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PUBLISHER
Tushar Sahoo
tushar@gecmmediagroup.com

CO-FOUNDER & CEO
Ronak Samantaray
ronak@gecmmediagroup.com

GLOBAL HEAD, CONTENT AND STRATEGIC
ALLIANCES
Anushree Dixit
anushree@gecmmediagroup.com

ASSISTANT EDITORS
Rehisha Pe
rehisha@gecmmediagroup.com

Sehrish Tariq
sehrish@gecmmediagroup.com

GROUP SALES HEAD
Richa S
richa@gecmmediagroup.com

PROJECT LEAD
Jennefer Lorraine Mendoza
jennefer@gecmmediagroup.com

SALES AND ADVERTISING
Ronak Samantaray
ronak@gecmmediagroup.com
Ph: + 971 555 120 490

DIGITAL TEAM

IT MANAGER
Vijay Bakshi

CREATIVE LEAD
Ajay Arya

SENIOR DESIGNER
Madan Singh

PRODUCTION, CIRCULATION, SUBSCRIPTIONS
info@gecmmediagroup.com

**GEC
MEDIA
GROUP**

UAE
Office No #115
First Floor, G2 Building
Dubai Production City
Dubai
United Arab Emirates
Phone : +971 4 564 8684

USA
31 Foxtail Lan, Monmouth Junction
NJ 08852, Ph: + 1 732 794 5918

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THE WORLD CIO 200 SUMMIT, GITEX 2023 AND COP28

The month of September is buzzing with anticipation as the grand finale of The World CIO 200 Summit 2023, is happening in Baku. This event holds the promise of surpassing its previous editions, bringing together visionary CIOs from around the world in an unprecedented gathering of industry leaders. Our core mission remains unwavering: to discover excellence by fostering unity, firmly believing that greatness thrives when we come together, ultimately paving the way for extraordinary and transformative developments.

And then there's GITEX, the tech giant extravaganza, where we eagerly anticipate reuniting with cherished allies, forging new partnerships, and engaging with future trailblazers. We extend an enthusiastic invitation to meet us at our booth. Together, we'll unlock boundless opportunities, propelling both your business and ours into the stratosphere.

In the span of two transformative weeks, from November 30 to December 12, 2023, Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, will take center stage, setting the world aglow with the 28th Conference of the Parties, COP28 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

This momentous event isn't just a gathering; it's a blazing beacon of hope and progress. COP28's Presidency has orchestrated a meticulously designed two-week thematic program, strategically calibrated to tackle the Global Stocktake and mend the rifts on our road to 2030.

Our calendar is jam-packed with events during these months, creating a flurry of activity. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to connect and engage with all of you in equal measure.

Happy reading!

Ronak Samantaray
ronak@gecmmediagroup.com



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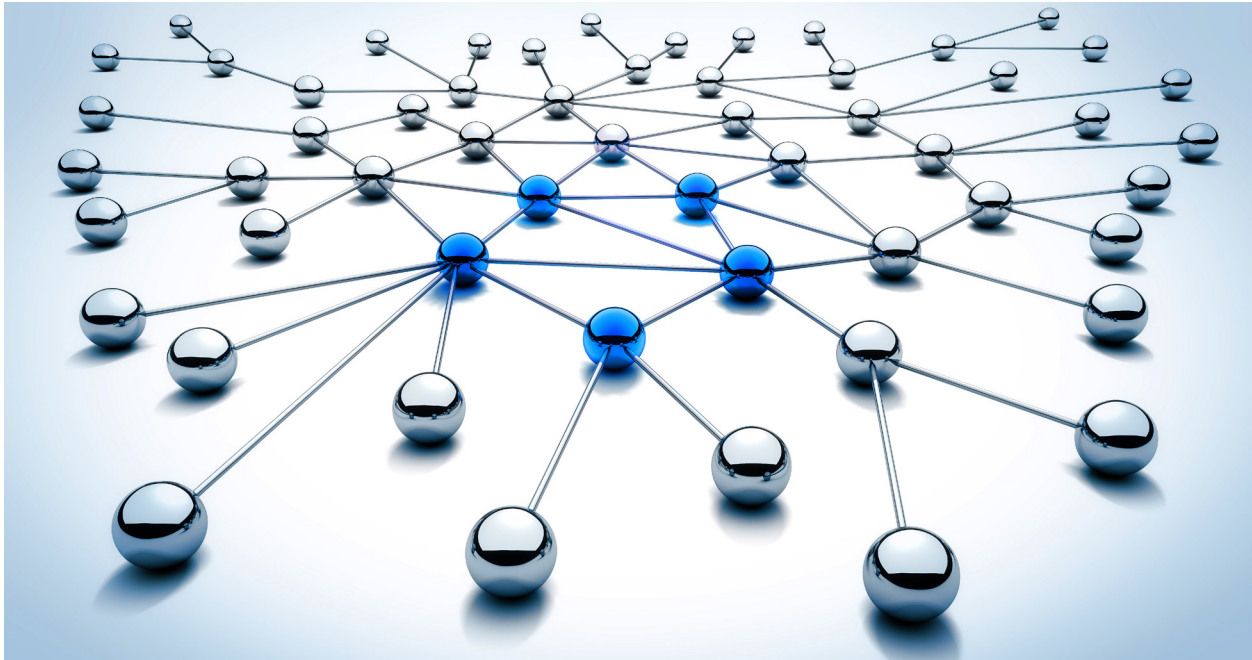
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SUSTAINING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION DURING SLOWDOWNS

While Gartner's 2023 forecast indicates IT decision makers pressing ahead with digital transformation, budgets will still need to be released internally.

As we move into 2023, digital transformation leads need to anticipate the possibility of market and revenue slowdown impacting their annual purchase decisions and ahead. A Gartner survey in July 2022, found that 69% plan to increase their spend on digital technologies, while the 2023 Gartner CIO and Technology Executive Survey found that CIOs are being tasked with accelerating time to value on digital investments.

While Gartner's 2023 forecast indicates IT decision makers pressing ahead with digital transformation and IT spending, budgets will still need to be released internally. And that means reviews and replanning with finance.

Moreover, digital transformation leads must anticipate these pressures extending for a period of six months to 24 months. By doing this proactively, technology leads are

protecting ongoing digital transformation projects, investments into future innovation and continuing to build resiliency for the future organisation.

Here are some measures forward looking organisations and their technology leads can initiate internally. It is also recommended to bring in their trusted digital transformation partners into these cost management exercises at an early stage of the upcoming financial cycles.

Here are some steps that technology heads need to initiate in conjunction with finance and business heads.

NEGOTIATION

In order to sit with leading vendor suppliers at the table, technology heads must have a list of tactics and concessions to keep these important vendor relationships in play throughout this



RANJITH KAIPPADA,
Managing Director
Cloud Box Technologies



While Gartner's 2023 forecast indicates IT decision makers pressing ahead with digital transformation, budgets will still need to be released internally.



period and avoid confrontation. Vendor suppliers will not yield easily to requests for renegotiation and yielding to concessions from customers unless they see immediate and longer-term benefits in their relationship.

Technology decision makers must detail the reasons for requesting concessions from vendor suppliers; they must be able to convince them that short term cooperation will yield longer term benefits. They can also explore benefits other than immediate pay-outs.

Technology heads can also invite vendor suppliers to advise on how to boost the organisation's productivity to reach well defined and challenging improvement metrics.

During the above negotiations, technology heads must continue to evaluate alternative vendors in terms of offerings and price to boost their ability to negotiate with existing vendor suppliers. They must also have completed an exercise of internal rationalisation of major vendor suppliers.

RELATIONSHIPS

Major vendor suppliers need to be informed about the ongoing internal initiatives being taken by technology heads. Public statements by vendor suppliers can be reviewed on how they plan to support customers in the time of market contraction.

In order to make progress with leading vendor suppliers it is important to have a list of expectations being considered as part of the negotiations. These initiatives could include moving away from annual payments into more frequent periodic payments; setting maximum payment ceilings for a specified

period of time; extending service contracts to include additional technology infrastructure not covered rather than initiating fresh contracts with new and higher price terms.

They should also highlight longer term business benefits with major vendor suppliers to avoid breakdown in the working relationship of any sort.

PAYMENTS

To make meaningful changes for the organisation's finance department, technology heads must review and reduce the schedule of upcoming payments. To achieve this technology heads can initiate and review a number of activities. This could include moving to the lower slabs of a SaaS subscription; selecting a product option with fewer features and hence lower slab rate; initiating consumption-based pricing wherever it has not been selected as yet.

In the area of services, technology heads can reduce service levels or terminate service contracts for older and commoditised product versions; for other products they can terminate the service contracts with vendors and negotiate lower and more competitive rates with third party service suppliers; they should initiate DevOps to manage high technology infrastructure costs and usage for IaaS and PaaS.

It is imperative that technology heads and their trusted channel partners work proactively on these measures. It is only with tangible results such as reduced cyclic spending and improved cash flow for the finance department can they ensure that longer term investments in digital transformation initiatives are sustained and maintained. ■

AUTOMATION IN HOSPITALITY WILL IMPROVE EXPERIENCE

Artificial Intelligence and automation do not need to replace the human aspect of hospitality, nor should they. But what they can do is enhance the workplace.

Artificial Intelligence is changing the world at a startling rate, growing at around 38% each year. In every single industry, new technologies are emerging that will change the way we work forever. The world is being forced to keep up or be left behind. And in some cases, this means people are losing their jobs because AI can do many things better and quicker than a person can.

When we relate this to the world of hospitality, does it mean that jobs will no longer exist? Does it mean that there are going to be mass unemployment rates? Well, not exactly.

Most business owners in hospitality no longer have a choice as to whether they bring in automation processes. If they want to stay competitive, profitable, and offer great customer service, it is a necessity at this point. But there are right and wrong ways of doing it.

As a business owner, you need to be transparent with your staff and let them know the changes you are implementing and how they will help them perform their jobs.

Artificial Intelligence and automation do not need to replace the human aspect of hospitality, nor should they. But what they can do is enhance the workplace. Make it more efficient, and give copious benefits to the business, as well as the staff.

If you ask people who work in hospitality what the main problems are, you will get the same few answers. Processes seem overly complicated. They could do with an extra pair of hands so they can provide the type of service they are proud of; mistakes happen all too frequently.

Now, AI actually helps the hospitality industry solve all of these problems without replacing any jobs. Here are some of the ways that AI streamlines workflow for the staff and how they benefit from it.





NAJI HADDAD,
General Manager MENA
Deliverect

“

The primary job of a hospitality worker is to make sure the customers are happy with their experience. Now to do that, they need to manage about 800 things at the same time.

”

The primary job of a hospitality worker is to make sure the customers are happy with their experience. Now to do that, they need to manage about 800 things at the same time. They need to be professional jugglers to be good at their job in hospitality.

But if most of those duties were automated, which they easily can be, workers can focus back on the people. Bringing them their food, answering questions, giving recommendations, clearing tables, even having a laugh, and cracking some jokes now that they have the time!

One of the most frustrating things that can happen in hospitality is an order going wrong. Previously, a customer would give their order, the waiter would write it down, pass it to the kitchen, and they would prepare it. Sometimes when the order came out, customers would say, that is not what I ordered. When it would be, in fact, exactly what they ordered, they had just forgotten. Now that was not all of the time.

Sometimes, waiters would take an order down wrong, or the kitchen would not be able to read their writing; a docket would go missing or be put in the wrong place in the queue. But regardless of the cause, mistakes were common, and they led to a lot of waste.

Today, customers can punch in their own order. To have it sent directly to the kitchen, they do not have to guess what it says, and the customer cannot say that it is not what they ordered because they ordered it themselves!

This is what AI in hospitality does. It makes a process more efficient with instant service and minimizes error and waste

with more accurate orders. It is winning all around for the customer, staff, and business.

One of the biggest stressors for employees in hospitality is when they are short-staffed. They need to work much harder to get the work done, and they will not be able to engage with customers the way they want. The whole business suffers when you are short-staffed, and the customers are not going to have as good of an experience.

By implementing AI, automation software, and automated food delivery solutions, the time-consuming and non-customer-facing tasks are taken care of. Although you still need enough staff to work the floor, at least if you are one or two people down, the team on deck can focus all their attention in one place rather than running all over the venue.

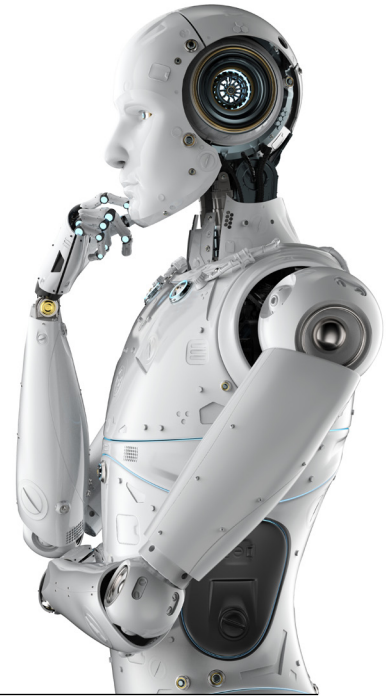
When the main pain points of hospitality staff are taken away, they are going to enjoy their job more naturally. They are not going to dread coming into work knowing they will be run off their feet or that they will get in trouble for getting an order wrong. Instead, they will know they get to engage with the customers and have a happy boss.

When a business owner is transparent about the implementation of AI, employees are quite excited about it. They know it will make their job easier and it will eliminate most of the problems associated with their jobs.

AI does not need to replace staff. What it can do, though, is streamline efficiencies, allowing staff to focus on customer service and giving clients a better experience at your venue. ■

INTEGRATING SERVICE ROBOTS INTO BUSINESS

Unlike industrial robots that have been incorporated for many years now, service robots are relatively new and designed to support humans in their daily lives.



The futuristic vision of humanity has always been of a society where devices of all sorts, little and large, are capitalised on by people to improve the quality of personal and business life.

Robots, as they exist are still in the early stages of the innovation cycle. But are rapidly improving through a convergence of technologies into the next levels of sophistication.

Robots can be applied as key components of a much larger engineering chain, such as in industrial production. And they can also operate as standalone, independent devices, performing specific tasks, continuously and without any interruption. In other words, service robots.

Unlike industrial robots that have been incorporated for many years now, service robots are relatively new and designed to support humans in their daily lives.

According to World Robotics 2021 Service Robot reports, the global market for professional service robots reached close to \$7 billion, up 12% from 2020. It is expected to reach \$70 billion by 2032. The International Federation of Robotics report suggests the pandemic was one of the major driving factors behind relooking at the major robotic service trends.

When built to deliver specific services, such robots have multiple benefits:

- Improvement in productivity due to continuous 24/7 non-stop performance
- Improvement in efficiency since multiple

types of routines can be specified and executed without risk of failure

- Improvement in safety since human lives are not being exposed and stressed

In any social and cultural environment, the idea of bringing in automated services, machinery and equipment, through service robots, conjures up fears of redundancy, retrenchment, and layoffs of human employment. However, with a more detailed assessment, the large-scale benefits for the worker, customer, and owner become evident.

Some of the application use cases for service robots include:

- Transport and delivery
- Sanitation and cleanliness
- Rehabilitation and medical recovery
- Education and remote learning
- Telepresence and social company
- Customer services

We take a look at some of the fastest growing and most important application and use case areas for service robots.

LOGISTICS AND WAREHOUSING

The logistics warehouse is a hive of activity. Volume goods are continuously being delivered, stacked and indexed, retrieved and then dispatched. This is a never-ending cycle. Robots can be programmed to fit into any of these segments of warehousing operational processes. The form factor is typically autonomous vehicles, lifters and carriers, and now even



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These robots that can have a humanoid or non-humanoid form factor, moving or stationary in presence, are designed to interact with customers through a face-to-face engagement.



drones for smaller form factors.

Such robots are characterised by having low intelligence, are usually distributed in large numbers to be useful, and are now in high demand. This form factor has a CAGR of 21% over the next ten years and is one of the primary application use cases for service robots.

CLEANING AND SANITISATION

The process of cleaning and sanitisation of the workplace, leisure areas, homes and other places of human movement and habitation, is an integral everyday operation. This process prepares the area for the next round of engagement with humans. Because of its importance coupled with the benefits that it offers; this category of household and professional cleaning robots is the second largest amongst service robots.

Cleaning and sanitisation tools built into such service robots can be either contact based, that is brushes and detergent; or non-contact based, that is sprays and UV light. The importance of this application use case for service robots was highlighted during the pandemic and was used extensively in some countries.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

These robots that can have a humanoid or non-humanoid form factor, moving or stationary in presence, are designed to interact with customers through a face-to-face engagement. Their purpose is to automate many of the basic customer service tasks. Their investments are typically presented against benefits through automation of tasks and routines, workforce savings, efficiency and productivity

through 24x7x365 days of usage.

Other than the fact that they are meant to provide information and a limited range of services at the request of customers, their importance lies in the fact that they can gather engagement data from the experiences customers have with these robots. This includes nature of the query, time spent, success rate and so on.

Most customer service robots help customers to find an item in a retail outlet, the price of an item, or complete a task for a customer. They can also guide customers in a retail outlet or lead customers around in a hospitality establishment. Their presence will become increasingly intuitive and expected in retail outlets, large outlet malls, family entertainment centres, over time.

Pepper is an example of a service robot designed to perceive emotions and form empathetic connections with users. Pepper has become familiar for welcoming guests with a warm “Hello, how may I help you?”. Some of its successful application use cases include serving as an airport concierge and hospital assistant. It has face recognition software as well as a touch screen for information display.

Other well-known service robots include Double 3, PuduBot, BellaBot, KettBot, HolaBot, Puductor 2, and Xenex.

As the usage of service robots increases and innovation levels improve, the powerful range of benefits are likely to trigger a wave of regional adoption. Finding a service provider to provide robots as a service is a good way to move forward into the realm of leveraging robotic innovation. ■



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HOW ORGANISATION CAN BUILD FUTURE CRITICAL SKILLS AMONG THEIR EMPLOYEES

In an era marked by the relentless march towards a digital future, where capability fuels endless possibilities and reskilling holds the key to reinvention, the competitive landscape for talent and skills has never been more intense.

With the world on a journey to a digital future in which capability drives possibility and reskilling unlocks reinvention, the environment for talent and skills has become more competitive than ever.

In this fast-evolving landscape, it is essential attract, retain, re-train and continually build the future critical skills need before we need them.

In the third edition of its Future of Jobs Report, published in 2020, the World Economic Forum (WEF) identified the top 10 skills that will stand employees in good stead for years to come. The skills are divided into four areas – problem-solving, self-management, working with people and technology use and development.

Under problem-solving, the study highlights analytical thinking and innovation, complex problem-solving, critical thinking and analysis, creativity, originality and initiative as well as reasoning, problem-solving and ideation. Self-management covers active learning and learning strategies as well as resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility. Working with people involves leadership and social influence, while technology use and development includes technology use, monitoring and control as well as technology design and programming.

The rising demand for these skills has spurred a global reskilling revolution that is reshaping the future of work and the workforce of the future. Some go as far as to say reskilling is the new recruiting.

The Great Resignation emerged as a buzzword in 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and has since grown into a full-fledged economic trend with its own Wikipedia entry. According to Gloat's report From the Great Resignation to the Great Transformation, as many as 95% of the workforce were considering quitting their jobs in 2021, while 80% were feeling disengaged at work and 60% were rethinking their career paths. It's no surprise that 87% of CEOs today report facing more competition for labour and skills, and 71% feel the need to reskill



SENA ERTEN,
Head of People
Ericsson Middle East
and Africa



KEY

TAKEAWAYS

- The rising demand for the skills has spurred a global reskilling revolution that is reshaping the future of work and the workforce of the future.
- Facing a future that is ever more digital, the company remains committed to ensuring it is also ever more human.
- With AI and machine learning, better training makes for smarter decisions, while cloud enables uninterrupted access to collective capability.
- Application programming interfaces (APIs) ensure that interconnection is always intentional.

their workforce to grow and adapt, as Korn Ferry reveals.

The journey to a pioneering and progressive people experience that boosts talent attraction, development and retention hinges on implementing a systematic skills framework. In a skills-driven ecosystem where employees' profiles, preferences and skills progression get matched to open jobs and projects, people are empowered to design their future.

At Ericsson they are redefining performance management to include skills development, and centring employee evaluation around skills and how they are applied to create value. They design learning and development based on skills rather than job tasks and enable employees to continually learn new skills that will help them succeed. The company has also set up internal talent marketplaces that match skills to roles, projects, tasks and mentoring opportunities. In addition, maintain core skills

and functional skills across the organisation and have aligned on a common language of skills.

Their priorities for learning and development include making learning easy, making learning a habit that matters and making learning drive profitable growth. They see people as the CEOs of their own careers, and view their upskilling and reskilling in critical areas as a strategic business investment.

Through Degreed, the leading learning and upskilling platform, have integrated Ericsson Academy learning content into a mobile-first interface, tailored to the skill profile of each employee, supporting core learning processes with an improved user experience.

Facing a future that is ever more digital, remain committed to ensuring it is also ever more human. 5G enables great connections that transform the ways do things, open radio access networks (O-RAN) bring transparency that makes access work better, and Internet of Things is fast becoming the Internet of Everything. With AI and machine learning, better training makes for smarter decisions, while cloud enables uninterrupted access to collective capability. Application programming interfaces (APIs) ensure that interconnection is always intentional, and data science has taught that every voice matters if listen carefully.

At Ericsson, all leverage technology to power skills-based organisation. This involves embracing enterprise solutions which are rapidly including skills or stacking niche, boutique solutions that allow employees to track skills development progress and hone skills in the flow of life. ■



LEVERAGING AI AS A CATALYST FOR BUSINESS EVOLUTION

As the world becomes increasingly digital, businesses are constantly searching for innovative solutions to drive growth, enhance customer experiences, and stay ahead of the competition.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a game-changer, offering immense potential to transform industries and drive growth, with its role becoming more critical as businesses strive to meet the growing demands of their customers and navigate the complexities of the digital era.

The potential of AI to revolutionize business processes, generate actionable insights, and deliver personalized experiences is immense. At IBM, we have been at the forefront of AI research and development, and recently, have just announced the launch of IBM watsonx, our enterprise-ready AI and data platform comprised of three components to help businesses accelerate and scale AI – the watsonx.ai studio, the watsonx.data data store built on an open lakehouse architecture, and the upcoming watsonx.governance toolkit.

Harnessing the power of AI however, requires a comprehensive understanding of its capabilities and a strategic approach to implementation.

TAPPING INTO GENERATIVE AI:

In today's competitive business landscape, organisations must distinguish themselves and provide personalized experiences to their customers. Generative AI and machine learning represent a new era of technological advancement that has the potential to revolutionize how businesses operate. They empower businesses to build customized models suited to their unique requirements, enabling them to stand out in the market and gain a competitive edge.

A lot of onuses also rests on advancing AI skills and expertise. IBM is collaborating with Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI) launching an AI Center of



MOSTAFA ZAFER,
Vice President, Data & AI
and Automation
IBM MEA

Excellence that aims to advance collaboration to improve the adoption of AI technology and help drive sustainability. The Center will develop carbon neutral solutions to existing energy supplies, combat climate change, and further natural language processing (NLP) for Arabic dialects.

SCALING AI WORKLOADS:

Scaling AI workloads is a critical challenge that organisations face when adopting AI solutions. The ability to handle large volumes of data, process complex algorithms, and deploy AI models at scale is essential for achieving transformative business outcomes. Watsonx.data addresses this by offering a purpose-built data store built on an open lakehouse architecture. It enables easy data access across cloud and on-premises, empowering non-technical users with self-

service access to reliable data. It ensures compliance through centralized governance and policy enforcement, providing a seamless experience for all users involved.

The importance of data cannot be overstated in the AI era. Organisations must invest in data infrastructure, talent development, and cross-functional collaboration to ensure the successful scaling of AI initiatives. By democratizing data access, fostering a data-driven culture, and empowering employees with AI tools and capabilities, organisations can accelerate the adoption and impact of AI across the enterprise.

RESPONSIBLE AND TRANSPARENT AI WORKFLOWS:

As businesses embark on the journey of AI transformation, it becomes crucial to address the ethical and governance aspects of AI deployment. Governance

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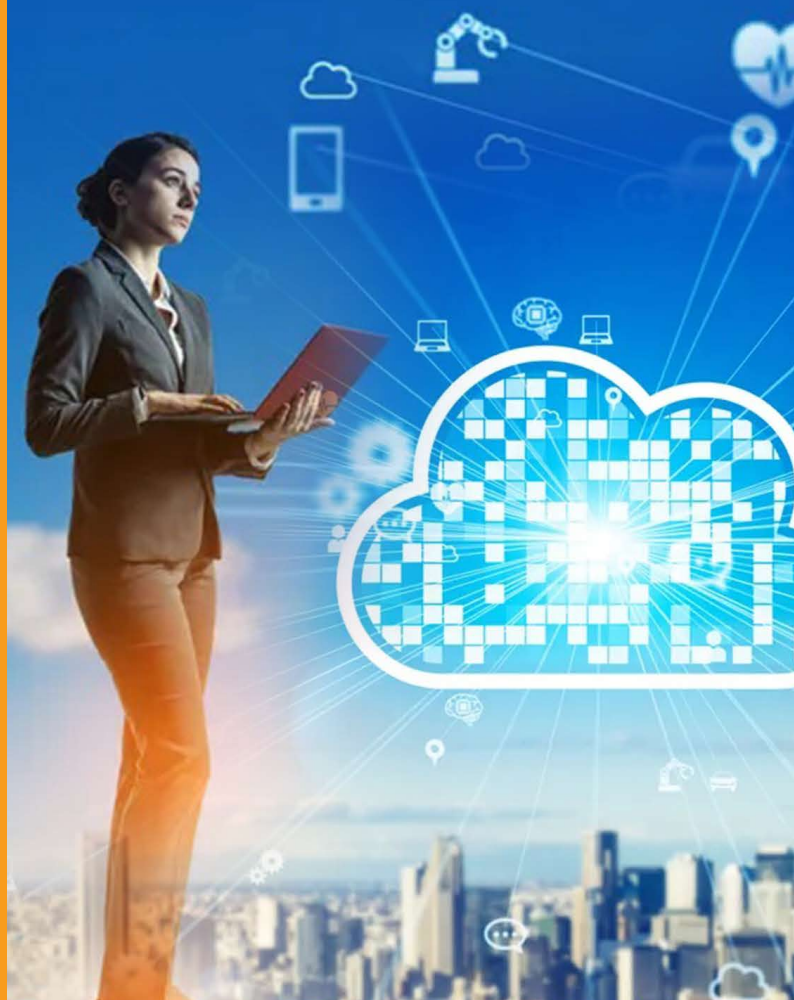
TAKEAWAYS

- The potential of AI to revolutionize business processes, generate actionable insights, and deliver personalized experiences is immense.
- Harnessing the power of AI however, requires a comprehensive understanding of its capabilities and a strategic approach to implementation.
- Scaling AI workloads is a critical challenge that organisations face when adopting AI solutions.
- The importance of data cannot be overstated in the AI era.

and ethics play a pivotal role in ensuring the fairness, impartiality, and alignment of AI systems with societal values. Given the potential impact on stakeholders, regulatory compliance, and ethical considerations, it is imperative for businesses to establish well-defined guidelines and policies for AI development and deployment. They must also proactively address concerns regarding privacy, security, and the ethical implications of AI deployment.

Responsible AI workflows involve designing AI systems that are explainable, accountable, and auditable. Our forthcoming toolkit, watsonx.governance, will enable AI workflows to be built with responsibility, transparency and explainability. AI governance should be a foundational principle, and we urge our customers to embrace governance from the outset of their AI initiatives.

The successful adoption of AI requires a mindset shift, cross-functional collaboration, and continuous learning to navigate the evolving AI landscape and stay ahead of the curve. As we look to the future, we envision expanding the use cases of enterprise foundation models beyond natural language processing (NLP). We are determined to operationalize 100B+ parameter models for bespoke, targeted applications, empowering organisations to create tailored AI solutions that drive real business value. Moreover, we will continue to enhance our AI governance capabilities, ensuring organisations can navigate regulatory landscapes and deploy AI responsibly. ■



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ACWA POWER INSTALLS LARGEST WIND TURBINE IN CENTRAL ASIA

ACWA Power installed the first wind turbine for its 500MW Bash wind farm, located in the Bukhara region of Uzbekistan. The wind turbine generator manufactured by Envision is largest of its kind in Central Asia with a capacity of 6.5MW. The installation of the wind turbine and generator was carried out by China Energy Engineering Corporation.

When complete in the first quarter of 2025, the Bash wind farm will include 79 wind turbine generators and is expected to generate more than 1,650 GWh of electricity annually, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 750 tonnes per year. ACWA Power has a 25-year power purchase agreement with the JSC National Electric Grid of Uzbekistan for the project. ACWA Power boasts a portfolio of 10 projects in Uzbekistan, with a combined investment value of \$ 7.5 billion.



DUAL FUEL, ULTRA LARGE CONTAINER, BERLIN EXPRESS AT JEBEL ALI

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EXPRESS

Hapag-Lloyd's Berlin Express ultra-large dual-fuel container ship passed through Jebel Ali Port. The Berlin Express is a state-of-the-art vessel with a capacity of 23,600 TEU. It is the first of 12 dual-fuel vessels ordered by the shipping line which will run on Liquefied Natural Gas, producing lower emissions than traditional marine diesel.

Vessels are now equipped with dual-fuel engines that can operate on both gas and conventional fuel. The Berlin Express primarily runs on LNG, an important transition fuel on Hapag-Lloyd's journey to climate-neutral shipping.

The dual-fuel technology enables Hapag-Lloyd to consider the use of bio- or synthetic fuels, like e-methane, in the future. In general terms, the use of LNG can reduce carbon emissions by up to 25%, and sulphur dioxide and fine particulate emissions by more than 90%.

Hapag-Lloyd will operate the Berlin Express between the Far East and the Arabian Gulf. It will then be transferred to its permanent route, the Far East Loop, between China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Germany.



THE WORLD CIO 200 SUMMIT



BAKU 17-19 SEPTEMBER 2023
G R A N D F I N A L E

THE GRAND FINALE OF THE WORLD CIO 200 SUMMIT 2023

A GROUNDBREAKING EVENT HAPPENING NOW!

The anticipation is building as the world's most prestigious gathering of 200 Chief Information Officers gears up for its grand finale – The World CIO 200 Summit 2023. This flagship event is currently taking place from 17th to 19th September at Marriott Hotel Boulevard, Baku, Azerbaijan, promising to be an unprecedented convergence of technology visionaries, thought leaders, and innovators from across the globe.

The World CIO 200 Summit has been a hallmark of excellence, knowledge sharing, and innovation in the field of Information Technology. Over the years, it is serving as a platform for CIOs to exchange ideas, discuss

challenges, and explore groundbreaking solutions that are driving digital transformation and technological advancement. The grand finale of the World CIO 200 Summit is marking the culmination of a journey that is spanning 50 countries, showcasing the global reach and impact of this remarkable event.

The theme this year is all about the 'Rise of the power', and the summit is excited to explore what this means for IT leadership around the world. With Year of the Eagle, we are reminded of the great strength and vision of this majestic bird. In many cultures, the eagle symbolizes leadership, power, and vision but most importantly – FOCUS and these are the

key qualities that IT leaders need to cultivate in order to succeed in today's fast-paced and ever-changing business environment.

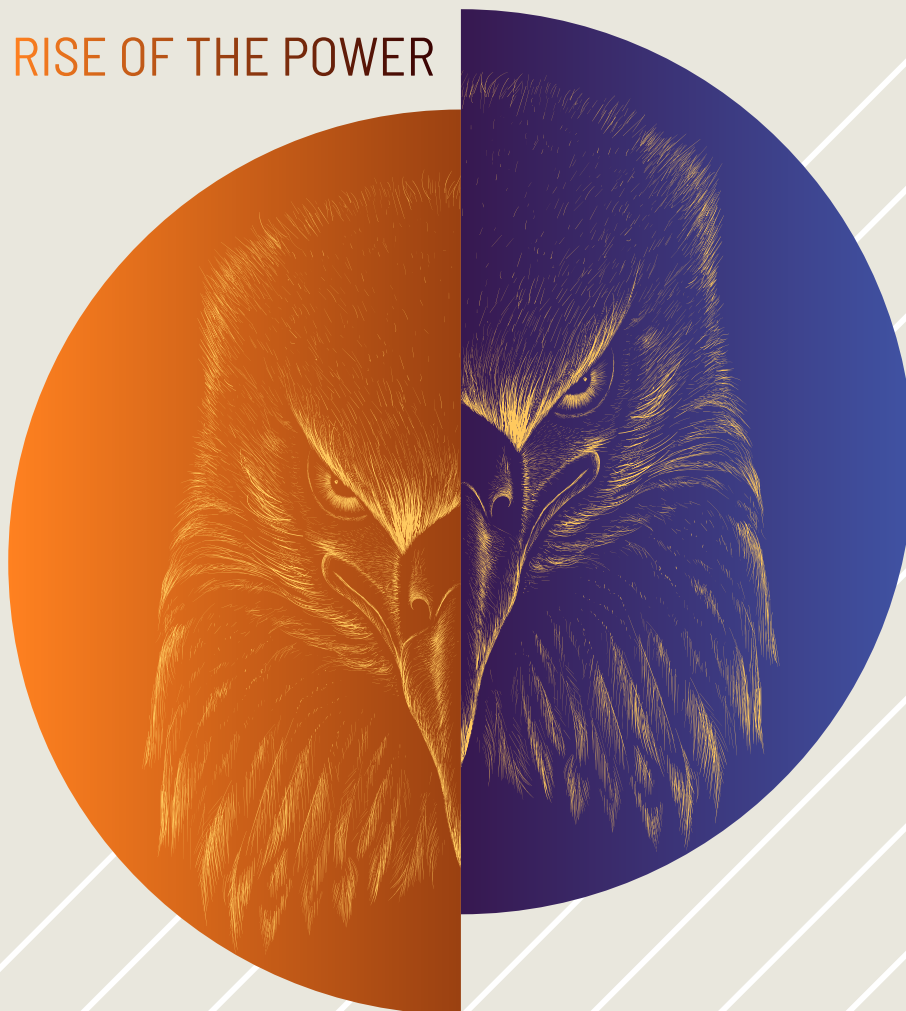
Renowned CIOs, technology experts, and thought leaders will deliver keynote addresses, panel discussions, and workshops, offering unique perspectives on the future of technology. The summit will include a prestigious awards session honouring outstanding achievements in technology leadership and innovation with The World CIO 200 Awards and DX Inspire Awards.

The Global CIO Forum was excited to unveil the inclusion of the CIO World Moto Challenge, reflecting the event's commitment to innovation, teamwork, and shared experiences. Attendees from across the globe had the opportunity to participate in this, which was designed to bring together tech enthusiasts, industry leaders, and professionals in a setting that went beyond traditional networking. The Welcome Dinner Night marked the culmination of this remarkable gathering, offering attendees

an opportunity to relax, unwind, and build meaningful relationships in a convivial atmosphere.

The World CIO 200 Summit has consistently been at the forefront of technology leadership, fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and recognition of excellence. The grand finale of the World CIO 200 Summit promises to be an unforgettable gathering of technology visionaries, thought leaders, and innovators, uniting them in their shared commitment to advancing the digital landscape. ■

RISE OF THE POWER



Saudi based Bab Rizq Jameel collaborates with Metavisionaries Academy to launch sciences camp

Bab Rizq Jameel Company, a company that is supported by Community Jameel Saudi Foundation and aims to empower Saudi youth to acquire advanced skills that are required by the labor market, has announced its collaboration with the “Metavisionaries, a company that aims to provide trainees with advanced competencies that are utilized in the space and technology sectors and the labor market of the future, through a number of programs that are administered through its virtual academy, space innovation centers, and extended network



with industry leaders.

In this initiative, Bab Rizq Jameel will sponsor educational courses to 100 participants aging between 18 and 30. It will take the form of an immersive

training camp conducted by the Metavisionaries Academy. It will allow each participant to undertake two comprehensive courses over two weeks, covering a diverse range of space sciences topics, from Data Science, astrobiology, to satellite technology, igniting the curiosity and passion of Saudi youth in the realm of space exploration.

Renowned for its innovative educational approach, the Metavisionaries Academy is dedicated to fostering innovation and cultivating new skills in the fields of space and emerging technologies.

TECOM universities to offer AI, Industry 4.0, robotics, genetics, animation in 2023-24

Leading higher education institutions at Dubai International Academic City and Dubai Knowledge Park, members of TECOM Group PJSC, are offering new programmes aimed at future-proofing students through the 2023-24 academic year. The programmes cover topics including artificial intelligence (AI), Industry 4.0, robotics, genetics, animation, and engineering, reiterating the commitment to the Dubai Economic Agenda ‘D33’ strategy, which seeks to make Dubai a global pioneering hub for higher education and one of the world’s top three cities over the next decade.

In addition to advanced programmes in science, technology, and engineering, international universities plan to offer popular and highly anticipated courses in fields such



as media, gaming, and animation during the new academic year, in line with global expectations of the jobs expected to be most in demand over the coming decade.

There are almost 30,000 students representing over 170 nationalities at Dubai International Academic City and Dubai Knowledge Park. Thirty-seven local, regional, and international higher education institutes are based across both districts, where programmes in business, engineering, and IT noted the highest rates of enrolment as of the end of the

2022-23 academic year.

The World Economic Forum’s Future of Jobs 2023 report states big data analytics, climate change, and environmental management technologies, and encryption and cybersecurity are expected to be the biggest drivers of job growth over the next five years. Boston Consulting Group said in June 2023 that the UAE is among the Middle East’s largest geographies for gaming and e-sports and will also attract a significant number of companies seeking to capitalise on the market’s potential.

LG Electronics unveils ThinQ UP 2.0 to offer ultra-connected lifestyle solutions

LG ThinQ UP 2.0



LG Electronics is set to unveil ThinQ UP 2.0, a smart home innovation that transforms home appliances into ultra-convenient and ultra-connected lifestyle solutions. ThinQ UP 2.0 highlights the expansion of LG's successful home appliance business into non-hardware areas, including subscription services, and confirms the company's leadership in promoting the 'servitization' of home appliances.

Aligned with its new Smart Home Solution strategy and 'Zero Labor Home Makes Quality Time'

customer experience vision, LG will introduce a wide range of services designed to fulfill customers' needs and deliver greater freedom and ease in the home.

LG ThinQ UP 2.0 sets a new benchmark for personalization, tailoring product performance and service options to users' preferences throughout the entire customer journey. Unlike traditional products with fixed features and specifications, appliances compatible with ThinQ UP continuously update their essential functions and offer

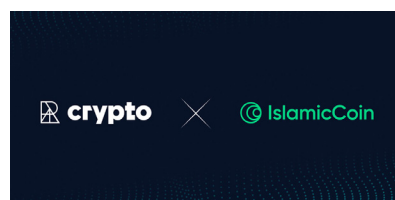
features suited to each individual user. A significant advancement over existing ThinQ UP appliances, ThinQ UP 2.0 products work intelligently to reduce the time and hassle of household chores, adding new services with flexible subscription options while also recommending additional services to make daily life smoother.

The home appliance personalization process begins even before the customer receives their products. For example, customers who purchase a ThinQ UP 2.0 washing machine will be asked to participate in a three-step 'Life Pattern Analysis' survey, conducted through the LG ThinQ app. LG analyzes the survey results and applies optimized washing cycles matched to the customer's preferences, ensuring a tailor-made user experience right from the start. What's more, customers have the flexibility to adjust the order of cycles installed on their machines and can save their personal settings on the app.

Shariah-compliant, Islamic Coin announced it is working with Republic Crypto

Islamic Coin, a Shariah-compliant, ethics-first, digital money that has been featured globally, has announced it is working with Republic Crypto, the web3 advisory group within global digital finance leader, Republic. The collaboration includes white-glove support to promote Islamic Coin's go-to-market strategy, along with advisory services focused on tokenomics, DAO governance, and long-term economic utility value. Republic Crypto will also help engage with potential strategic partners, exchanges, and market makers.

Fine-tuning the Islamic Coin value proposition, Republic



Crypto advised on creating fair and Shariah-compliant allocation options, distribution, and other mechanisms aimed at adding to the sustainability features in the ecosystem.

Separately, Islamic Coin plans to conduct a Reg D public token offering facilitated by OpenDeal Broker on Republic's retail investment platform in September 2023. Upon public launch, Islamic Coin's international community

will reap various advantages, including options to offer liquidity, stake their holdings, and gain tokens during the liquidity mining stage.

The Advisory Board of Islamic Coin is steered by members of ruling families of the UAE, including the grandson of UAE founder, Sheikh Dr. Hazza bin Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the country's Navy Chief, Sheikh Saeed bin Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Nahyan (serving in a private advisory capacity), Sheikh Khalifa Bin Mohammed bin Khalid Al Nahyan, Sheikh Mohammad Bin Khalifa Bin Mohammad Bin Khalid Al Nahyan, His Highness Sheikh Juma bin Maktoum Al Maktoum, and Her Highness Sheikhha Mariam Suhail Obaid Suhail Al Maktoum.

LG activates AI and big data controlled Direct Drive Motor in VIVACE Washing Machine

LG Electronics has unveiled its new LG 2023 VIVACE 11kg Washing Machine, the pinnacle of that evolution, bringing together large capacities and intelligent features, complete with a thoughtful design.

With this new addition to LG's washing machine range, the brand leverages AI capabilities for a more intelligent approach to laundry. The AI Direct Drive Motor uses big data of accumulated washing experience and optimizes the washing motion for an 18% increase in fabric protection. This is done by detecting the weight and softness of the fabric, thereby choosing the most appropriate motions for it. The

Inverter Direct Drive Motor is one of LG's successful products, which recently exceeded over 100 million units in production. The differentiated motor technology plays a key role in the strong and reliable performance of the brand's industry-leading solutions.

The LG 2023 VIVACE 11kg Washing Machine is also equipped with various hygiene-oriented features, such as the LG Steam technology, which focuses on eliminating up to 99.9% of allergens, including dust mites, to protect wearers from allergy or respiratory issues. It also boasts a large drum capacity of 11kg, without increasing the size of the



machine.

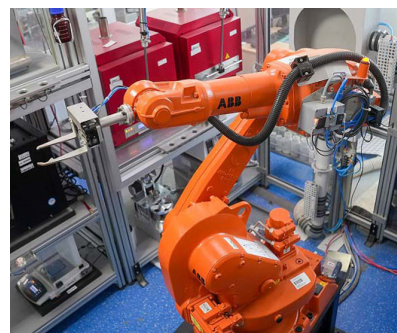
In terms of design, the LG 2023 VIVACE is designed to fit in minimalist aesthetic, with its metallic finish and a more visible display. It also comes with a tempered glass door and a stainless lifter, which contribute further to its durability and hygiene factors.

Central Laboratory of Dubai Municipality using robots, x-rays, AI to sample materials

Dubai Central Laboratory of Dubai Municipality has the use of robots that employ X-Rays and other latest AI technologies to carry out automated chemical analysis and tests on various types of cement and other construction materials. The cement testing services are linked to a smart platform for laboratory testing services in Dubai Municipality, enabling customers to receive inspection reports quickly through smartphones, tablets, and mobile devices. This technique will improve the quality of the Municipality's construction testing services as per the best international standards.

The robots utilize X-rays to precisely carry out chemical analysis of construction materials and cement products used, which allows for effectively meeting the

requirements of the construction sector in the Emirate of Dubai that is characterized by the superior speed in completing tests with the highest accuracy. The technology shortens the duration of the tests from 4 days to 8 minutes, with a record daily increase in the ratio of samples examined to 650 per cent, compared to the previous pre-application situation. This will accelerate the process of submitting laboratory results to the consulting sector and contractors, ensuring the timely completion of the project stages according to their deadlines. This is part of Dubai Municipality's efforts in adopting digital and competitive business systems, applying pioneering AI technologies, and adopting digital solutions that enhance the quality of services and streamline

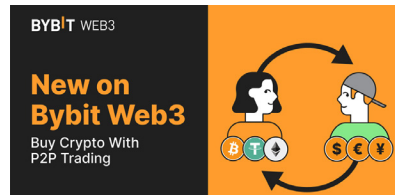


operation

Eng. Hind emphasized that cement checks are important components of concrete mixtures and the results of their inspection have an impact on the quality and sustainability of buildings, significantly contributing to increasing their life span. She also pointed out that this technology will be used in the future to prepare specialized research studies at Dubai Central Laboratory aimed at the preliminary assessment of various building constructions as well as construction products and materials.

Bybit announces crypto on-chain purchases for users

Bybit, one of Coingecko's top-five crypto exchanges, has announced that users can now buy crypto on-chain using Bybit's peer-to-peer trading service. The P2P enhancement currently allows for the purchase of USDT using more than 62 fiat currencies, with users receiving crypto on Ethereum and BNB blockchains. Users can receive USDT directly in their secure Bybit Wallet — with more cryptocurrencies to come. Bybit intelligently displays the most favorable offers, considering factors such as country/region,



preferred payment method, desired coins, and compatible providers.

Connecting buyers and sellers of crypto is part of Bybit's commitment to be the world's Crypto Ark. And Bybit Web3's P2P functionality ensures secure, peer-to-peer transactions using an escrow system to ensure each trade is performed with ease and integrity.

To break down the difficulty barrier, they have invented Bybit's Web3 Wallet, which allows users to interact with decentralized finance apps while their assets and keys are kept safe by Bybit. By connecting this service with P2P system it is again throwing open the doors for anyone to come and take advantage of the next-level opportunities offered by the blockchain revolution.

Bybit is renowned for its commitment to offering competitive rates, low fees, and steady conversion rates. With this new function, users can look forward to advantageous pricing and the freedom to choose from a wide range of payment options.

42 Abu Dhabi invites applications for upcoming Piscine coding boot camp in September

42 Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital's innovative and disruptive coding school that provides a unique peer-to-peer, gamified learning methodology, has opened applications for candidates to register and join its upcoming intense coding boot camp called Piscine, which will be held on the 4th of September, with the aim of selecting candidates to enroll in its tuition-free coding school. The Piscine, derived from the French word for "swimming pool," is an intense and immersive 25-day boot camp that tests candidates' computer programming skills as well as their drive, perseverance, and devotion towards it. It is the final stage in the application process to 42 Abu Dhabi's program.

Potential applicants who are interested in joining the upcoming 'Piscine' may visit 42 Abu Dhabi's official website, where they will have to complete 42 Abu Dhabi's pre-selection 'Game' – an online assessment which evaluates



cognitive capacity via logic and memory tests – and attend an in person Check-in discovery session to be briefed on the Piscine and the learning methodology. Once the candidates successfully pass the Piscine, they will be able to join 42 Abu Dhabi's coding program and start their exceptional learning journey.

Students who join 42 Abu Dhabi will be able to leverage the school's strategic partner network with leading organisations and companies across different industries and sectors, such as

Mubadala Investment Company, Abu Dhabi Department of Energy (DoE), Department of Government Support, Microsoft and BEACON RED.

Through the school's strategic network of partners, 42 Abu Dhabi provides Emirati talents with sponsorship opportunities and offers stipends for every UAE national who joins 42 Abu Dhabi. In the past year, 358 job and internship opportunities were offered to 42 Abu Dhabi students, including 109 sponsorships for UAE national students.

UAE based BEDU announces AI Builder Tool, BEDU AI, to improve digital engagement

BEDU, the regional pioneer at the forefront of Web 3.0 and AI, announced a strategy set to change how individuals and enterprises engage with the digital realm. The announcement comes at a time when the company is targeting substantial growth and regional industry leadership through a pre-seed investment round.

Over the past 18 months, BEDU has achieved significant milestones in its continued investment in innovation. The company showcased its leadership in emerging technology by launching the Virtual Mars Experience 2117 in partnership with the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre. BEDU's



community-building efforts include leveraging blockchain for societal engagement – a reflection of its tradition of identifying and capitalizing on emerging trends, through bringing digital collections such as 'From Desert to Mars' and 'Colonies on Mars'. Leading to BEDU making an impact at Art Dubai 2023, as it showcased the role that technology and Web3.0

are playing in the Art space.

The global AI investments projected to reach \$110 billion by 2024 and by 2030, the market impact of AI is expected to be even more significant, with estimates indicating that AI could contribute up to \$15.7 trillion to the global economy. With that BEDU's long-term vision represents fertile ground for investment.

MBZUAI establishes new departments dedicated to robotics and computer science

Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence has established two new departments and four associated graduate programs dedicated to robotics and computer science, catering to the surging global demand for these disciplines, which is expected to hit \$225 billion and \$140 billion, respectively, by 2030.

The new departments will complement the university's existing computer vision (CV), machine learning (ML), and natural language processing (NLP) departments, which are ranked among the top 20 globally by CSRankings, and will act as academic homes for new faculty, researchers and postdoctoral fellows, and students in robotics and computer science.

Aligned with the formation

of the new departments, the university has launched master's and Ph.D. programs in robotics and computer science. The new programs will help further develop the UAE's wider artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem and strengthen its position as an international hub for AI research and innovation.

The Robotics Department will focus on rigorous, high-impact, original research, emphasizing robot learning and robot algorithms rather than the development of new robot hardware. Topics of interest include deep learning, control theory, robot manipulation, quadruped locomotion, human-robot interaction, robot-assisted surgery and healthcare, swarm robotics, precision



agriculture, and environment and infrastructure monitoring.

Robotics is a transformative technology, revolutionizing sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, and transportation. Research indicates strong demand for robotics expertise in the coming years, with the robotics technology market expected to surpass US\$225.6 billion in value by 2030. This demand will be critically hampered by a predicted global talent shortage, with up to 85 million jobs potentially going unfilled by 2030 due to a lack of skilled people to fill them.

e& capital announces its participation in the Series A financing round for Ikigai Labs

e& capital announced its participation in the Series A financing round for Ikigai Labs, a pioneering firm harnessing the power of generative AI for tabular data. Ikigai Labs has secured \$25 million in this round, with contributions from e& capital, Premji Invest, and Foundation Capital. The funding will advance Ikigai Lab's vision of transforming enterprises' utilisation of AI, enabling organisations to master AI through the Ikigai Academy and the easy, fast, and powerful Ikigai platform.

Ikigai Labs offers a no-code AI solution, helping organisations address the challenges of harnessing large datasets and



ensuring accurate forecasting. The company's innovative approach combines state-of-the-art time series forecasting with three core tools: aiMatch for data reconciliation, aiCast for prediction, and aiPlan for scenario planning.

Ikigai is poised to revolutionise the way businesses engage with AI. First, by prioritising functional teams and meeting them where they are on their AI journey both through their powerful, intuitive AI platform and through their engaging, hands-on academy.

Second, while the tech world is enamoured with text- and image-based generative AI, Ikigai recognises the substantial value of tabular data, the true treasure trove for most businesses.

With this investment in Ikigai Labs, e& capital reaffirms its dedication to championing innovative technologies. This strategic move is anticipated to catalyse the next generation of AI-driven solutions, heralding a smarter, data-centric business world.

PureHealth acquires UK based Circle Health Group, an operator of hospitals for \$1.2 billion

PureHealth, an Abu Dhabi based holding company and the largest healthcare platform in the Middle East, has signed an agreement to acquire Circle Health Group, UK's largest independent operators of hospitals, in a deal valued at \$1.2 billion.

Circle Health Group joins a roster of world-class healthcare providers that make up PureHealth companies, including SEHA – Abu Dhabi Health Services Company; Daman – Nation Health Insurance Co.; PureLab – which is the Gulf Cooperation Council's largest lab network; Rafed – Group Procurement Organisation; Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Centre, which leads cutting edge stem cell research.

PureHealth is the largest healthcare group in the Middle East and this acquisition



underlines PureHealth's commitment to delivering world-class medical care to patients globally, as well as developing new clinical care pathways made up of the best healthcare providers to meet patient needs. PureHealth aims to invest in scientific innovation and healthcare infrastructure within all its assets,

including Circle Health Group, giving access to patients around the world to the best possible medical care with the highest international quality standards, leading them to live longer, healthier and happier lives.

The acquisition of Circle Health Group is PureHealth's first entry into the UK. This acquisition forms part of PureHealth's global expansion programme, which includes acquisitions previously completed in the USA, as well as entry in other international markets. Patients in the UAE and the UK will benefit from PureHealth's acquisition, both through the diversity of choice in healthcare provision, expanded network of medical professionals and expertise combined with knowledge sharing that will be developed.

EDGE concludes high-level visits to major defence industry players and partners in Brazil

EDGE concluded a series of high-level visits to key government bodies, and major Brazilian industry players and partners within the defence, advanced technology, and industrial manufacturing sectors in Sao Paulo State. The group met with the Secretary of Public Security; the Secretary of Public Management; the Vice Governor of São Paulo; and the Secretary of International Affairs of the Sao Paulo State Government – all of whom pledged their support of EDGE's plans to grow in the region through partnership, knowledge exchange, R&D cooperation, and the co-development of advanced solutions across the aerospace, smart weapons, unmanned and autonomous platforms, and naval domains.

The visits took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest commercial hub and economic powerhouse,



and the neighbouring city of São José dos Campos, Latin America's leading aerospace research and manufacturing centre.

The sheer pace of advancement, particularly here in the State of Sao Paulo, has enabled to become the continent's leading centre of aerospace manufacturing. With a population of 46.5 million, and a state GDP of US\$ 721.06 billion this year – one of the highest in the world, well placed to fully support EDGE in achieving its goals in the region, not only by delivering incentives and an industrial framework, but also

by providing a geographical and manufacturing base, and all the necessary resources across the defence and advanced technology eco-systems, supply chains, and logistics network and infrastructure.

During its visit to Sao Paulo, the EDGE delegation also held constructive meetings with high-ranking dignitaries in the Brazilian Navy, and with major industry players and partners, and signed strategic agreements with Brazil's Department of Aerospace Science and Technology (DCTA), and Turbomachine.

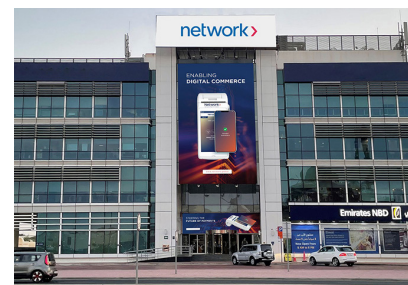
Network International announces investment of EGP 1 billion in Egypt

Network International announced an investment of EGP 1 billion to accelerate economic growth in Egypt with innovative payment solutions. The investment is a result of Network's firm belief in Egypt's economic potential and is to fulfil Network's purpose to help economies and businesses grow by simplifying payments and commerce.

Network will further enhance its state-of-the-art payment technology and capabilities in Egypt to accelerate the transition from cash to digital payments. The investment will support the country's remarkable progress

in financial inclusion objectives and accelerate GDP growth. A significant share of investment will be centred on procuring, deploying, and maintaining approximately 100,000 innovative Point-of-Sale (POS) machines, propelling the future of digital payments in Egypt. The remaining portion will be channelled into the implementation and seamless operation of Network One, Network's cutting-edge payments technology platform.

This investment underlines their continued commitment to bringing innovative payments solutions to Egyptian businesses.



The presence in the Egyptian economy spans over two decades, during which they have served numerous banks and financial institutions. The investment goes beyond monetary value – the focus includes continuing to hire and develop local talent and leadership. Egypt has been their Africa headquarters for many years and 700+ Egyptian colleagues serve 160+ banks across Africa and 65 banks in Middle East.

UAE's Artificial intelligence Office and Mastercard sign MoU to increase readiness



The UAE's Artificial intelligence, Digital Economy and Remote Work Applications Office and Mastercard signed a Memorandum of Understanding to increase Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities and readiness in the region. An initial focus of the effort will be dedicated to battling financial crime, securing the digital ecosystem, and driving inclusive growth in the UAE and beyond.

HE Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications emphasized the UAE government's dedicated efforts towards strategic collaborations with the private sector and leading international companies. These collaborations have been recognized as pivotal catalysts for expediting the adoption of Artificial Intelligence, a crucial

component of the nation's journey towards digital advancement and prosperity.

His Excellency pointed out the significance of bilateral cooperation. He emphasized the importance of realizing the aspirations outlined in the UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence 2031. This strategy aims to consolidate the UAE's position as a leading hub for Artificial Intelligence. Concurrently, it seeks to foster the development of comprehensive technology-driven frameworks within priority sectors.

Furthermore, His Excellency praised Mastercard's efforts in adopting AI, as well as their inauguration of a global center dedicated to Artificial Intelligence and advanced technology within the UAE.

Saudi based Quant Data & Analytics partners with Satellogic for sub-meter Earth data

Quant Data & Analytics, a Saudi provider of Data & AI Products and Enterprise Solutions focused on the real estate and retail sectors, recently announced a transformative 3-year agreement with Satellogic, a leader in sub-meter resolution Earth Observation data collection. This strategic agreement leverages Satellogic's high-resolution satellite imagery to serve and evolve the ever-expanding property tech landscape across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

Quant's collaboration with Satellogic will lead to the development of derivative products, transforming and broadening the adoption of data science, AI, and SaaS products for real estate and retail. Satellogic's flexible and scalable business



Ahmed Bukhamseen, CEO of Quant Data & Analytics

model will support Quant's Suhail platform, an interactive real estate tool for agencies, developers, and clients and Fruits360's Location Intelligence tool, a state-of-the-art tool designed to empower restaurants with insights for geographical expansion and strategic location selection. The agreement will empower the Saudi Arabian and Gulf region's real estate sector by delivering AI solutions and unparalleled insights, accuracy, and efficiency for driving growth and enhancing

decision-making processes.

This collaboration is timely, coinciding with increased Saudi government investment in infrastructure to stimulate tourism, residential, and commercial real estate development. Leveraging Satellogic's high-resolution EO satellite constellation, the agreement will enable monitoring of rapid urban development and compliance with environmental and zoning regulations, enhancing competitiveness in the high-growth market.

By harnessing the power of satellite imagery, Quant is laying the foundation for a futuristic approach to real estate development, monitoring, and decision-making. This collaboration promises to be a game-changer in utilizing big data to make transformative impacts on real estate, retail and beyond.

e& capital leads \$5 million Series A financing round in Maxbyte to drive robotics



e& capital announced a lead investment in the \$5 million Series A financing round of Maxbyte, an innovator in the field of integrated digital and robotics solutions, to strengthen the company's market expansion and product development, empowering it to pioneer innovative solutions that enable manufacturers in

the digital age. Headquartered in the UAE, Maxbyte is a leading provider of Industry 4.0 solutions with a strong presence in the automotive, defence, utilities, and food and beverage sectors. It aims to enable smart connected industrial enterprise for flexibility, productivity, predictable revenue and profit growth, as well as sustainability.

The funding aims to expedite growth by bolstering the sales team, refining the go-to-market strategy and partnerships, and scaling projects across new geographies and industries.

Maxbyte provides a wide array of services across three main domains, including Industry 4.0 and AI applications for digitising industrial value chains to Smart and Sustainable Factories, robotics and automation solutions for enabling autonomous factories, and Industry 4.0 education programmes to empower manufacturers and the community for the advancement and adoption of digital transformation and Industry 4.0 journey.

Recently, e& enterprise and Maxbyte entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), designating e& enterprise as the exclusive distributor and system integrator of Maxbyte products in the UAE.

Mashreq announces incorporation in Pakistan, following its Centre of Excellence

Mashreq, one of the leading financial institutions in the MENA region, announced the successful incorporation in Pakistan. This marks a significant milestone in Mashreq's strategic expansion and underlines its commitment in driving digitization and financial inclusion in high growth markets. To mark this significant occasion, a high-level Mashreq delegation including senior members of the executive committee visited Pakistan to strengthen ties and consider collaboration to recognize this momentous milestone along with our independent board members Syed Naseer Hassan and Rashid Khan.

Currently, Mashreq has



a Centre of Excellence in Pakistan to deliver a portfolio of innovative products. Leveraging its successful incorporation in Pakistan, Mashreq is confident that its entry into the country will lay the foundation for a fruitful partnership that will benefit consumers, businesses, and the economy alike. Mashreq is

committed to fostering the growth of the country by harnessing local talent and expertise. Through cultivating a digital ecosystem supported by robust infrastructure and institutional frameworks, Mashreq aims to propel Pakistan towards a future of digital innovation and financial inclusivity.

Hisense to open new production facilities, new flagship stores across Levant, GCC, North Africa

Global electronics leader Hisense has revealed its plans to build on production capabilities and sales growth opportunities throughout the Middle East and North Africa as it gears up for the opening of two new production facilities, new offices, and three new flagship stores across the Levant, GCC and North Africa. This will allow Hisense more flexibility when delivering its award-winning lineup of products from home entertainment and home appliance categories in market to customers, streamlining delivery times and increasing after-sales support offerings.

Hisense's regional growth has been elevated by the expansion of local offices in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, and Algeria, improving regionwide operations and a more robust



Jason Ou, President of Hisense Middle East and Africa

partner network and relations strategy. This advancement has also brought the brand closer to its key markets, allowing Hisense to better cater for its end users and network partners. We also look forward to catering to local requirements in terms of

products, lifestyle, environment and social that influence the customers consumption patterns and habits with a global R&D centre based in Dubai, that will be an innovation centre for Hisense to introduce new products and technology.

The DataFlow Group partners with ministries in Bahrain to provide certificate verification services

The DataFlow Group, a provider of verification services, is supporting Bahraini ministries and government sector authorities in authenticating educational degrees and certificates for skilled professionals across the country. This strategic collaboration aims to strengthen Bahrain's skilled employment sector, driving sustainable economic growth across key industries.

Bahrain's Prime Minister's Office recently enforced a new requirement for all public and private sector institutions to verify the authenticity of educational degrees and international accreditations. While equivalency is no longer

a requirement, professionals seeking employment in key growth sectors such as vocational institutions, legal practice, and education, must now provide verified educational and license documents.

The DataFlow Group will closely collaborate with several Bahrain ministries to provide comprehensive primary source verification (PSV) services to applicants seeking employment, in line with the new requirements. This integral role involves authenticating essential employment documents, including academic degrees, employment certificates, professional licenses, work



Sunil Kumar, CEO The DataFlow Group

permits and passports. PSV ensures the authenticity and accuracy of documentation required for employment, contributing to the country's highly skilled workforce.

Admiral Energy partners with Autel to bring EV chargers to Middle East

The partnership represents a commitment by Admiral Energy to deliver chargers to the UAE from July 2023, with plans to roll out chargers across the region.

Admiral Energy, a company that specialises in developing and engineering integrated zero-emission energy solutions, announced a major partnership with Autel, provider of EV charging solutions, to bring electric vehicle chargers to the Middle East and Africa markets.

The chargers, which have been assessed in the UAE, will cater to the growing demand for electric vehicles in the region. The UAE government alone anticipates that 70,000 EV charging points will be required by 2030 to cater to the increasing demand for green transport.

The strategic partnership represents a commitment by Admiral Energy, part of Admiral Global DMCC to deliver chargers to the UAE from July 2023, with plans to roll out the chargers across the region itself. With COP28 fast approaching, the news announcement highlights the ambitions of both Admiral Energy and Autel to service the rapidly growing electric vehicle sector in the Middle East as companies turn towards greener solutions for their commercial fleets.

The standalone high speed DC charging solutions will be made available for fleet and commercial applications, with Admiral Energy working closely with Autel to develop chargers that are specifically suited to the GCC market. The electric vehicle market in the GCC is expected to reach US\$6.7 billion by 2027 due to increased logistics and travel activities in the region, as traditional vehicles are replaced with zero-emission models.

Announced at the electric vehicle Innovation Summit, EVIS at ADNEC, the charger range include five DC charging solutions, ranging from 47kW DC Compact to 400kW DC charger solutions. They are set to be compatible with 99.5% of vehicle models, with auxiliary balancing and healthy charging to extend the battery life by up to 20%.



The chargers will be offered to Admiral Energy's partners and dealers to further support their journey towards carbon neutrality.

The chargers are expected to be available from July 2023. This follows reports that global electric car sales are expected to reach 14 million this year, up from 10 million last year, according to the International Energy Agency's Global electric vehicle Outlook.

Commenting on the announcement: Graham Bremer, Chief Marketing Officer of Admiral Global DMCC and GM of Admiral Mobility, commented: "We are proud to be bringing more charging units to the market to help provide a more sustainable infrastructure for the electric vehicle industry. Our partnership with Autel means that we are collaborating closely with experts in E-Mobility products to help build an ecosystem in the region that will bring us one big step closer to carbon neutrality."

Commenting on the announcement, Claire Zuo, Regional Director of Autel IMEA said: "We are excited to be collaborating with Admiral Energy on this major announcement. We are playing a key role in accelerating the region's EV infrastructure and we are looking forward to helping to build a commercial vehicle industry that is providing a greener and more sustainable operation for all." ■

Astra Tech conducts workshop for licensed Abu Dhabi farmers to sell fresh produce

The Botim ultra app is poised to create a dynamic marketplace, establishing a transformative ecosystem that bridges the gap between farmers and consumers in the country.

Astra Tech, a consumer technology holding group based in the UAE, collaborated with Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority, to organise a workshop at their headquarters. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce licensed local farmers to the Botim ultra app's e-store, which will enable them to display and sell their seasonal fresh produce and products directly to customers.

The Botim ultra app's expansive user base of over 8 million individuals in the UAE, will allow local farmers to significantly boost their brand's online presence and visibility, it will also enable farmers to embrace digital transformation, adopt new approaches in marketing and distribution and gain access to a range of convenient and cashless payment options through the app's advanced fintech capabilities.

Recent data released by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment indicated that the UAE boasts approximately 38,000 operational farms, showcasing immense potential. The Botim ultra app is poised to create a dynamic and thriving marketplace, establishing a transformative ecosystem that bridges the gap between farmers and consumers in the country.

Commenting on the workshop, Abdallah Abu Sheikh, Founder of Astra Tech and CEO of Botim, said: "By harnessing the Botim ultra app as a platform, we are equipping local farmers in the UAE with digital tools to increase their online presence and reach, bringing them closer to their customers and millions of app users. Introducing digital solutions in agriculture have the power to transform traditional practices by providing farmers with data and insights that will help them understand and serve their customers better. We are very excited to be part of this journey and look forward to onboarding more farmers across the UAE on Botim."

Eligible licensed local farmers in the UAE



will be able to establish their online brand on the Botim e-store for free in three simple steps and take advantage of 24 hour payment settlement policy, competitive and fixed commission and in-app marketing support. Local farmers can additionally request logistics support to deliver their products through the entities' partnership with Aramex.

Astra has made strategic acquisitions of prominent platforms including UAE Central Bank-licensed fintech platform PayBy, on-demand home services platform Rizek, and MENA's communications platform, Botim. In 2023, Astra seamlessly integrated Rizek and PayBy into Botim, creating the world's first Ultra app.

This groundbreaking app offers users seamless home, e-commerce, and fintech services that outpace competitors by three times in terms of speed. Astra Tech's innovative approach revolutionises the connection between consumers and businesses, elevating the digital experience across the MENA region and beyond. ■

AVEVA announces launch of latest Predictive Analytics for monitoring of industrial assets

The software makes it significantly easier to deploy, validate, maintain, interpret results of predictive models, enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions.

AVEVA, a global vendor in industrial software driving innovation and sustainability, announced the launch of its latest AVEVA Predictive Analytics software release, purpose-built for predictive monitoring of industrial assets in oil and gas, power, chemicals, mining and minerals, and manufacturing. The software helps industrial operators achieve the highest possible levels of reliability and performance of industrial assets while improving sustainability and increasing workforce productivity.

This software release makes it significantly easier to deploy, validate, maintain, and clearly interpret the results of predictive models, enabling asset stakeholders to make better, more timely and informed decisions to improve profitability.

The new release features automated model building. This new capability enables users to autonomously deploy new predictive models in a single action. This greatly reduces the time required to deploy and scale the predictive maintenance solution while reducing errors and ensuring consistency in model development.

With rising market pressures industrial organisations must find ways to facilitate agile, resilient, and profitable operations. The predictive analytics market continues to evolve as the technology has advanced to a point where the data can be leveraged in such a way that asset stakeholders can easily operationalise predictive monitoring of their assets at scale enabling rapid improvements in asset reliability and performance.

Key for success is connecting data, systems, and processes, enabling people throughout operations and maintenance to make, and act upon, decisions confidently. Scalability of predictive maintenance efforts for maximum return on investment will be seen as a must have for many industries going forward.

AVEVA continues to deliver on market and customer requirements with a bring your own



DAVID BLEACKLEY,
Value Chain
Optimisation Lead
AVEVA

algorithm capability. This enables data science teams to add their own artificial intelligence algorithms and intellectual property to the solution. Furthermore, deep integration with the AVEVA PI System ensures AVEVA's customers are continuing to capture increased value from their existing industrial software investments.

David Bleackley, Value Chain Optimisation Lead at AVEVA said: "Data is the new currency of the industrial world, and an effective predictive asset monitoring strategy is predicated on the ability to continuously transform massive amounts of sensor data into clear and actionable results. Operationalising a predictive monitoring program at scale has never been easier than it is now with AVEVA's PI System and latest predictive analytics software release".

The company's secure industrial cloud platform and applications enable businesses to harness the power of their information and improve collaboration with customers, suppliers, and partners. Over 20,000 enterprises in over 100 countries rely on AVEVA to help them deliver life's essentials: safe and reliable energy, food, medicines, infrastructure and more. By connecting people with trusted information and AI-enriched insights, AVEVA enables teams to engineer efficiently and optimise operations, driving growth and sustainability. ■

Increasing appetite for sustainable tourism among leisure travellers across the globe

Research shows travellers feel tourism sector is making little effort to become sustainable, indicating there is much room for the sector to respond and make a difference.



JENNY DAVIS-PECCOUD,

Global Head of Sustainability and Responsibility Practice
Bain and Company



KARIM HENAIN,

Partner
Bain and Company
Middle East

Following a dip in 2020, tourism globally is again on the rise and is expected to reach \$17 trillion in size by 2027, compared to \$11 trillion prior to Covid-19. Bain and Company's new research study, *Sustainable Tourism: An Untapped Opportunity for Green Growth*, reveals that there is an increasing appetite for more sustainable tourism among leisure travellers across the globe.

They will choose destinations and providers, airlines, hotels, restaurants, and tour companies based on their sustainability records and are starting to pay a premium for it. On the other hand, research shows that some travellers feel that the travel and tourism sector is making little or no effort to be more sustainable, indicating that there is still much room for the sector to respond and make a difference.

There is a significant opportunity among the sustainability enthusiasts' segment of travellers interested in visiting the MENA, Middle East, and Northern Africa region. The study's aim is to better understand the behaviours and preferences of relevant travellers interested in MENA as a destination. The research covered consumers from six markets: Germany, Italy, France, UK, Saudi Arabia, and China.

"The uptake in sustainable tourism is driven by an appetite to travel sustainably and make more responsible choices. Bain has developed a framework defining the components of a sustainable tourism experience around three pillars: environmental impact, example eco-friendly transportation and accommodation

options, social responsibility, example DEI standards, and community engagement, example contract with locals," says Karim Henain, Partner at Bain and Company Middle East.

"It is important to go green in the tourism sector as it allows tourism growth, environmental conservation, and social well-being to be mutually reinforcing. Green, sustainable tourism will eventually help create jobs, support the local economy, and reduce poverty," said Jenny Davis-Peccoud, Global Head of Sustainability and Responsibility Practice at Bain and Company.

Overall, more than two-thirds of consumers surveyed in the selected markets consider sustainability aspects to be important or extremely important when traveling for leisure, and 73% expect sustainability to become more important over the next five years. In addition, they state that sustainability considerations influence their choices, 64%, are willing to pay extra for more sustainable offerings, 66% and would recommend a holiday destination based on sustainability considerations, 57%.

Among the respondents, Bain identified sustainability enthusiasts: those who consider sustainability extremely important, both in their daily life and when traveling for leisure, ~30% of survey respondents.

Sustainability enthusiasts were found in all markets, but demographics varied by country. For example, sustainability enthusiasts from China and Saudi Arabia were highly educated millennials, whereas their European counterparts were equally spread across age groups, income, and education levels. ■

Deliverect, a SaaS company that accelerates online orders for restaurants, announced Deliverect Star award

By identifying the top performers in the digital food industry, Deliverect not only celebrates their exceptional operational excellence but also highlights them as role models for others.

Deliverect, a global scale-up that integrates and accelerates online orders for restaurants, announced the launch of its Deliverect Star award. Through this long-term campaign, customers who had the highest number of orders with 0% failures will be recognised for keeping this record since the beginning of the year. Deliverect will be selecting one restaurant per month for its first round of awards.

The aim of this initiative is to recognise and honour the restaurants that receive online orders from various food aggregators and channels, which are also Deliverect partners, throughout the region. Having 0% failed orders in a restaurant leads to enhanced customer satisfaction, increased customer loyalty, and reduced food waste. It signifies efficient operations, promotes positive online reviews, and contributes to long-term success.

Naji Haddad, General Manager of MENA at Deliverect said: "To date, we have processed more than 300 million orders globally and acknowledge that the restaurant industry is highly competitive, especially with the rapidly changing consumer demands and preferences. Therefore, it is important to recognise the restaurants who have stayed ahead of the curve and managed to increase their sales while at the same time satisfying every order they receive. We want to encourage restaurants to follow the same path and deliver excellence to their customers."

By identifying the top performers in the digital food industry, Deliverect not only celebrates their exceptional operational excellence but also highlights them as role models for others. The award brings significant visibility and prestige to the winners, elevating their positioning as delivering outstanding customer experiences through the seamless



NAJI HADDAD,
General Manager MENA
Deliverect

fulfilment of online orders.

This recognition will not only boost customer confidence and loyalty for the winners but also inspire other restaurants to improve their digital order accuracy, streamline operations, and reduce food waste. The Deliverect Star award thus fosters a culture of excellence and continuous improvement within the digital food ecosystem.

Winners will receive a printed certificate to celebrate their success, along with a trophy. Deliverect will also be empowering the selected winners by amplifying their success on social media and through email newsletters, to share this achievement with the rest of the community. The selected top performers will also receive a digital badge that they can add to their online presence in addition to a branded box with office desk goodies.

Deliverect is a global SaaS company that seamlessly integrates online orders from food delivery channels, such as Uber Eats, DoorDash, Deliveroo and Just Eat, allowing food service establishments to improve operations, increase customer satisfaction, and boost profits. Over 43,000 businesses trust Deliverect's platform and suite of products to power their front of house and back of house. Available in 42 markets worldwide, Deliverect works with restaurants of all sizes as well as food brands like Taco Bell, Burger King, and Unilever. ■



HP, Decathlon, Lonati Group innovate footwear manufacturing towards sustainability

By harnessing HP's Multi Jet Fusion technology and Lonati's shoe-upper knitting machines, this paves the way for a future of sustainable footwear production.

HP joined forces with Decathlon, one of the world's largest sports companies, and Lonati Group to unveil game-changing manufacturing concept. Together, they presented an innovative and sustainable approach to shoe manufacturing that is set to reshape the industry. By harnessing the power of advanced technologies, including HP's Multi Jet Fusion technology and Lonati's shoe-upper knitting machines, this collaboration paves the way for a future of sustainable footwear production.

Traditionally, shoe production requires numerous parts, adhesive materials, and a significant workforce. However, HP, Lonati Group and Decathlon are revolutionising the process by leveraging the power of 3D printing. In their latest innovation, they have developed a sports shoe that embodies the future of footwear manufacturing.

This ground-breaking shoe combines Lonati's meticulously crafted sock with an innovative midsole and outsole produced using HP's state-of-the-art 3D printer. Lonati's XT-MACHINE and Double Cylinder E1530XS knitting machines allow the production of shoe uppers with single or double-layer fabric, resulting in an integrated upper that offers unparalleled comfort, lightness, performance, and quality.

HP's Jet Fusion 5200 printer is producing both the midsole and outsole of the shoe, showcasing the cutting-edge capabilities of 3D printing technology. To ensure optimal performance, these components are manufactured using BASF Ultrasint TPU01 material, a versatile thermoplastic polyurethane powder known for its exceptional shock absorption, and flexibility. By integrating

these advanced materials and technologies, Decathlon and HP are revolutionising the sports shoe industry, paving the way for innovative designs that deliver unmatched comfort, durability, and performance.

With this partnership, the companies want to share a main message, focusing on the advantages of 3D printing and digital knitting for manufacturing at an industrial level, emphasising the following key points:

CUSTOMISATION

The shoe is highly customisable, enabling consumers to personalise their footwear to suit their preferences and needs.

CIRCULARITY

By using a glue-free assembly method, the shoe can be easily repaired when damaged. The cushion and upper parts can be separated, allowing for targeted repairs without the need to discard the entire shoe. This not only extends the lifespan of the product but also reduces waste.

Moreover, the use of a single material, TPU, thermoplastic polyurethane, for the grip and cushion parts enhances the shoe's recyclability. All of this contributes to a more sustainable and environmentally friendly product life cycle.

PRODUCTION

By leveraging 3D printing, the shoe can be produced locally, reducing transportation emissions, and supporting local economies.

FLEXIBILITY

The manufacturing process allows for stock lifetime optimisation and enables on-demand production and thus reducing waste. ■



EMBRACING **THE METAVERSE** AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TRANSFORMATION

The Metaverse is rapidly becoming a tangible reality, poised to revolutionize the way businesses operate and engage with their clientele.



The concept of the Metaverse has the potential to transform the way businesses operate and interact with their customers in a number of ways. The Metaverse will help in driving the next wave of growth, while paving the way for new opportunities in industries like manufacturing, transportation, oil and gas, healthcare and better delivery of government services.

There are five key factors influencing metaverse advancements. They include devices (wearable), infrastructure, applications, experience and data. Businesses can have a dedicated presence and virtual storefronts in the metaverse where consumer experience will be totally enhanced.

Metaverse is expected to change how companies collaborate internally and with external partners through shared virtual workspaces, as well as how customer service and technical support are delivered via augmented technologies.

PLANNING FOR A PRESENCE IN THE METAVERSE

One major goal of the metaverse is to offer a significantly better user experience than what is currently available. As a starting point, organisations need to be creative. They need to plan how they can provide realistic experiences to customers in a virtual environment. Some key considerations for organisations who are planning to adopt the metaverse in providing their services



are business objectives, target audience, security and privacy, user experience, continuous improvement and scalability.

GROWING SECURITY AND PRIVACY FACTORS

Data security and privacy are critical components of an organisation's strategy for the metaverse. They ensure the protection of sensitive information and maintain the trust of customers, employees, and partners. Businesses need to embed cybersecurity throughout their operations as the user acceptance depends on the assurance that organisations will safeguard customers' and visitors' information. In the metaverse, this information goes well beyond a user's account information. It

WALID GOMAA,
CEO
Omnix International

tracks the full range of their activities. As a starting point, companies must reinforce their cyber defences with stronger infrastructure and systems, along with the necessary human expertise.

IMPACT OF THE METAVERSE

The metaverse could have a major impact on organisational culture and employee environments. It plays a key role in boosting productivity, minimizing rework and downtime, eliminating geographical barriers, increasing operational efficiencies and allowing new opportunities for distributed work.

It also helps in on-the-job training and knowledge transfer. Manual-based training might not be effective or appealing to new hires, especially millennials. AR training with smart glasses offers a more intuitive method of instruction. Additionally, it bridges the skill gap between experienced workers and newcomers by making work instructions and checklists readily available.

Tasks involving equipment or tasks that can't be easily replicated can be taught securely by allowing trainees to manipulate virtual components and see consequences. Workers can receive interactive, on-the-job training and supervision simultaneously from remote experts. Subject matter experts can mentor junior field workers, offering valuable knowledge of complex equipment. Remote experts can seamlessly connect with field technicians to help get machines back online faster. It can also enhance collaborations, increase productivity, streamline workflows, and improve customer satisfaction. ■



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FINDINGS FROM EQUINIX GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY TRENDS SURVEY

Equinix's global survey of 2,900 IT decision-makers confirmed AI uptake is on the rise across all industry sectors, with 85% of respondents seeking to benefit from AI.

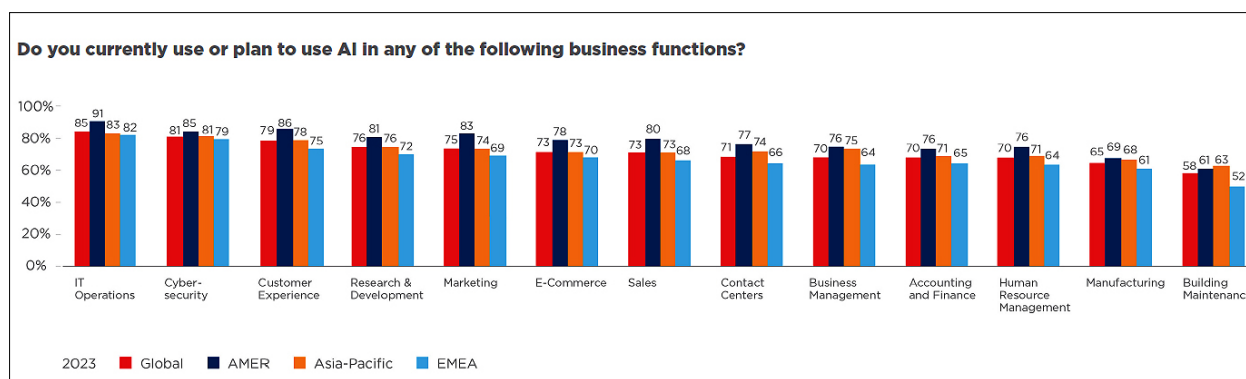
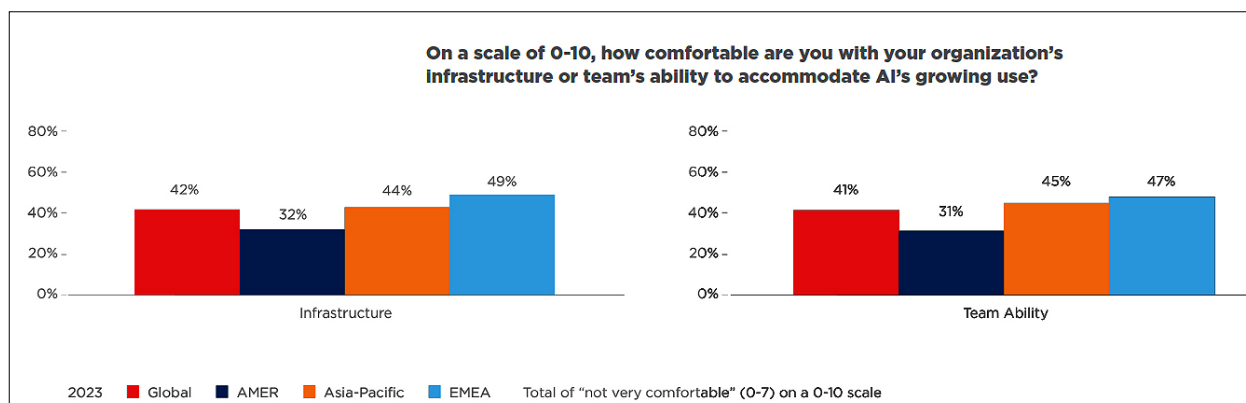
IT leaders in EMEA have the most uncertainty about the ability of their infrastructure to accommodate the needs of AI, 49%, compared to leaders in Asia-Pacific, 44% and the Americas, 32%. In addition to digital infrastructure updates, the survey also highlighted the need for education and collaboration to enable IT teams to optimise the deployment of this infrastructure, with AI and machine learning expertise being sought by 52% of those growing their IT teams.

Technology leaders globally are expediting AI's integration into their organisations, and

it is increasingly becoming a critical capability to enable intelligent and autonomous systems that power a modern business. Those who fail to maximise its use could fall behind.

Equinix's global survey of 2,900 IT decision-makers confirmed AI uptake is on the rise across all industry sectors, with 85% of respondents worldwide seeking to benefit from the advantages of AI and already using or planning to use it across multiple key functions.

The independent study, commissioned by Equinix, surveyed more than 2,900 IT decision-makers in diverse enterprises across the Americas,





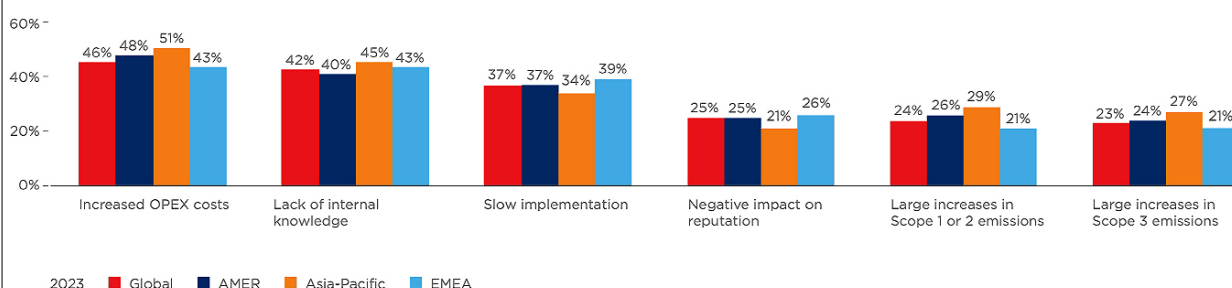
KAMEL AL-TAWIL,
Managing Director
Equinix MENA

Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, US, Asia-Pacific, Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and EMEA, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UAE, UK. Respondents were

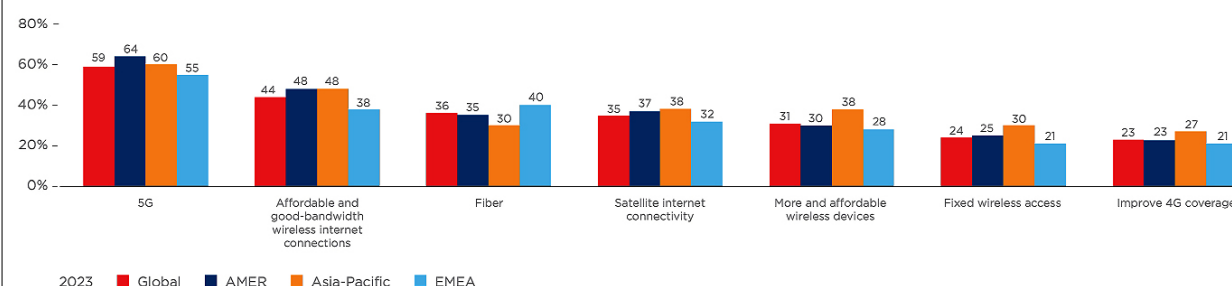
selected for participation from Dynata's online panel. The survey was conducted online in March and April 2023.

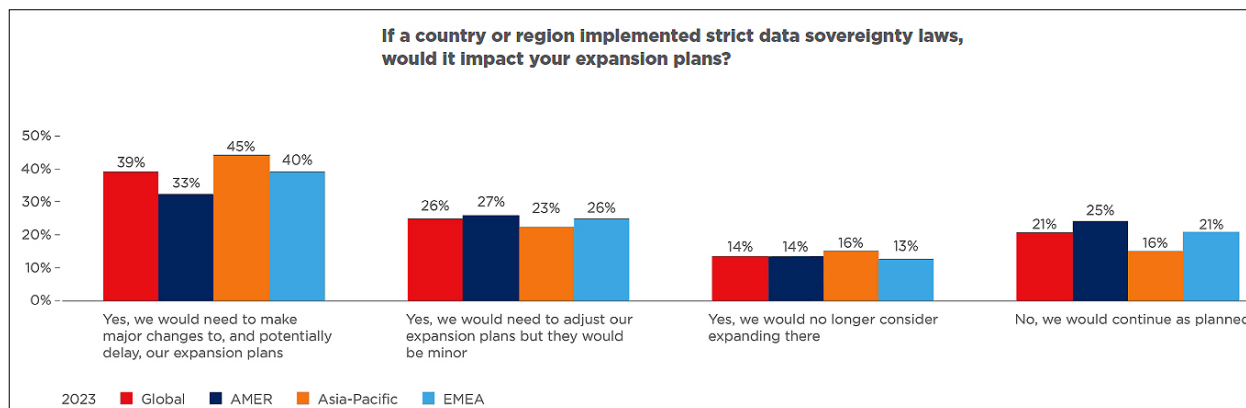
The survey, which examined IT leaders' responses to AI advances in their organisations, comes after a year of significant AI breakthroughs that saw the technology rapidly deployed

Which of the following would deter your company from adopting a newer technology (like AI)?



Do you believe there is a particular technology that could more quickly solve the digital divide?





“

It is interesting to note that UAE businesses are more comfortable with accommodating AI's growing use compared to global averages.

”

in applications across both the business-to-business and business-to-consumer sectors.

Successful development of accurate AI models depends upon secure and high-speed access to both internal and external data sources that can be spread across multiple clouds and data brokers. For example, as enterprises embark on creating their own private generative AI solutions, they may want to process their confidential data at a private and secure location with high-speed access to external data sources and AI models. Furthermore, we are entering an era where more data is being generated at the edge.

Hence, AI processing has to move to the edge for performance, privacy and cost reasons. In order to satisfy the above requirements, tech leaders can implement hybrid solutions where AI model training and model inference can occur at different locations. Ultimately, to create scalable AI solutions, businesses must consider whether their IT frameworks can accommodate the required data ingestion, sharing, storage and processing of massive and diverse data sets, while keeping

sustainability in mind.

More than three out of four IT leaders surveyed in the UAE, 77% say their existing IT infrastructure is prepared for the demands of artificial intelligence, AI technology, as the country experiences widespread adoption across industries, according to the Equinix 2023 Global Tech Trends Survey. The UAE scored higher than other countries in preparedness to accommodate AI, with only 58% of global and 51% of EMEA IT leaders believing their infrastructure is prepared for AI.

In the UAE, organisations are most likely to be using AI, or planning to do so, in IT operations, 97%, followed by cybersecurity, 95%, and sales, 95%.

It is interesting to note that UAE businesses are more comfortable with accommodating AI's growing use compared to global averages. AI is being used across diverse business functions in the country from IT Operations to customer experience, and marketing. This result is testament to the country's visionary leadership which first launched its Artificial Intelligence Strategy in 2017, aiming to be the world leader in AI by 2031. ■

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DHL Global Forwarding, FAMCO introduce Volvo Electric FM Truck in UAE, Middle East

DHL Global Forwarding announced a successful partnership with the UAE's leading commercial vehicle and machinery company FAMCO to introduce the Volvo Electric FM Truck in the Middle East as a testament to their commitment to sustainable logistics solutions. This marks DHL's deployment of the first Volvo truck in its UAE fleet, after having already deployed over 50 Volvo trucks in its European fleet.

The signing ceremony for this partnership took place at the DHL MEA Innovation Center on the August 24. DHL Global Forwarding



CEO, Middle East and Africa, Saloodo

and FAMCO officials, in the presence of several dignitaries. DHL Global Forwarding's

partnership with FAMCO in the UAE reinforces a shared vision of promoting sustainable logistics

DHL wants to reduce all logistics-related emissions to net-zero by 2050. It is doing this by committing to a set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions target by 2030 in line with the Paris Agreement, investing EUR 7 billion to reach it. This investment will be used to increase its use of sustainable aviation fuels, design all new buildings to be carbon neutral, offer a comprehensive portfolio of green products and electrify 60% of its last-mile delivery by 2030.

UM MENAT partners with Teads in Saudi Arabia to assess emissions linked to media campaigns

UM MENAT has taken a proactive step towards environmental sustainability by joining forces with a Teads' tool to assess and address the carbon emissions linked to the media agency's advertising campaigns. With remarkable success already achieved in Saudi Arabia during the initial rollout, UM and Teads are now poised to expand this eco-friendly initiative across the entire MENAT region.

Today's conscious consumers are showing a growing preference for companies that prioritize sustainability and have a clear purpose. According to Scope 3 estimates, 1 million digital ad impressions are equivalent to a flight between Paris and New York in terms of environmental impact. In response to this concern, at the beginning of this year, Teads announced a global partnership with IMPACT+, a leading third-



party solution aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the digital advertising industry.

The primary goal of this collaboration is to foster a sustainable media ecosystem that prioritizes respectful ad experience while also supporting quality journalism. By working together, Teads and IMPACT+ are committed to addressing environmental concerns in the digital advertising space and aligning with the values of today's environmentally conscious consumers.

Within this framework, UM will execute campaigns for clients,

which will be measured by Teads through its supply chain using a dynamic carbon measurement and reduction initiative exclusively available through Teads Ad Manager. By incorporating this data into the planning and execution phases, UM and Teads can create a more carbon-efficient solution.

Teads is dedicated to minimizing the use of heavy creatives, reducing wasted impressions caused by inefficiencies in viewability, attention, and targeting, and eliminating technological challenges associated with excessive quantities across various platforms. By providing a seamless end-to-end omnichannel platform and forming direct partnerships with premium publishers, Teads has the capability to oversee multiple aspects of the media supply chain.

Saudi based ACWA Power installs wind turbine for 500MW project in Uzbekistan

ACWA Power, has successfully installed the first wind turbine for its 500MW Bash wind farm project, located in the Bukhara region of Uzbekistan. The wind turbine generator (WTG) manufactured by Envision is the largest of its kind in Central Asia with a capacity of 6.5MW. The installation of the wind turbine and generator was carried out by engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor China Energy Engineering Corporation (CEEC).

CEEC was awarded the EPC contract for each of the 500MW

wind farms in

When complete in the first quarter of 2025, the Bash wind farm will include 79 wind turbine generators (WTG) and is expected to generate more than 1,650 GWh of electricity annually and reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 750 tonnes per year. ACWA Power has a 25-year power purchase agreement (PPA) with the JSC National Electric Grid of Uzbekistan for the project.

ACWA Power boasts an impressive portfolio of 10 projects in Uzbekistan, with a combined investment value of US\$ 7.5



billion. The company's continued investments and partnerships underline its dedication to the sustainable development of Uzbekistan's energy landscape, promoting economic growth, and advancing the country's renewable energy goals.

Alibaba publishes its latest ESG report disclosing its Scope 3+ decarbonisation

Alibaba published its latest Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Report in late July where for the first time it disclosed its Scope 3+ decarbonization progress since it pioneered the concept in 2021 for a wider

The research, titled "The Sustainability Trends Report 2023", polled more than 14,000 consumers from 14 markets across Asia, Europe and the Middle East. It finds that convenience (53%) and affordability (33%) are critical for driving behavioral changes on consumer sustainability and businesses can make it easier for consumers to make sustainably conscious choices.

Consumers from the emerging Asian markets are the most willing to learn how to make more sustainable purchase online

Consumers globally are embracing more sustainable lifestyles, but there are variations



across regions in the level of engagement and how they want to live and shop more sustainably.

Over half (58%) of consumers say they've already engaged with sustainable practices and they feel they are already personally doing a great deal. There's also a general openness towards learning about sustainable online practices, with an average of 73% saying that they would welcome more information about how to make purchases online that are more sustainable.

Half of the consumers would only go sustainable if it's convenient; with a third believing sustainability is not affordable

Lack of information on how products are sustainable (48%) and the prices of sustainable products being too high (45%) are cited as the main barriers for consumers to make more sustainable purchases.

Over half of the consumers (53%) surveyed say they would only make sustainable choices if they were convenient, which is especially the case in Asian markets (61%) compared to European markets (36%). A third (33%) say living sustainably is not affordable, with Thailand (84%) leading the pack, followed by UAE (41%) and Spain (37%).

Wizz Air reduces carbon emissions intensity by 11% compared to the previous fiscal year

Wizz Air, Europe's fastest-growing and most environmentally sustainable airline globally, has published its annual sustainability update, presenting the progress towards its sustainability targets. In the fiscal year 2023, Wizz Air achieved the carbon emissions intensity of 53.8 grams per passenger per km, a decrease by 11% compared to the previous fiscal year performance. This is Wizz Air's lowest ever recorded result for one fiscal year and the lowest performance among major competitor airlines.

Wizz Air's sustainability strategy is based on four



pillars – environment, people, governance and economy

Wizz Air's sustainability milestones in fiscal year 2023

Achieved carbon emissions intensity of 53.8 grams per passenger/km, a decrease by 11% YoY and 6% to the pre-covid level.

Continued its fleet renewal and expansion programme with 35 new A321neo aircraft joined the fleet.

Fleet average age decreased to 4.6 years, making it the youngest fleets of any European airline with over 100 aircraft.

Signed four agreements with SAF producers for future supply: Mabanaf/P2X Europe, OMV, Neste and Cepsa.

Made its first £5 million equity investment in a British biofuel company, Firefly, and participated in \$50 million investment in CleanJoule, a US-based biofuel start-up.

Became the first airline in Hungary to commercially test the SAF supply chain in collaboration with Neste, MOL and Budapest Airport.

Bupa Global selects 18 sustainability-focused startups from Bupa Eco-Disruptive event

Bupa Global selected 18 sustainability-focused startups worldwide that qualified in the finals of the Bupa Eco-Disruptive Live event. Held in London recently, the event attracted over 400 attendees, with 20 speakers discussing the importance of startups leading sustainable innovation.

Bupa Arabia on Sustainability
Bupa Arabia Cooperative Insurance, a leading healthcare company in Saudi Arabia, integrates sustainability practices into all its operations to reduce energy consumption and environmental pollution and its negative impact.

Bupa Arabia has, taken up several initiatives to save water and electricity consumption, such as replacing conventional lighting with LED lights, installing water aerators at



sales branches, timers in air conditioners, and lighting panels in Bupa Arabia buildings.

Financial Support

For the Bupa Eco-Disruptive Live event, qualified startups selected by Bupa received financial support and marketing expertise to develop pioneering solutions and products that address climate change in new and innovative ways. Chosen from more than 1,000 applicants from around the world, the 18 startups were picked based on the positive impact of their work on health and the

environment.

Healthy Environment

Bupa Eco-Disruptive Live is a crucial step toward promoting a sustainable environment by supporting startups in developing more efficient healthcare technologies, which address climate change, preserve the environment, and provide health benefits.

The program aims to partner with startups and integrate their solutions into Bupa's products and services, driving innovation and sustainability in healthcare.

Mubadala Energy and Indonesia's Pertamina collaborate on carbon capture applications

Mubadala Energy, the Abu Dhabi-based international energy company, and Pertamina, the Indonesian state-owned integrated energy company, have entered into an agreement to discuss, explore and potentially engage in energy transition initiatives, primarily focused on carbon capture, utilization and storage applications in Indonesia.

In line with Mubadala Energy's commitment to play an active role in the energy transition and explore new energy solutions including CCUS, the partnership will see both companies cooperate to conduct joint studies and,

potentially, business development activities in this strategic area of carbon mitigation.

The agreement provides a framework to explore CCUS solutions for Pertamina's and Mubadala Energy's existing portfolio of assets in Indonesia through collaborative discussions and evaluation of relevant projects. In addition, this Memorandum of Understanding will facilitate knowledge sharing between both parties while exploring potential joint investments in upstream projects that may seek to utilize CCUS applications.



Commenting on the signing, Mansoor Mohamed Al Hamed, CEO Mubadala

Mubadala Energy has been present in Indonesia since 2004, with four operated Production Sharing Contracts (PSC), including the Sebuku PSC containing the award winning Ruby gas field, in addition to the Andaman I and South Andaman Gross Split PSCs.

Emirates NBD Group signs UAE Climate-Responsible Pledge supporting UAE's net zero initiative

Emirates NBD has signed the UAE Climate-Responsible Companies Pledge initiated by the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. As a part of its ongoing commitment to achieving net-zero goals, Emirates NBD Group is among the seventh cohort of 15 signatories in the UAE to sign the pledge and commit to implement carbon emission reduction goals and follow more sustainable methods in managing their operations, according to a timeline compatible with the UAE's national path to climate neutrality by 2050. The pledge was made in the presence of Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almhairi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment at the launch of the 11th National Dialogue for Climate Ambition organised by the Ministry under the slogan 'Accelerating the Shift; Decarbonizing Ground Mobility'



in collaboration with Emirates Driving Company.

The pledge commitments include organisations stepping up their collective efforts to combat climate change by measuring and reporting their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in a transparent manner, developing ambitious science-based plans to reduce their carbon footprint, and sharing these plans with the

UAE government to contribute to achieving the national net-zero target by 2050. Moreover, signatories pledge to factor in climate change mitigation and adaptation as core values and principles of their businesses and operational models, and adopt an all-inclusive approach that engages youth, women, and vulnerable segments of society in developing their net-zero plans.

Dubai CommerCity launches Logi-Flow integrating blockchain technology with logistic operations

Dubai CommerCity, has announced the launch of “Logi-Flow”, a move towards integrating block chain technology with the logistics operations of small and medium-sized companies. This integration aims to lower costs for these companies while enhancing the overall flexibility and efficiency of their logistics, particularly in digital trade. This initiative aligns with Dubai CommerCity’s objectives to fulfill the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. The objective is to strengthen Dubai’s status as a hub for the digital economy and to support national strategies related to the digital economy and future technologies.



Abdulrahman Shaheen, Senior Vice President for Property Management and Supply Chain

These endeavors are also closely connected to the Emirate’s process of digital transformation. This will be acknowledged through a distinctive digital system that enhances business operations and facilitates business processes, alongside the incorporation of Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies, such as block chain for small and

medium-sized businesses. Logi-Flow, a secure and measurable system, relies on a pay-as-you-go approach tied to transaction volume. It offers round-the-clock support without incurring IT service and maintenance costs, ensuring transparency throughout the entire order process, from creation to delivery.

Aspen Technology launches domain training programme for asset-intensive industries

Aspen Technology, introduced an industry domain training program for companies in asset-intensive industries who are onboarding recently-graduated engineers. The comprehensive program is designed to enable new process engineers, control engineers, reliability engineers, supply chain planners, cost estimators and others to build industry-specific competencies within each of these roles. AspenTech created the program specifically to help industrial companies navigate considerable gaps in industry domain knowledge as specialized senior engineers retire and a new generation enters the workforce.

For example, in a recent survey entitled Gaps in the Energy

Workforce, conducted by the Center for Energy Workforce Development, there is a considerable increase in younger populations (younger than 32) within the energy workforce, including 43% of technicians and 25% of engineers. Competencies required to succeed in the process industries. This program helps companies achieve operational excellence and positions their new-generation workforce to address their operational business challenges.”

The curriculum was designed in partnership with leading domain experts, such as Becht, a 60-year-old engineering services company serving energy, chemicals, power and alternative energy industries,



David Reumuth, Sr. Director, Customer Support and Training, AspenTech

to offer integrated process, refining, and chemicals domain practice for a holistic, real-world learning experience. More than 1000 users from 150+ companies across the globe have already completed the training.

BEEAH Tandeef implements AI City Vision using 360 cameras fitted to waste collection vehicles

BEEAH Tandeef, announces a monumental step towards cleaner urban environments with AI City Vision. This groundbreaking AI 360 Camera system for waste collection vehicles, the first of its kind in the region, is set to revolutionise how cities are maintained and waste is managed. A standout innovation, AI City Vision processes images and videos captured by 360-degree external cameras with exceptional accuracy. By recognizing conditions such as waste bin status, overflowing waste, and road cleanliness, this AI-driven technology streamlines

waste management, leading to significant time savings and smarter asset management. Overflowing bins are logged into a portal, optimising waste collection and cleansing routes. Focusing on the beautification and upkeep of the city, the AI City Vision system aligns perfectly with BEEAH Tandeef's dedication to a cleaner and more sustainable future in the UAE and beyond. Alongside the groundbreaking AI City Vision system, BEEAH Tandeef also introduced additional innovative solutions. With a Facial Recognition Bus Attendance system,



BEEAH Tandeef's workforce transportation buses are transforming labour management within the industry. This system ensures seamless, accurate and timely attendance records while reducing administrative burdens. Further building on its innovative legacy, BEEAH Tandeef continues to find success with the Smart Bracelet designed for its dedicated labourers.

Facilities management service provider Emrill introduces virtual reality to command centre

Emrill has enhanced its command centre with virtual reality technology capabilities to advance business functions across its projects and operations.

The command centre, located at Emrill's headquarters in Dubai, utilises new-generation technology to provide employees and clients with access to video and visual information across projects with advanced VR headsets. The introduction of these innovative technological solutions bolsters Emrill's command centre, which centralises multiple systems into one integrated digital hub to increase visibility, makes real-time information more accessible, and tracks and analyses data across the FM provider's contracts. The addition of virtual reality capabilities to the command centre is the latest extension of Emrill's advanced



digital FM solution, TECHSPHERE, to increase the efficiencies in the FM industry. The command centre integrates Emrill's clients' building management systems through open protocols enabling efficient monitoring of operational performance and allows the organisation to monitor and control building systems and infrastructure, including heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, power and

electrical distribution systems, security systems, and other critical equipment. The centre receives and processes alerts to manage facility incident reports efficiently by signalling on-site teams to rectify any potential issues. Emrill's enhanced command centre increases sustainable operations by tracking environmental, social, and governance (ESG) metrics across multiple project sites.

Network International activates WeChat Pay on 5,000 N-Genius POS terminals

Building on its long-term partnership with Tencent Holdings, the official developer of WeChat, Network International, the enabler of digital commerce across the Middle East and Africa region, is offering WeChat Pay acceptance on its POS terminals across the UAE enabling Chinese visitors to transact seamlessly, safely and securely via their WeChat Pay mobile wallet. WeChat Pay is currently accepted at 5,000 Network payment terminals across the UAE – including in over 400 outlets at prominent malls within Dubai forming part of Network's extensive merchant partner ecosystem. Network is in the process of activating WeChat Pay in all its Android-



powered terminals. The addition of WeChat Pay to Network's acceptance offerings is in line with the company's commitment to position itself as a differentiator by continuously making new and relevant propositions available to merchant partners to meet the needs of their customers. The UAE's tourism sector has made a strong comeback putting the

country on track to become the world's most visited international destination by the end of 2023. Over the past decade, China has ranked among the top-five source markets for Dubai. Data from Dubai Economy and Tourism indicates that the number of Chinese visitors to Dubai reached 177,000 in 2022, up 131 per cent from 2021.

Fugro USV equipped with Blue Volta completes subsea inspection of Umm Al Quwain gas field



Having commissioned the region's first-ever government-licensed USV in early 2023, Fugro has successfully completed its first USV operation for a client in the Middle East. The Fugro Pegasus USV (part of the Blue Essence fleet) was mobilised for Chinese operator Atlantis in early June to perform a subsea survey and inspection of the UAQ3 platform within the Umm Al Quwain gas field.

This pioneering operation was executed from Fugro's onshore remote operations centre (ROC) in Dubai using a specialist team of mariners and surveyors. The Fugro Pegasus USV was equipped with a Blue Volta electric remotely operated vehicle (eROV), which was used to inspect the integrity of the platform's structure and generate a detailed map of the surrounding seabed. The data collected was streamed to the

ROC, allowing Atlantis to review the data in real-time during the operation. This enabled the team to quickly identify and investigate areas of further interest to develop a comprehensive risk assessment for the client's upcoming decommissioning programme.

The Blue Essence USV fleet forms part of Fugro's remote and autonomous operations programme to deliver market-leading Geo-data insights to its clients with improved efficiency, safety and sustainability. Thanks to their economical design and optimised fuel system, the USVs eliminate carbon emissions by 95% versus conventional vessels and can spend up to two weeks at sea without refuelling. Furthermore, the ability to remove personnel from the offshore environment significantly reduces health and safety risks and creates the opportunity to build a more localised and diversified workforce onshore.



AmiViz is the first B2B enterprise marketplace focussed on Cybersecurity business in the Middle East and Africa, designed specially to serve the interests of enterprise resellers and vendors

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FIVE IMPORTANT WAYS THAT SMART MANUFACTURING ENABLES THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

IoT and cloud tech are transforming manufacturing, advancing sustainability.

As we have all learned by now, there is no single technology that will provide a silver-bullet solution to the challenges of sustainability. However, there are technologies that can make a lot of important contributions, in different ways and in different places, to get us to where we need to go.

One such technology or group of technologies, is the concept that is traditionally referred to as the Internet of Things. In truth, it is a term that

struggles to capture the full range of what these types of systems can now do.

Customers do not ask us for IoT in the same way that Chief Technology Officers do not ask for, 'some IT'. They think in terms of specific business outcomes and how they can monitor, control, and optimize their business processes to get those outcomes. Here are five of the most significant ways in which the new paradigm in cloud connectivity is already driving the circular economy forward.


YASSER HASSAN,

Managing Director of the Commercial Sector in the MENAT region at Amazon Web Services

QUESTIONING MANUFACTURING'S SACRED COWS

There is a lot of dogma in manufacturing; a lot of principles that are set in stone and rarely questioned, because they are a safety net for protecting things that are important to a manufacturer's bottom line. Traditional manufacturing lore has it that it is rarely worth the risk of shutting equipment down. Concern about reliability issues constrains the way manufacturing operates because everything has to be optimized around keeping processes going.

Cloud-connected manufacturing changes the game in two important ways. First, by digitally enabling manufacturing, capturing, and analyzing valuable data, it removes the mystery around reliability issues. Cloud connectivity shows what fails and why – delivering insights that enable predictive

maintenance to solve the issue rather than running the entire operation in a certain way to prevent it. This responsiveness has greatly increased in recent years thanks to the Hybrid Edge, which puts decision-making technology within a factory itself, so that it is able to respond to data immediately rather than just uploading it to the cloud. Second, cloud-connected manufacturing provides a new level of data granularity that you can feed into machine learning models to identify exactly what the optimum speed and the optimum runtime for a piece of equipment are. AWS IoT SiteWise and AWS IoT SiteWise Edge work with a broad and deep set of partners to create data-driven insights, and deliver them via drag-and-drop, no-code dashboards and intelligent applications. These make insights more accessible and more actionable to manufacturers.

KEY

TAKEAWAYS

- There is no one-size-fits-all solution to sustainability challenges, but technology can play a crucial role in addressing them.
- IoT technology is beyond just a buzzword. It is a powerful tool that helps achieve specific sustainability outcomes by enabling monitoring, control, and optimization of processes.
- IoT allows a closer examination of material chemistry, leading to reduced energy consumption and a shift towards using recycled materials, contributing to sustainability.
- Digital twins constructed from cloud data optimize processes within factories and supply chains, enhancing efficiency and contributing to circular economy practices.
- Industries like automotive use IoT to monitor the performance of products and trace back manufacturing conditions, enabling proactive actions and reducing waste.

The data collected through these types of applications enables manufacturers to build detailed digital representations of factories, known as digital twins. Created through tools like AWS IoT TwinMaker.

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CHEMISTRY

Manufacturing works to a lot of fixed formulas that have been proven to deliver the quality and durability of product that is required. These formulas are often built around using virgin materials, with a high level of purity, and applying a lot of heat to removing moisture from those materials. The formulas exist because they work – but they clearly restrict the scope for using recycled materials, and for improving energy efficiency. And just because they're one way of getting to an outcome does not mean they are the only way.

Using sensors and cloud connectivity, we are able to get under the surface of the chemistry that takes place in manufacturing, understand what is really happening – and what's really required at each stage. When we applied smart manufacturing to the cement industry, we were able to help manufacturers identify the optimal amount of time for heating, to avoid under or over-cooking clinker. Using digital twins, we could assess what level of moisture content

they actually needed to remove, to enable the downstream processes to work properly. As a result, we were able to significantly reduce energy use and the environmental footprint associated with cement production.

As we move onwards into the circular economy, taking a closer look at the chemistry of materials used by cloud-connected enterprises can do a lot more. We can analyze the impact of using slightly different materials, from different sources, to those we have used in the past.

MONITORING INCREASINGLY VARIED SUPPLY CHAINS

Constructing digital twins from cloud data has a huge role in optimizing processes within factories – and experimenting with the use of new materials. It is also got a big role to play in evolving supply chains. The automotive industry is leading the way here, as it takes a circular approach to recycling Electronic Vehicle (EV) batteries through giga factories such as Northvolt Ett in Sweden. Companies are using real-time digital twins of their entire supply chains so that they can understand where materials are coming in, what the ship times are at each stage, where they incur risks of shortages and what backup plans, they can put in place. This gets very



granular, down to the levels of sensors in trucks and tanks to monitor levels.

TRACKING THE ONGOING LIFECYCLE OF PRODUCTS

Tracking the ongoing performance of products, and being able to connect this back to precise manufacturing conditions, is another area in which the auto industry is

leading the way. Because there's so much value contained in an EV battery, it is important for auto manufacturers to monitor how they perform. If they detect patterns of deteriorating performance over time, they can trace that back to the conditions in which a batch of batteries were produced – and determine if they need to recall or update those batteries. ■



RENEWABLE ENERGY ORGANISATIONS MUST STEP UP

Renewable energy enterprises must stop cybercriminals from infiltrating their infrastructure, and the best way to do this is to anticipate cyber-attacks and communicate those risks for favourable decision support.

Green energy is a key piece of the puzzle for the future of our planet, and while there is an uphill battle to build sufficient renewable energy capacity across the globe, there is another critical issue decision makers should not lose sight of — cybersecurity. The sad reality is threat actors see the renewable energy sector through the same dollar-sign lenses that they see every other industry through.

Last year, ahead of CS Hub's Government

and Critical Infrastructure Digital Summit, Anuj Sanghvi, Technical Lead at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, said renewable energy penetration is on the rise and warned, this adoption makes them a lucrative target for cyber-attacks due to the interconnectedness with the power grid and their potential catastrophic consequences.

A Google search will reveal that renewable energy players have already fallen prey to cyber-attacks in recent times. Three German



BERNARD MONTEL,
EMEA Technical Director and
Security Strategist, Tenable

wind-energy firms, Deutsche Windtechnik AG, Nordex SE, Enercon GmbH, saw their operations disrupted by cyber-attacks and, in late 2021, wind turbine manufacturer Vestas was targeted by cybercriminals, and saw its IT systems and data compromised.

These are few examples of cyber-attacks against the renewable energy sector. Threat actors will continue their assault as attack paths and surfaces evolve in-sync with the adoption of modern technology and systems. All this points to one thing, the renewable energy sector must up its cybersecurity game.

INTERCONNECTED AND VULNERABLE

A variety of drivers have pushed organisations to adopt technology that allow new ways of working, which means background infrastructure is now far different compared to years past.

As an example, enabling remote working and the modernisation of operational systems including engineering and manufacturing applications, has seen organisations embrace the cloud. A knock-on effect of this is physical devices and systems of all types are connected to a network and are programmable. At the same time, new compute platforms and development shifts including cloud, DevOps, mobile and SaaS have made it possible to move from concept to capability with ease.

For this to work properly, two systems that traditionally operated in silos have converged: one side comprises IT systems such as servers, routers, notebooks, while the other includes operational technology systems such as

human machine interfaces and programmable logic controllers.

And whereas in the past OT systems and environments had restricted or no connectivity and may even have been air-gapped, the deployment of smart technology has meant internet-connected assets are mandatory and encompass IT and OT systems, thus dissolving the once defined network perimeter.

NETWORK CHALLENGES

In the past, traditional network security has seen the fortification of a network's perimeters, and, with regards to OT security, a discussion was rarely given much thought as those systems were typically seen as protected by air-gap. Both concepts have been rendered invalid since organisations have adopted hybrid infrastructure comprising on-premises systems, private and public cloud, and connected devices.

This significantly increases organisational risk as it effectively expands available attack vectors, while inadvertently making cyber-threats harder to detect, investigate and address. It is also worth remembering that an attack against OT systems can have physical consequences for individuals or company infrastructure on top of the threat to the organisation's data. Complicating matters further is the fact that cyber breaches that occur on one side of the connected, converged infrastructure can migrate to the other – from OT to IT and vice versa.

A key issue, particularly to the OT side of an organisation – given the business criticality of these systems – is the zero-downtime tolerance policy.



An attack against OT systems can have physical consequences for individuals or the company on top of the threat to the organisation's data.



Another challenge is legacy infrastructure; OT environments typically feature legacy technology that is built for process functionality and safety, along with static devices and a perimeter protective layer.

Considering modern systems increasingly connect devices, machines, sensors, thermostats and more to the internet - which means the number of vulnerable touchpoints keeps increasing - securing OT systems is of the utmost importance.

When looking at IT and OT systems, it is worth recognising the difference between these systems' lifecycles. Whereas IT infrastructure is designed to be updated on a regular basis, OT systems are designed to operate for years or even decades without updates, upgrades.

In some cases, OT

infrastructure could be as old as the physical plant it is installed in, which means a full inventory of assets along with maintenance and or change management records may not be up-to-date or may not even exist. This makes it difficult for an organisation to protect its industrial operations and should be addressed by maintaining a detailed inventory of all assets and infrastructure.

EXPOSURE MANAGEMENT

There has been a marked increase in ransomware attacks, nation-state sponsored threats and zero-day vulnerabilities weaponised within the last 12 months. This has put under-resourced security teams under yet more pressure, and forced them to balance working practices, improvements to



security systems and posture, and tight budgets. Though this may seem like an impossible task, going back to the basics with cyber-hygiene can have a dramatic impact on lessening an organisation's cyber exposure.

The impact of cyber incidents can only truly be understood when business and security leaders combine efforts. Business leaders must ensure that security leaders fully understand the organisation's mission and take initiative-taking steps to protect the assets, data, staff, and tools needed for critical activities.

Determining where weaknesses and vulnerabilities exist is only possible when a holistic view of cloud and on-premises, IT and OT environments, and everything in between including the

interdependencies that exist for critical functionality, is available to experts.

With this established, the next critical step is to identify what could cause theoretical versus practical damage. Organisations can safely assume that there is a plethora of hidden OT systems that were temporarily installed, forgotten about and so are under-protected. Keeping this in mind, steps can be taken to address risks where possible or monitor assets that could fall prey to attacks.

Vulnerability management in its most traditional sense focused on addressing flaws in software that could be taken advantage of, leveraging common vulnerabilities and exposures, CVEs glossaries. Exposure management goes beyond this as it offers additional

context such as how a system is configured, who is using it and what they have access to. It enables cybersecurity teams to operationalise their preventative security programs, which means organisations have a clearer understanding of the effectiveness of their security suites.

The writing is on the wall, renewable energy organisations must step up and stop cybercriminals from infiltrating their infrastructure, and the best way to do this is to anticipate cyber-attacks and communicate those risks for favourable decision support. Organisations that do this well will be able to successfully defend against existing and emerging threats and will be key players in a future based on renewable energy ■



CHATGPT AND PHISHING. SHOULD WE BE WORRIED?

The technology sophistication has wowed the world but as the dust settles and the hype calms, inevitable questions on what these tools mean for the future of cybersecurity are fast clouding the knee-jerk enthusiasm.

The launch of ChatGPT took the world by storm creating a host of new opportunities and challenges, virtually overnight. With capabilities to generate infinite realistic responses and to perform a host of useful and creative applications it is no wonder the tool captured the attention of millions.

From simple email drafting, to helping students pass exams, to writing code, or even just generating song lyrics and jokes, new AI tools have a lot to offer a lot of people from

any occupation with limitless applications for everything from work to leisure time.

The technology sophistication has wowed the world but as the dust settles and the hype calms, inevitable questions on what these tools mean for the future of cybersecurity are fast clouding the knee-jerk enthusiasm. In our always-on digital world opportunistic hackers are known to take advantage of any new tool for their own benefit and the reality of technology is that nothing is ever completely fool proof.



DAVID HOELZER,
SANS Fellow and AI Expert
SANS Institute

Technology is built by humans and with human beings comes human error, so technology advancement presents yet more new toys for hackers to play with. So, what are the actual drawbacks and how can we stay on the front foot to ensure AI brings benefits and not just another cybersecurity pitfall to swerve?

CHATBOT MISUSE

ChatGPT has gripped the world but amid the hype and enormous potential, it is important to come to grips with the reality and understand the real impact of advanced AI solutions. While the machine learning chatbot has game-changing capabilities, it is also plumping up hackers' toolkits, with criminals able to find ways to use, abuse, and trick the system into performing tasks that play right into the hackers' hands.

With 450,000 new pieces of malware detected every day and a staggering 3.4 billion daily phishing emails entering our inboxes, attacks of this nature have become so commonplace and sophisticated that they are harder than ever to detect.

Now the excitement of the AI tools has settled people are beginning to question the security element, and just like any change to the ways we work and behave, along with the buzz comes the promise of security threats as cybercriminals will

look to exploit and expand their hacker toolkits.

EXPLOITING TOOLS

The easiest and most commonplace application of AI chatbots for cybercriminals will be generating sophisticated and persuasive phishing emails. The Dubai Police recently warned against phishing scams in the form of emails urging recipients to pay fines and service fees.

In days gone by, if an email had typos, then it set phishing alarm bells ringing. Now it is the opposite, and we advise all to look for typos as a positive sign that the email's from a human!

You can tell the chatbots to be imperfect by asking it to sprinkle text with a couple of typos, so it depends on what stage cybercriminals are at in teaching it to perform phishing tasks. As well as this, spam is one of the first places cybercriminals will take this since it is one of the fastest things the model can do.

Research has revealed that AI chatbots are currently easily influenced by text prompts embedded on web pages. So, cybercriminals can use indirect prompt injection – where they secretively embed instructions in a webpage. If a user unknowingly asks a chatbot to ingest a page, this can activate the placed prompt.

Researchers even found that Bing's chatbot can detect other tabs open on a user's device, so hackers simply need to embed



While the machine learning chatbot has game-changing capabilities, it is also plumping up hackers' toolkits, with criminals able to find ways to use, abuse, and trick the system into performing tasks that play right into the hackers' hands.



the instructions on any webpage open in a tab. Cybercriminals can then easily manipulate the user through the AI tool and could attempt to obtain sensitive information such as your name, email address and credit card details.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

These technological advances come with risks in the form of bias, misinformation, privacy concerns, automated attacks, and even malicious use. Search engines already represent a well-known privacy risk in that any information that is unsecured or publicly available on a site that is scraped by the search engine will potentially be indexed.

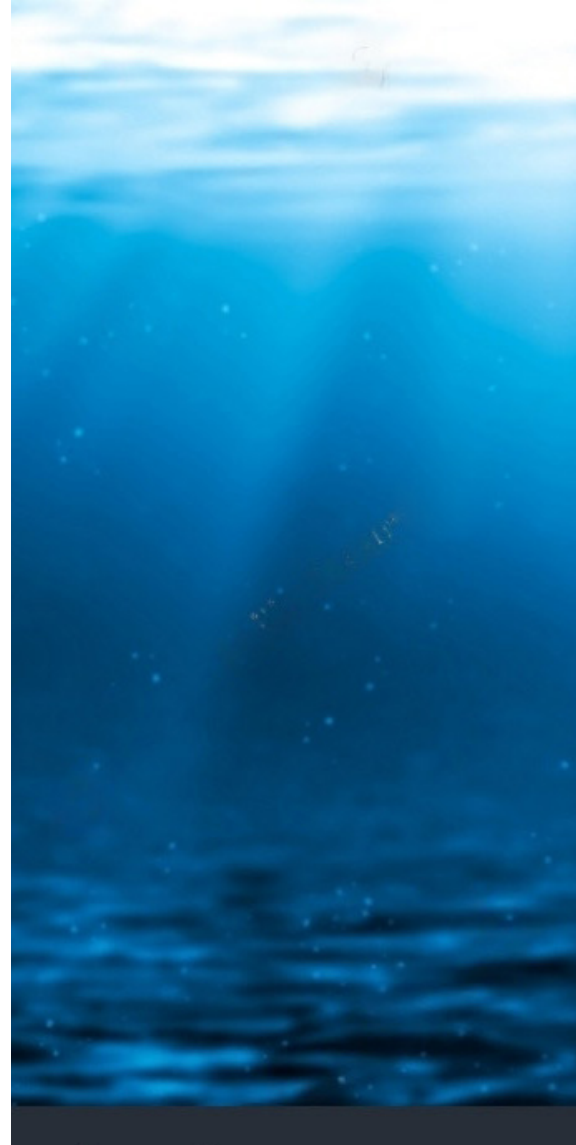
This has been mitigated over the years as search engine companies have recognised certain patterns that are particularly damaging and

actively do not index them, or at least do not allow public searches for that information. An example would be social security numbers.

On the other hand, Chatbots, or more generally, AI tools trained on something like CommonCrawl or The Pile, which are large, curated, scrapes of the Internet at large, represent fewer familiar threats. Especially when we are thinking about large-scale models like LLaMa, ChatGPT, the potential for AI to be able to generate accurate personal data for some number of individuals given the proper prompt is real.

The good news is that, since the responses are being generated based on probabilities rather than recalled from scraped data, it is much less likely that all of the data is accurate.

In other words, the risk in a search engine remains greater





for a larger percentage of the population. The risk to a smaller number of people might be higher in an AI but is alleviated by not knowing beforehand which individuals the AI might be able to generate accurate information about.

SHOULD WE BE WORRIED?

It is important to remember that ChatGPT is not learning at the moment, it is just doing predictions of the entire history of your chat. It cannot currently be directed to automate ransomware attacks. It is a research tool created to show the world what is possible, see how people use it, and explore potential commercial uses. It is key to remember that we are not indirectly training AI chatbots every time we use them as some people may assume.

OpenAI wants to see what ChatGPT does, what it is capable of and how different people use it. The creators want to give AI to everyone. However, their concern is that if only a small number of humans have AI capabilities, those people will become superhumans. Democratising access to AI and its real-world security benefits will minimise the risk of only a select few having these extra capabilities.

This is why it is so important for the threat hunting and security teams in organisations to understand how these tools work and what the realities of the technologies are. Without knowledge, it can be difficult for teams to keep management informed about what the real risks and opportunities are.

Businesses could even soon

be using AI as a force for good by preventing cyberattacks through phishing, as the tools could be trained to recognise the language used by staff and therefore detect any deviations from this from outside threat actors.

The possibilities generative AI can bring for the future are exciting and transformative. However, it is important to not lose sight of the threats that also come alongside it. Like any transition in how we do things online, AI chatbots introduce many new possibilities for the cybercriminals that use them too.

Educating people on the specific threats at play is key to avoiding attacks. If users know exactly how hackers could be targeting them, then they will be better able to ward them off ■

ETIHAD STAGES SKYDIVING ORCHESTRA

Etihad Airways revealed an electrifying stunt in celebration of its collaboration with Paramount Pictures. In the adrenaline-fueled video, Etihad Airways performed a stunt that had never been done before. Etihad put together a skydiving orchestra, who could play the instantly recognisable Mission: Impossible theme song while falling 13,000 feet at 120 mph through the air.

Etihad Airways with their advertising agency Impact BBDO, had to do the impossible, to find talented musicians who are also skilled skydivers. The stunt took weeks of preparation. Each skydiver was given their part of music to practise and learn by heart, which they needed to be able to play perfectly despite the wild environment while skydiving.



ALULA DESERT BLAZE ADDED TO GLOBAL ENDURANCE CALENDAR

Athletes from the region and around the globe put themselves through one of the newest, hottest, intense endurance races, going head-to-head with other extreme challenges held around the world. With distances spanning 5km, 10km, 21km, and 42km, men and women of all fitness levels can vie for the honour of being among the first individuals to conquer this new challenge that will push their physical capabilities to the limit.

The endurance kicks off in historic Hegra, Saudi's first UNESCO Heritage Site, for runners participating in the 5km, 10km, and 21km races. For those tough enough to tackle the gruelling 42km route, their journey begins in the heart of the Ashar Valley at Maraya.

Located 1,100 km from Riyadh, in North-West Saudi Arabia, AlUla is a place of extraordinary natural and human heritage. The vast area, covering 22,561km², includes a lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years to when the Lihyan and Nabataean kingdoms reigned.







BURJ AL ARAB OFFERS INDOOR SUNSET EXPERIENCES

Burj Al Arab's popular UMA Lounge and Terrace, provides guests exclusive access to luxury dining, stunning views, allowing visitors to discover the untold stories of Dubai's most iconic hotel and the original home of luxury. Guests looking to take their indoor UMA experience up a level can choose from several Inside Burj Al Arab premium luxury tours, from sunset tours with premium beverages to tours with delicious dining experiences.

Not just any tourist experience, Inside Burj Al Arab, is amongst the must-see attractions in Dubai, providing exclusive tours and a stunning window into the all-suite hotel known for its boundary-pushing architecture, innovative design, and opulent interiors. For those looking to enjoy stunning sunsets and uninterrupted views of the Arabian Gulf, guests can still experience UMA's outdoor Lounge and Terrace with a variety of ultra-stylish outdoor seating areas.

Nestled within the venue's outdoor setting, each beautifully designed cabana sits up to six people and is perfect to enjoy drinks with groups of friends over sunset. Also available is the venue's chic Sunset Lounge. Magical all day long.

HATTA SIGN RECOGNISED BY GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS



Dubai Holding's iconic Hatta Sign, a longstanding landmark that has enthralled both visitors and residents, achieved global recognition by securing the Guinness World Records title, The Tallest Landmark Sign. The commanding 19.28-metre-tall structure stands as a symbol of Hatta's identity and its status as a beacon of natural wonder for the Emirate.

The Guinness World Records title will shine a spotlight on the Hatta region and what was once a local gem is now set to attract international interest, enticing travellers from around the world to experience the enchantment of Hatta firsthand. The heightened attention will help stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and foster local business development, contributing to Hatta's sustainable growth.



Antler announces expansion with Dr Jonathan Doerr and Romain Assunção as Partners



Dr Jonathan Doerr



Romain Assunção

Antler announces the expansion of its presence to MENAP with Dr. Jonathan Doerr and Romain Assunção as Partners. The firm aims to strengthen the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem by backing exceptional founders at the earliest stage with co-founder matching, personalized coaching, access to a local and global network of founders and advisors, MENAP ecosystem expertise, day zero investment, and support with follow-on funding.

As a day zero investor, Antler's philosophy is to invest in people. For the Riyadh cohort launching in September 2023, Antler is selecting 60+ pre-idea or pre-seed founders from thousands of applications to develop, validate, and start scaling a new business model. This proven program has so far supported 6000+ founders globally.

Antler sees increasing applications to its founder programs with an end-of-program investment rate of 1%.

Bassam Moussa moves from Emirates Development Bank to Mashreq as Group General Counsel

Mashreq, is delighted to announce the appointment of Bassam Moussa as the new Group General Counsel. Bassam will be responsible for overseeing Mashreq's legal affairs and ensuring the protection of the bank's and its shareholders' assets and interests from potential legal risks on both local and international platforms.

Moussa carries an impressive record in the banking and finance sector, showcasing his extensive expertise in energy projects, corporate commercial, M&A, real estate, governance, and intelligent management of disputes and litigation. Bassam's vast experience comes from his time as the Chief Legal Officer and Board Secretary at Emirates Development Bank and as the Group Head of Legal – C&IB (Corporate & Investment Banking) at Emirates NBD Group.



Bassam Moussa
Mashreq Bank,
Group General Counsel



Edwin Stonestreet
Feature Mind,
Managing Director

Omnichannel solution provider FeatureMind led by Edwin Stonestreet sets up UAE office

FeatureMind announced its launch in the United Arab Emirates. With this launch, FeatureMind will bring its expertise in delivering comprehensive end-to-end omnichannel support to businesses across the region, empowering them to elevate customer experiences and drive growth.

According to Alpen Capital, the GCC retail industry sales are forecasted to grow at a 5.7% CAGR between 2022 and 2026 to reach US\$ 370.0 billion. FeatureMind's team of experts is perfectly positioned to help clients adopt technology-driven solutions, positions retailers to tap into this potential, offering seamless shopping experiences, expanding market reach, and fostering sustainable business growth. By providing innovative solutions that seamlessly integrate multiple communication channels, FeatureMind empowers businesses to create cohesive and personalised interactions, enhancing brand reputation and fostering long-term customer loyalty.



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PHYSICAL COUNTRIES

Countries	Date
Morocco	1st June
United Arab Emirates	18th July
Bahrain	20th July
Malaysia	24th July
Philippines	26th July
Kuwait	1st Aug
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	2nd Aug
Singapore	7th Aug
Indonesia	8th Aug
Qatar	14th Aug
Switzerland & Germany	16th Aug
Oman	17th Aug
Egypt	22nd Aug
India	1st Sept
Bangladesh	1st Sept
Srilanka	2nd Sept
Pakistan	2nd Sept
United States of America	5th Sept
Baku, Azerbaijan	17th-19th Sept


VIRTUAL COUNTRIES

Countries	Date
Tunisia	1st June
Algeria	
Libya	
Ghana	6th July
Ivory Coast	
Uganda	14th July
Zimbabwe	14th July
Tanzania	
Rwanda	
Mauritius	
Ethiopia	
South Africa	
Kenya	
Botswana	3rd Aug
Brazil	
Hong Kong	5th Aug
Vietnam	
United Kingdom	18th Aug
Taiwan	14th Aug
Thailand	
Belgium	24th Aug
Spain	
Italy	
France	
Canada	
Netherlands	4th Sept
Turkey	

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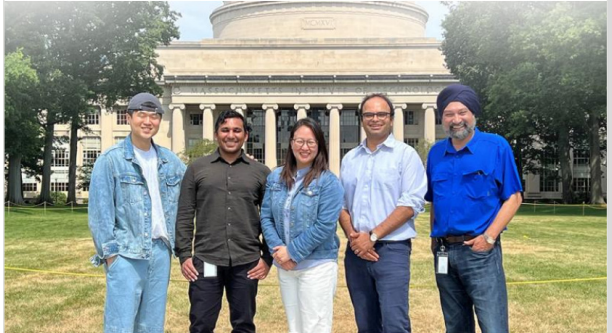
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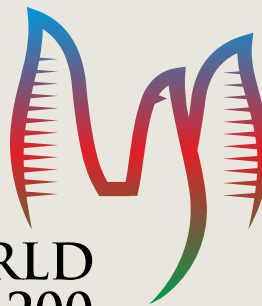
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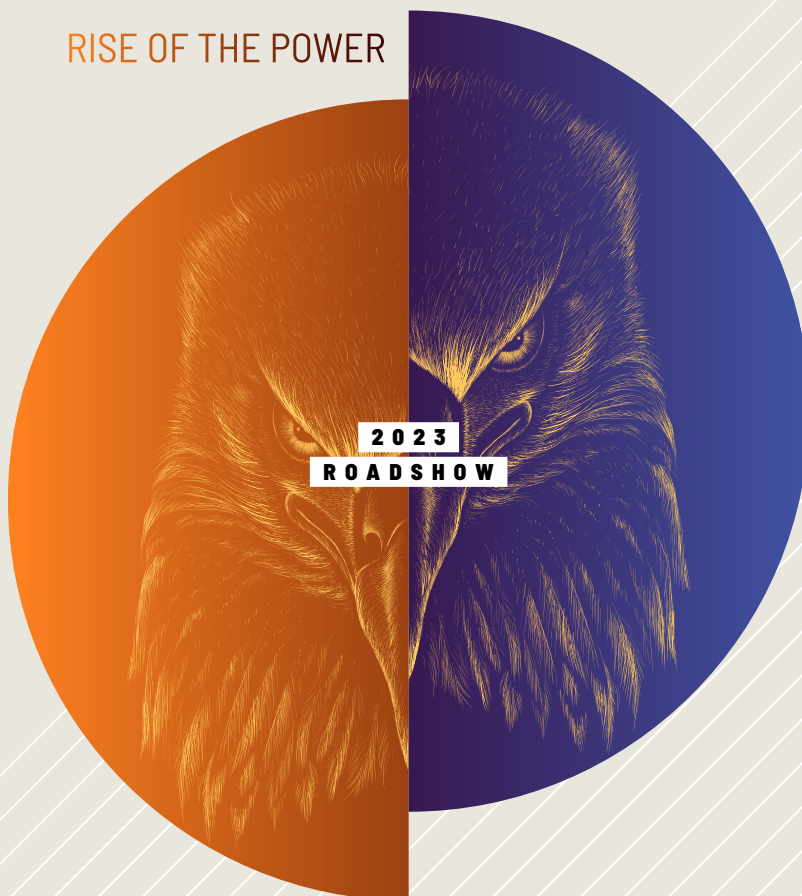
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