"Our SMB-approach is our success mantra"

There is more to ManageEngine than just offering free premium tools to its start-up customers. Vidya Vasu, Head of ManageEngine Community, while speaking to VARINDIA, shares the significance that the SMB customer holds for the company and how it capitalizes on their growing number in the county

Founded in 1996, ManageEngine had a different focussed market back then – large and enterprise-class customers. During the slowdown in 2003, and as a plan to bring in more revenue, the company ventured into the SMB market by offering commercial IT management products. A network performance management company, the telecom boom in 2000 gave ManageEngine a good sign to revisit its company strategy.

"We thought we should be doing more of enterprise point products like network Management. We started with applications like Applications Manager and have moved a long way since then. Today, we have 20 different products in our portfolio," says Vidya Vasu, Head of ManageEngine Community.

For the past 15 years, ManageEngine has been building IT management solutions and tools for start-ups and SMBs. "One of the main reasons for our success is the SMB-approach, though we also target large enterprises with a couple of applications. Our focus on SMBs is not only in India but also abroad. Globally, 70–80 per cent of business comes from SMBs/start-ups and the rest from enterprise business," observes Vidya.

There is always a lookout for free software in the market, as start-ups and SMBs are generally one-man shows or small teams with limited budgets who can't afford to pay for software. ManageEngine understands that developing economies like India and others is a breeding ground for great technology innovations. To nurture young and energetic IT innovators, solopreneurs and SMBs, ManageEngine provides freemium products and tools required to run IT for free. It is thoughtfully built with SMBs in mind and eventually scales for large businesses. It provides a delectable range of tools for start-ups that want to manage their IT without spending a dime. "This is a mutually beneficial program," says Vidya. "It also helps us as a Brand Recall strategy. With free tools, savvy start-ups can smarten up and look to enhance their productivity and performance. As companies grow, they always have the option of upgrading to our premium products without any hassle. We have 50 tools, including the Mobile App and 16 full-grown tools as the premium version."

With IT adoption in India growing, 35–40 per cent of its worldwide customers are from India alone, while another major chunk comes from the US. "We sell our solutions through partners, resellers and system integrators. We work with around 50 of them. Partners help us in growing and we, in turn, provide them necessary training and certification programs so that they are well versed in our applications and can sell them to the customers. We also have our products available online where we have a policy of 'try before you buy'. We have a free licence available for 30 days; if users wish to extend the trial period, we offer the extended trial licence also," explains Vidya.

In the long term...

ManageEngine is realigning and repositioning its products for a long haul in India. Network management market is itself a very huge market and ManageEngine seeks to have more market share in this space. One thing that differentiates this brand from the rest is that it provides scalability in and integration among all its products. For instance, it designs two applications in such a manner that they can, if needed, talk with each other seamlessly. "We would be focussing on making this integration smoother. Quite many of our products have already been integrated. We would also like to add more value to our products and add more

Vidya Vasu
Head - ManageEngine Community

Ideally, ManageEngine, Zoho, and WebNMS form the three entities under the parent company, Zoho Corp. With the emergence of cloud, more people are moving on to the cloud and Zoho was created as a separate division to offer online business, productivity and collaboration applications. Customers use Zoho applications to run their business processes, manage their information and be more productive while at the office or on the go, without having to worry about expensive or outdated hardware or software. Additionally, it provides services like CRM support, Zoho Invoice, Zoho Docs, etc. WebNMS, on the other hand, is a provider of M2M solutions that provide data integration and application development environment for rapid deployment of M2M applications for management of connected devices in real time.

free tools. We want to be in the reckoning of businesses that grow and when they grow they should remember ManageEngine," hopes Vidya.

India is a huge market and because of the huge number of start-ups and businesses that have sprung up in the last two-three years, it definitely sees a good growth here. ∎

samrita@varindia.com