives include the lack of alignment to business outcomes and low levels of internal communication. The two elements are crucial for encouraging cultural transformation and motivating employees to embrace it.

Communication is often a disregarded aspect of digital transformation. However, it is important to inform the stakeholders and define the start and finish line, as also celebrate small wins in the process. This helps to keep the team engaged and get continuous feedback from the users.

The understanding that digital transformation is not just about technology, and it requires a multidisciplinary strategy which involves technical, business and



**GUSTAVO ALVAREZ**  
Regional Sales Manager Gulf and Levant, Kyndryl.



### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Businesses must set accurate digitisation objectives that are closely aligned with their business model.
- Digital transformation requires a multidisciplinary strategy involving technical, business and process teams.
- Companies must assess their culture and take steps to help employees embrace and support change.
- Lack of alignment to business outcomes and inadequate internal communication can hamper transformation initiatives.

process teams.

Each team plays a major role and complements one another's role, ensuring that digital strategy is in line with business needs and that the right processes are followed. It is the multidisciplinary team's responsibility to report progress and feedback to key stakeholders.

This also means that in the days to come, businesses will have to deal with the challenge of organisational culture change to keep pace

with the rapid speed of digital transformation.

There is a very close relationship between change and human attitudes. One of the most common reactions is resistance. Therefore, companies must assess their current culture and determine the necessary transformation which will help employees embrace and support change.

The change must be driven from the top down. Leaders must lead by example, not only by raising awareness but also by turning it into actions. ■

**OUTSYSTEMS**

# DELIVERING SERVICE AT THE SPEED OF CHANGE

With the low-code platform, organisations can build scalable mission-critical apps that can evolve to keep pace with changing business needs.

**D**igital transformation is considered a boon for many businesses. Organisations have been embracing digital transformation with a strategy or are working towards one.

Companies in the UAE are seen to be more efficient than their global peers across a variety of digital-related capabilities. The UAE has introduced a long-term objective to modify the

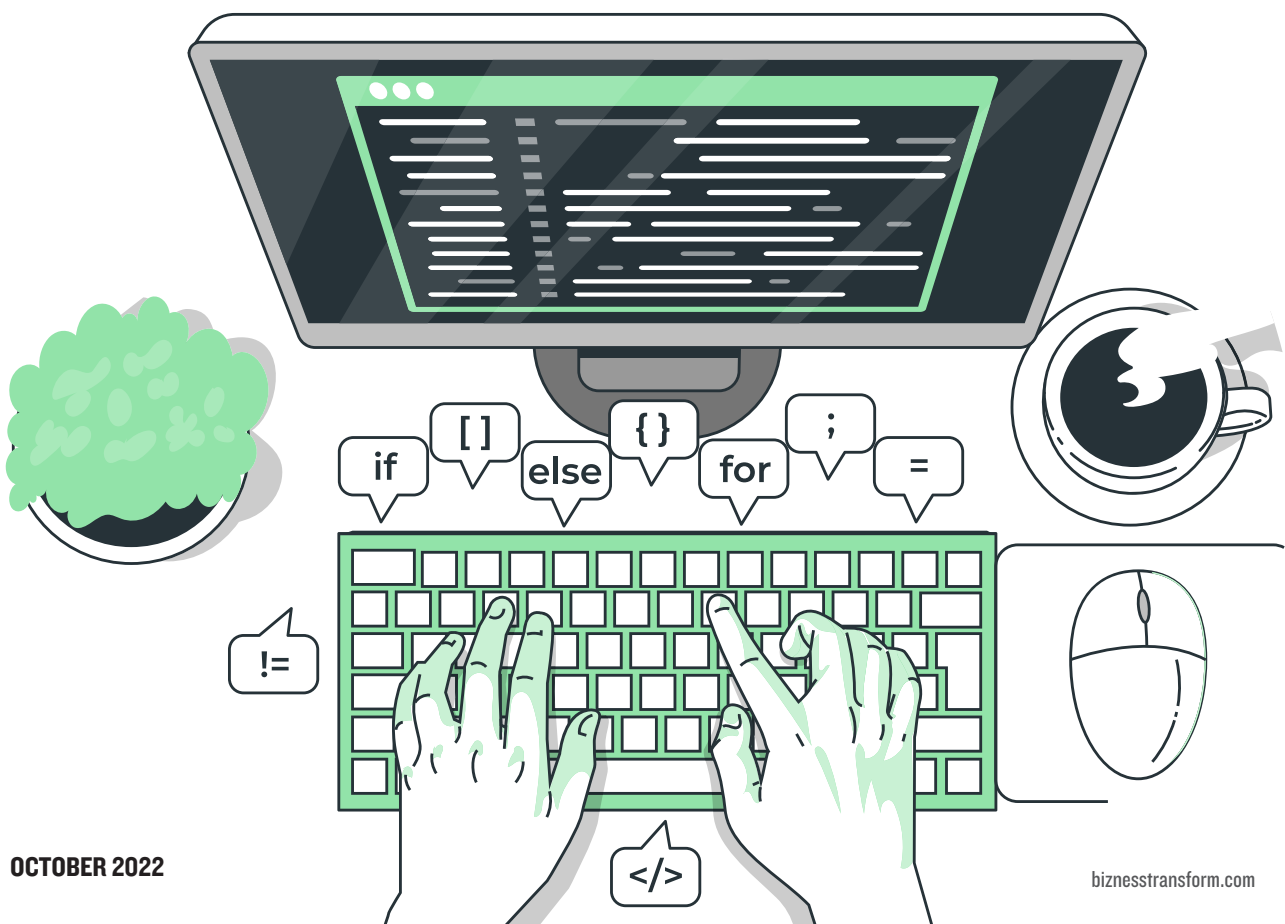
public and private sectors by implementing innovative digital strategies that enhance the customer experience and drive business efficiency.

Organisations are striving to adopt digital transformation solutions to remain competitive, add value to their business, and ensure better productivity.

Without quality digital assurance, many businesses can fail in their digital

transformation initiative. Businesses underestimate the investment required during digital and business transformation to deal with the lack of expertise, limited budget, and the lack of a digitalisation strategy.

Quality assurance is built into OutSystems, to ensure a faster and seamless deployment. Its high-performance low-code platform provides a more





**RODRIGO CASTELO**

VP Middle East and Africa, OutSystems.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The cost of investing in digital, sustainable solutions are often very high for small and medium companies.
- To stay ahead of the competition, businesses need to roll out digital solutions and services in the shortest time.
- A low-code platform can help businesses respond to market changes 10 times faster than traditional methods.

efficient way for teams to build highly scalable mission-critical apps that can evolve to keep pace with the needs of the business.

Organisations need to create a faster digital experience without additional resources. The constant pressure on IT organisations to keep delivering innovative solutions can cause them to face enormous backlogs, difficulty in hiring qualified employees, and a large amount of technical debt.

A high-performance low-code platform provides the ability to accelerate delivery up to 10 times faster than traditional methods. It allows businesses to adapt and respond to market changes and new opportunities using innovative, digital solutions that solve business problems.

This platform is a way to elevate and enhance the skills of development teams so they can build high-quality applications that are built to withstand the test of time.

With digitalisation speeding up faster than ever before, mission-critical applications that can provide significant value to businesses or customers are expected to be built in the shortest time possible. This is especially true for larger enterprises that are constantly under the pressure to provide state-of-the-art digital solutions for their customer.

Similarly, Small and Medium Enterprises or SMEs also need to follow the footsteps of larger enterprises to remain competitive. No wonder then, much of the market is struggling with the speed



Quality assurance is built into OutSystems, to ensure a faster and seamless deployment



of digital transformation. For many SMEs, the cost of investing in digital, sustainable solutions are often very high. Therefore, low code is a good solution since it simplifies the process while keeping costs down.

Businesses are having to keep up with the dynamic changes in the market, whilst trying to be ahead of their competitors. However, Artificial Intelligence seems to be the technology that will play a huge part in business disruption, especially in the workplace environment. ■



P F U

# MOVING AHEAD ON THE TRANSFORMATION HIGHWAY

A robust business transformation strategy is fundamental to successfully transitioning from legacy to data-driven digital systems of the future.

**W**any regional government departments have adopted digital transformation solutions including banking, education and financial institutions. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar are leading the charge. From front-end customer-facing solutions to capturing data to the back-office function, digital transformation is embedded across the board across several key sectors.

These business transformation solutions have helped ease everyday functions and established a clear vision of the possibilities that technology offers. Regional businesses that have not begun their digital transformation journeys must urgently identify potential gaps, from inefficient workflows to information management issues, so that a clear plan and a digital roadmap can be implemented.

Unfortunately, many organisations in the region lag in adopting business transformation because they view it as a disruptive and costly investment. They must realise that business transformation leads to process optimisation.

For a measurable and purposeful business change, the right framework for digital transformation is essential. This begins with an understanding of the organisation's current status, processes and dynamics. It is part of a wider process before organisations can fully leverage the benefits of digital technology within their everyday functions and processes.

Legacy systems need to be completely overhauled for digital technologies to take root. Reskilling and retraining staff on the benefits of applications is also critical. Many regional SMEs and larger enterprises are already adopting the

latest technologies, especially in the banking and government sectors.

The UAE has a strong digital ecosystem in place, with new strategies on the cards to leverage digitalisation across more sectors in the future. Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia are rapidly deploying new digital technologies to improve efficiencies.

A robust business transformation strategy is fundamental for regional enterprises to successfully transition from legacy to data-driven systems of the future.

The global economy is unpredictable. Global conflicts, the pandemic, and rising costs are impacting the bottom lines of several organisations. While a lot of companies are streamlining their business to optimise resources and operations, others are holding implementation of new strategies.

It is important to note that digitalisation can have a positive impact on businesses, improving profitability, streamlining processes, and making data accessible for remote workers. Organisations that use data as a strategic asset are more likely to have a competitive advantage.

By leveraging business transformation, organisations can overcome poor processes, inefficient workflows and information management issues, all of which can transform the enterprise. Automation is also expected to have a larger focus to drive governance.

PFU has a wide portfolio of trusted technology services, solutions and products to help organisations on their journey to enterprise-wide

digitalisation. For example, the PaperStream NX Solution offers a simple-to-manage, easy-to-use, flexible scanning solution that brings enhanced security and greater protection to document management, ensuring superior governance of information and greater peace of mind.

Limiting access to sensitive information and ensuring greater protection against human error helps increase overall business security and ensure nothing is missed.

With technology evolving by the day, the metaverse is expected to enhance the flow of information between people and systems. Organisations must remember that business value should be the driver of analytical systems, whether they operate within the metaverse or outside.

For regional enterprises, technology offers an opportunity for convergence of the physical and digital realms, offering customers new and transformational experiences in alternative worlds.

Businesses are taking small steps towards a greener future. Paper is still a fundamental part of business processes and will continue to be so. However, there is a shift towards automation and digitalisation to reduce the reliance on tedious, paper-based tasks. One of the best ways to boost efficiencies, reduce costs, enhance security and improve the customer journey is to go paperless.

Fujitsu solutions are ideal for organisations that want to run, manage, and configure a server, but don't want to develop integrations. They offer seamless integrations and multiple points of connectivity, ensuring continuous adaptability and value for money. ■



**TAREK AKL**  
Partner Manager Middle East, PFU EMEA.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There is a shift towards automation and digitalisation to reduce the reliance on tedious, paper-based tasks.
- Fujitsu offers solutions to run, manage, and configure a server, without the need to develop integrations.
- With the metaverse, businesses can offer customers new and transformational experiences in alternative worlds.
- Business transformation can help enterprises improve processes, workflows and information management systems.



RED HAT

# TRANSFORMING BEYOND TECHNOLOGY IMPERATIVES

Organisations must look beyond immediate business needs and ensure a cultural transformation to support innovation and continuous change.

**O**rganisations today are dealing with major disruption. They are challenged with supporting their employees and partners, reaching new customers, and providing new, innovative products and services faster. They want and need to be the ones disrupting their industries through business transformation.

Digital disruption is now a constant state for most industries, not just one event. Transformation implies more than an investment in the latest technology. It underscores the need to have an architecture that supports

digital flexibility and reimagines processes and implements a culture for continuous technology change.

Most organisations struggle with digital transformation because they are not looking beyond the role of technology in their immediate survival. They view digital transformation as a way to keep pace technologically with peers disrupting their market with out-of-reach capabilities like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, automation or Big Data analytics and a function for IT only.

The goal is not just to survive the next digital



**PHILIP ANDREWS**  
Vice President and  
General Manager CEMEA,  
Red Hat.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Business transformation is a continuous process that requires investment beyond the latest technology.
- Transformation underscores the need to have an architecture that supports digital flexibility and reimagines processes.
- Red Hat's open-source solution enables the portability of applications and faster roll-out of innovative applications.

disruption with IT; it is also to move the culture of the organisation to support continuous adaptation to change. Architecture, process and culture are the three critical factors that can make or break a digital transformation project. Red Hat can help customers handle the three challenges effectively.

The process of cultural and process change is challenging but achievable and it takes more than improvements to IT infrastructure to achieve it. A closed organisational culture is well documented as the greatest barrier to success.

Digital transformation is a continuous process involving new technologies and ways of working and delivering products or services to gain a competitive advantage. This puts CIOs in a key role to provide support for transformational initiatives.

A bigger challenge, however, is to build the innovation DNA that allows executives to create visions of the possible and then implement new ways of doing business. This may impact existing structures, roles and partnerships. Having the capability to imagine, the ability to execute and the courage to change are the biggest challenges.

Many businesses around the world are finding it increasingly challenging to meet customer demands driven by digital transformation across industries and disruptions due to COVID-19. Businesses can leverage cutting-edge application technologies, edge computing, cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and new development methods to deliver services more dynamically.

Effective data gathering and data processing are crucial for businesses looking to evaluate climate change risk and opportunity. Red Hat is helping build the technology and data platforms needed to fully integrate the impacts of climate change in global financial decision-making and risk management.



Organisations view digital transformation as a way to keep pace with peers disrupting their market



Implementation of Red Hat's products in smart cities and buildings can also help manage and optimise the use of fossil fuel-based energy supplies. Its open hybrid cloud, integration, and automation technologies are supporting the growth and diversification of businesses across the UAE.

Its open-source solutions enable the portability of applications across any cloud to help customers accelerate the delivery of innovative applications. It also enables businesses in sectors like telco, banking, transportation, and the public sector to offer new business services.

With an OpenShift-based platform that helps streamline application development and scalability, enterprises can improve time to market and employee productivity. Businesses can also facilitate improvement in the availability, uptime and recovery of applications to enhance the user experience.

OS-Climate or OS-C is a Linux Foundation-backed open-source project that intends to build technology and data platforms. Since joining OS-C, Red Hat has been participating in an initiative to equip financial services institutions with the data they need to make informed decisions. ■

SIEMON



# MITIGATING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE

For a successful transformation initiative, organisations must prioritise elements, systems and processes that must be digitalised first and why.

**I**n the post-COVID world, there is an increased impetus for digital transformation across organisations. This is fuelled by the evolution of advanced IT infrastructure solutions, data security, a data-driven approach, the Internet of Things, and Artificial Intelligence.

The availability of the right IT infrastructure and the evolution of technologies like 5G, edge computing, hyperscale datacentres, etc. creates a platform for any business to leverage data in a way that allows them to make data-driven decisions faster

while increasing efficiency and reducing errors.

Marketing campaigns, improving the overall customer and employee experience, and capacity building are areas where digital and business transformation solutions have helped businesses.

Sectors like education, healthcare, manufacturing, and financial services are leading the way in the adoption of digital and business transformation. Going forward, government spending will see an increase and will be key to the successful delivery of government schemes.

In terms of evolving technologies, 5G will be one of

the most significant technology implementations shaping the future. By offering very high bandwidth up to 20 GB per second and low latency of less than one millisecond, 5G will become a serious driver for safer autonomous vehicles and it will help push the smart city concept.

Edge computing and edge datacentres will also grow in significance enabling low latency, high-speed transmission of data that myriad connected devices require. Similarly, the metaverse can be a serious business disruptor, provided the consumer adoption journey is easy, simple, and exciting.

The metaverse market will be driven by the consumer experience. While it is at a very nascent stage now, if successful, it can provide a plethora of options to businesses on how to connect with the consumer. It will demand a high-speed infrastructure and may lead to the implementation of 400 and 800 GB per second infrastructure solutions much faster.

Metaverse depends on the network on which it is based, so a sound IT infrastructure will

## 5G

edge computing, and hyperscale datacentres allow businesses to take data-driven decisions faster



### **PREM RODRIGUES**

Director for Sales and Marketing IMEA, Siemon.

### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- A fundamental aspect of digital and business transformation is the increased use of data within organisations.
- Edge computing enables low-latency, high-speed transmission of data for myriad connected devices.
- The lack of a proper IT infrastructure can impact the way data is collected from multiple systems and devices.
- Organisations must thoroughly work out their digital transformation strategy to determine future expenditures.

be the key. Today, there is a myriad of devices and sensors connected to IP-based networks and communicating via common protocols. This enables systems and applications to share and analyse information to help make strategic decisions, enabling businesses to achieve real digital transformation.

A fundamental aspect of digital and business transformation is the increased use of data within organisations. For companies to become successful with digital transformation initiatives, the collection and analysis of data are key. They drive the automation and optimisation of business processes, leading to increased adoption of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

It is also important that companies start measuring and reporting their carbon footprint based on carbon accounting metrics as per the universally accepted standards. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol sets the standard for calculating carbon emissions and at a minimum, companies should cover both Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions.

The Science Based Target initiative or SBTi sets the most widely accepted global targets for reducing carbon emissions. The targets set are tight and committing to SBTi targets should be a key activity within a company's sustainability efforts.

The lack of a properly selected and installed IT infrastructure, however, might stand in the way of collecting data from

multiple systems and devices.

There has also been an increase in security threats such as cyberattacks in recent months. This has certainly stalled digital and business transformation initiatives since organisations are holding back investment in digital technologies. Other reasons include a lack of the right products or solutions in the market, budgetary constraints, and the non-availability of an experienced team for implementation.

Change management and a detailed digital transformation strategy are two key elements that can accelerate digital transformation and the adoption of digital technologies. A digital transformation strategy will determine which elements, systems and processes of the organisation need to be digitalised and why. This will determine which digital technologies to implement.

For top executives, the biggest challenge could be the availability of sufficient resources, both employees and budget. Digitally transforming an organisation requires a specific skill set, particularly in the IT and technical departments but the market is currently facing a shortage of skilled employees.

An adequate budget for any planned digital transformation work is another challenge. Organisations must thoroughly work out their digital transformation strategy to determine future expenditures and accurately calculate them. ■



SITECORE

# ENABLING UNMATCHED DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

A successful digital transformation plan must be adaptable and flexible and revolve around customer needs, offering rewarding digital experiences.

**W**ith so many countries in the Middle East embracing digital transformation and including it in their vision documents and strategies, there has been impressive progress across all industries. Both public and private sectors have made substantial gains in establishing robust digital infrastructures to support economic diversification and innovation.

Tech companies have responded with significant investment to support companies in making the transition to the cloud as quick and painless as possible.

Cloud-based enterprise resource planning tools are being implemented to address the biggest problems facing businesses today like supply chain issues and finding more sustainable ways to carry out their operations.

Businesses must remember that the customer is at the front and centre of all transformation decisions in the government and public sector, banking and finance, telecommunications, energy, and tourism and hospitality sectors. Besides, marketing technology and content

personalisation are at the heart of digital transformation.

One potential significant error a business could make is to lose sight of customer needs while focusing on its digital transformation initiative. Sitecore encourages businesses to focus on their customers in everything they do. Marketing technology enables businesses across all industries and sectors to connect with their citizens or customers and enhance customer experiences and e-commerce.

The second significant error would be to implement a digital transformation that is not designed to be adaptable and flexible. The sudden changes brought by the pandemic and geopolitical tensions over the past two-and-a-half years have demonstrated the importance of flexibility and agility.

The Sitecore digital experience platform DXP is headless, cloud-based and composable so that businesses have the flexibility to pick and choose the parts they need and seamlessly integrate these into their existing systems. Hence, it is essentially ready for whatever the future brings. Moreover,



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Area Vice President,  
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### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Companies may also err by rolling out a digital transformation plan that is not adaptable and flexible.
- Customers expect rewarding digital experiences from companies rather than just buying a product.
- Organisations should plan how they want to interact with customers in the metaverse.
- Sitecore digital experience platform DXP is headless, cloud-based and composable.

the company's development team is always working with new technologies to ensure that they can be used on behalf of the customers.

Governments across the region have done an excellent job in encouraging companies to embrace digital transformation. In short, the world has changed, and businesses realise that adopting new technologies is not an option but a necessity. The pandemic has also had a substantial and irreversible impact on how people work and live, how they use technology and what they expect from businesses.

This is likely to have a positive impact on the readiness of both employees and customers to embrace change and realise the benefits that new technologies have to offer.

With the pressure on companies to undergo digital transformations rapidly, technology companies have been focusing on solutions to ease digital transformation.

Sitecore believes businesses must adopt the customer-first approach to create new digital touchpoints. Whether these touchpoints are in augmented reality, virtual reality, Web 3.0 or the metaverse, the focus should be on implementing new technologies to best meet customer needs.

Customers have increasingly higher expectations from digital interactions with companies and they are looking for rewarding experiences rather than just buying a product. There needs to be a seamless transition between physical, digital and virtual worlds.

The world is also moving away from cookies towards first-party data, which is owned information a company collects directly from its customers. This creates challenges, but also opportunities as companies plan for a future with increased customer insight and more sophisticated personalisation.

New customer channels could be created through new technologies and the metaverse. In addition, just



Businesses may lose sight of customer needs while focusing on their digital transformation initiative



as businesses are focusing on personalised interactions with customers, tech companies will be focusing on solutions personalised for businesses. Sitecore collaborates and innovates with customers, enabling them to tailor their digital experience to their audiences.

Companies should plan how they want to interact with their customers in the metaverse. New metaverse revenue streams are being established and new opportunities will arise as companies and stores buy or rent space in metaverse cities and worlds.

The metaverse has great potential, but as it will serve as another touchpoint with customers, the approach needs to be consistent with other touchpoints, and effective analysis of customer data will be needed to proceed with it. ■



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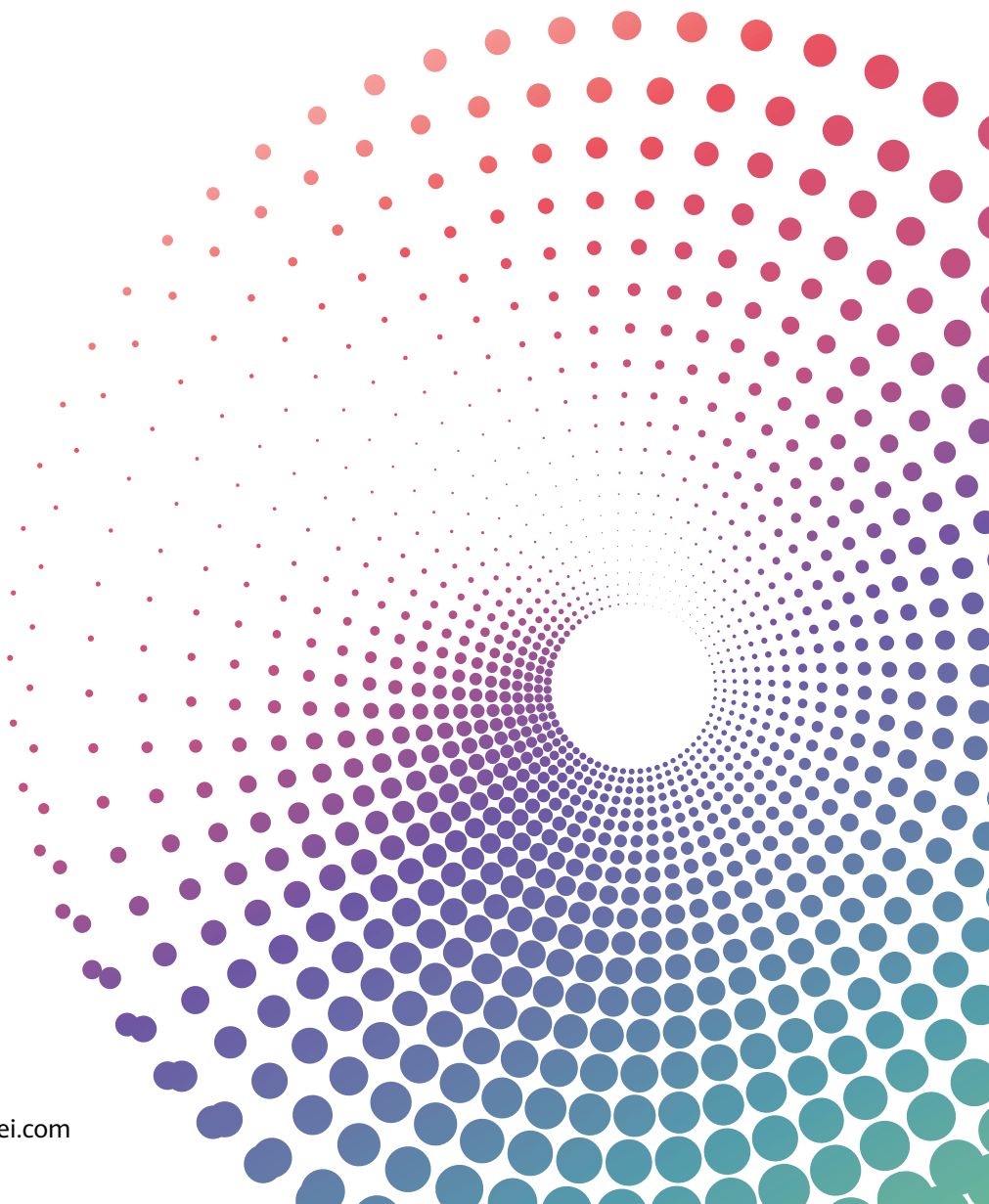
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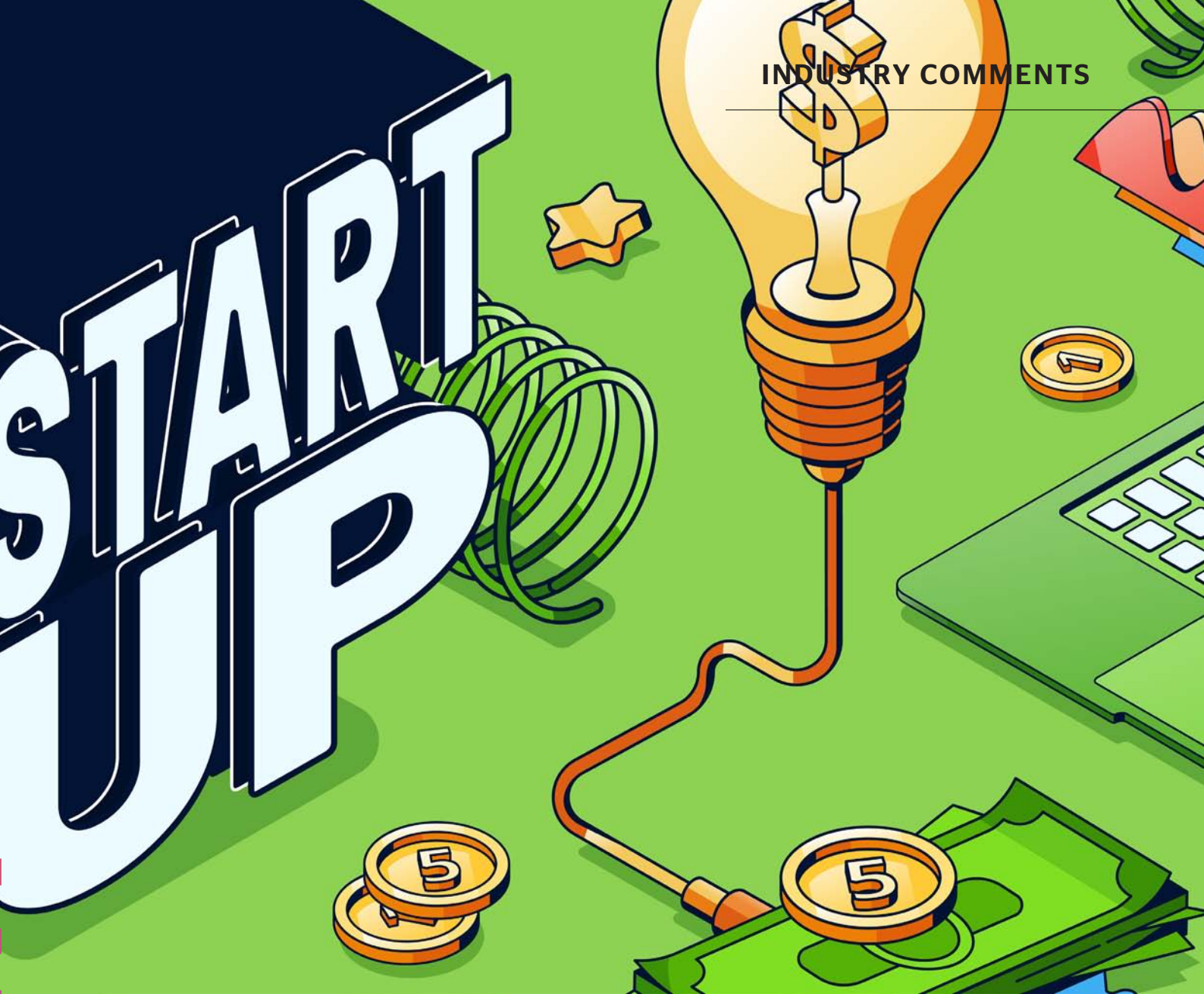
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## FOUR REASONS VCs SHOULD FOCUS ON WOMEN-LED START-UPS

Women founders tend to be more resilient when it comes to raising capital, having encountered injustice, double standards, obstacles in their careers.

**T**he Middle East and North Africa region saw its highest ever level of VC funding in 2021. \$2.6 billion flowed into the region and the UAE took \$1.2 billion of it across 155 transactions, while neighbouring Saudi Arabia showed an impressive 270% VC growth to overtake Egypt for the number-two spot. Amid this surge, the UAE has made strides in closing

the funding gap for women founders. Abu Dhabi's Hub71 reported that 30% of its third cohort of start-ups in 2020 were founded by women.

In the broader ecosystem, gaps remain, so as it works towards diversifying its economy, the UAE government is encouraging VCs to back a highly diverse array of start-ups with no gender bias.

Here are some insights into how funding



**RYAAN SHARIF**

General Manager,  
Flat6Labs UAE.

women-founders can be a massive opportunity for investors.

### #1 Persistence

In the UAE, 12.6% of businesses are owned by women and 75% of them have expanded outside their domestic markets — an aspiration that features prominently in the guidelines of many of the government's economic-diversification programs. And in Saudi Arabia, the rate is almost 50%. In fact, 29% of women-led businesses across the MENA region are global enterprises — a greater proportion than their male peers can claim.

The reason for this is largely understood to be that women founders, on average, do not give up at the same rate as men. This may be explained by the personal, legal, and professional obstacles that have routinely been faced by women in the workplace and society.

Mentoring systems and incubators should take the time to encourage women founders to launch before perfecting a product, as this may accelerate and quicken the process of access to funding. Once investors step in, access to more resources will enhance the iteration process.

Despite the persistence advantage, women may lose out to men, who are generally better at overselling their start-ups as they continue to focus on communicating metrics which highlight their growth and potential rather than communicating their state of affairs as of today.

### #2 Risk

Historically, we see an incredible capacity in women founders to understand their numbers,

compared with men, especially on reporting metrics and projections to their investors. Women founders also tend to be more resilient when it comes to raising capital, having encountered injustice, double standards, and other obstacles throughout their careers.

But that does not mean that these obstacles do not extend to the world of funding. According to a Wamda report, in MENA in the first half of 2021, male-led start-ups garnered 96% of funding agreements and women-led start-ups a mere 0.9%, with mixed teams getting the remainder. While there are signs that this imbalance is improving, we still have a distance to travel.

Vcs are starting to see, either through anecdote or research, that women tend to be more mindful, collaborative and risk-averse — capable not only of strong cashflow management, but of building the kind of team rapport that boosts talent-retention ratios.

### #3 Perspective

Women entrepreneurs are, on average, more likely to have business ideas that solve unique challenges. Recent research shows women are 20% more likely than men to found companies with a social or environmental purpose. This is of particular significance in light of the rise of ESG environment, social, governance as a source of concern among investors, shareholders, and private citizens.

Women's unique perspectives also include a greater-than-average awareness of their target demographic. This may help to explain why a 2016 BNP Paribas Entrepreneur Report found that on average, women-

led businesses make 13% more revenue than those owned by men.

## #4 Diversification

Women investors are twice as likely to invest in companies with women on their leadership teams, and three times as likely to invest in women CEOs, according to a report by Diversity VC. This could be the beginning of a cycle of improvement if the relatively low women representations among global VCs' decision makers are addressed.

But for now, men continue to have more opportunities in business than women. The Wamda report noted that in September 2021, out of the \$338 million raised by MENA start-ups, only \$100,000 went to women entrepreneurs and \$313 million went to men.

The more things change, the more they will continue to change. Women-led companies are a great way to diversify VCs' portfolios. And as cultural norms shift and we see more women-focused funds being set up, investment companies will likely bring more women decision makers on board to take advantage of yet more diversification.

Women VC partners invest in twice as many women-led founding teams at early stages of funding. Women-led businesses should leverage these findings and reach out to women-led VCs and VCs with a strong emphasis on investing in women entrepreneurs. Funds with specific industry mandates that match the founder's core business are also an advantage, as their scope for diversification is more limited.

Women founders are certainly at a greater advantage than they were, say, a decade ago. Governments and investors

“  
**29%**  
of women-led businesses across the MENA region are global enterprises, a greater proportion than their male peers can claim  
”

are beginning to realise the economic implications of being less inclusive of women in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Work remains to be done, particularly with regard to the level of investment into fully women founded teams but the mounting evidence of the above-average potential of women founders to lead successful start-ups, combined with the rise of women-led and women-focused VCs, is welcome.

Things are finally moving in the right direction. Now we must work together as stakeholders in the VC community to accelerate this momentum. ■

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Women entrepreneurs are, on average, more likely to have business ideas that solve unique challenges.
- We see an incredible capacity in women founders to understand their numbers, compared with men, especially on reporting metrics and projections.
- Women-led companies are a great way to diversify VCs' portfolios.
- Despite persistence advantage, women may lose out to men, who are generally better at overselling their start-ups.



**EAGLE PRO AI**

Experience the Power and Convenience  
of Artificial Intelligence Powered Wi-Fi

The graphic features silhouettes of people in a modern setting, with various D-Link EAGLE PRO AI routers and range extenders displayed in the foreground. In the top right corner, there are logos for the EAGLE PRO AI app, including the Apple App Store and Google Play Store icons.

# INNOVATING USING AI, SUSTAINABILITY, GLOBAL STANDARDS

D-Link's most recent technologies supports lifestyle by delivering intelligent, strong network connections for bandwidth-intensive applications in densely populated households. D-Link also highlighted the three product development methods for producing breakthroughs that allow the current digital revolution. D-Link improves the performance of home networks by producing solutions that use AI technology to identify network issues and adjust accordingly. D-Link Green is environmentally friendly approach to packaging goals, ensuring that the corporate responsibility goals are satisfied. D-Link is also dedicated to creating a vertically integrated ecosystem of network communication equipment that meets the Made In Taiwan (MIT) quality assurance standard.

The EAGLE PRO AI Series brings AI-enhanced capabilities to optimize your Wi-Fi, and the AI Assistant to intelligently monitor network usage to give simple, actionable recommendations to keep your network at peak performance for everyone in the family.

EAGLE PRO AI Series – It features a comprehensive range of routers to fulfil everyone's needs for home Wi-Fi and 4G Wi-Fi. Equipped with Wi-Fi 6 Technology, the R15 AX1500 Wi-Fi 6 Smart Router, M15 AX1500 Mesh Router, and E15 AX1500 Mesh Range Extender deliver up to four times more capacity and 40% throughput increase than Wi-Fi 5. The R03, R04, and R12 Wi-Fi AI Routers are entry-level devices for emerging markets that provide the latest WPA3 security encryption for more secure connectivity. The EAGLE PRO AI series also includes 4G AI Routers G415 and G416, as well as entry-level models G403 and G412, all with two built-in external

LTE antennas. Additionally, the G416 utilizes Carrier Aggregation Technology to boost data speeds up to 300 Mbps. Carrier Aggregation provides the foundation for deploying 4G and 5G networks, with the capability to combine several frequency bands for higher peak rates and increased cell coverage.

The series routers are equipped with built-in EAGLE PRO AI capabilities, which monitors traffic and improves the home network. The AI Wi-Fi Optimizer searches and monitors the network in real time to ensure that users are connected to the optimum Wi-Fi channel. D-Link's Mesh Optimizer is an AI-enhanced Beamforming Technology that provides more strong, dependable Wi-Fi across the home. The AI Traffic Optimizer prioritises and assigns bandwidth to different apps automatically, while also informing users about which devices are creating congestion. The AI Assistant collects actionable data to keep users informed about network quality, and AI Parental Control gives parents greater control and freedom over their children's online activity. The EAGLE PRO AI App has an integrated Speed Test to evaluate Internet speed, a Health Mode to manage sleep patterns, and voice control compatibility for Amazon Alexa and Google Assistant.

The EAGLE PRO AI series is a first-of-its-kind Wi-Fi solution that enables customers to embrace the new stay-at-home lifestyle and rethink home Wi-Fi. D-Link's EAGLE PRO AI series delivers quicker, more secure, and more dependable connectivity for endless possibilities, whether for video conferences, HD streaming, or high-quality gaming.

Get the EAGLE PRO AI Series in your home and experience the power and convenience of AI powered Wi-Fi. ■

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