20

40

50

//Inside>

Welcome
The winning formula

Network Middle East held its annual celebration of network industry excellence at the end of February.

The 2017 Network Middle East Innovation Awards brought together dozens of industry players in the region to Dubai, witnesses as we awarded 18 of their own for what our judges perceived as the best projects and technologies the region has had to offer in the past twelve months.

We have extensive coverage of the ceremony itself in this issue.

There were some key takeaways from the run up to the event and during the ceremony itself.

One of this was the Middle East region has embraced digitisation like nowhere else. In the past year, what was until then a buzzword, digital transformation is now a broadly embraced concept. Incidentally, the financial uncertainties brought on by the larger macro-economic trend in the region are have organisations embracing IT as a key enabler of their own business transformation to thrive in a tricky market environment.

Some of the biggest public projects, events and initiatives in coming years in the region have a major digital element to them, that disregarding this evolution is no longer an option for regional businesses.

In this issue are a few mentions of a relatively new technology, Blockchain, but whose importance will only grow over the next few years. In an era where organisations are worried about the security of their transactions, here comes an incredibly secure and very cost-effective solution to many a CISOs nightmares.

You will be hearing a lot more about blockchain, not just in your boardrooms, but also within the covers of our publication.

David Ndichu
Editor
david.ndichu@itp.com

Five minutes with...

Raj Sabhlok,
PRESIDENT, MANAGEENGINE

1 What is your current role in the ICT industry in the Middle East and what are your responsibilities?

ManageEngine has established itself as a leading provider of IT management software in the Middle East. Some of the largest companies across the Middle East, among them Almarai, ADEC, Oman Air, DWTC, eHosting Data Fort, LuLu Group rely on ManageEngine to ensure their IT infrastructure is highly available, optimally performing, secure and in compliance with relevant regulations.

2 What is the best thing about your job?

What I find most rewarding in my job is the ability to work with some of the largest and most significant companies in the world and discuss their vision for information technology in business. This is not only beneficial for them, because we can make sure our strategies are aligned, but it is also beneficial for Zoho Corp. Being able to collaborate and share ideas is hugely valuable for Zoho Corp. as well as ManageEngine.

3 How innovative do you think the network industry in the Middle East is and how can it improve?

In some sense, the Middle East is in an enviable position. Markets such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia have bypassed legacy technology and are adopting new technology. As a result, many companies leverage very sophisticated IT infrastructure. With that said, there are rapid advancements in networking and other technologies. So it is imperative that companies stay abreast of new technologies like software defined networks (SDN) and other new strategies for deployment.

TOP 5

Favourite film?
The "Avengers" series

iOS or Android?
iOS

Favourite gadget?
My iPhone 7

Favourite band/musician?
Adele

Favourite book?
Moonwalking with Einstein by Joshua Foer

4 What are the upcoming trends or products in your sector?

SDN is poised to change the way we use, deploy, and manage networks. Even more important is protecting our networks and infrastructure. ManageEngine has been focused on cybersecurity, and I anticipate we will deliver more in the way of Identity Access Management, Auditing & Compliance, Password Management, and SIEM.

5 Does your company utilise virtualisation or cloud computing and if so what products/ implementations do you have?

Our IT help desk application, ServiceDesk Plus cloud version, is developed and marketed by ManageEngine, but is also marketed under our Zoho brand. Similarly, we offer monitoring (ManageEngine Site24x7) and mobile device management (ManageEngine Mobile Device Manager Plus) via cloud.

6 What are your out-of-office hobbies?

I'm a big sport fan and participant, having played competitive tennis since I was 10.