

Channelwise

October 2013
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office equipment**

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What's in a name?

Sitting in The Local seated across from Ray-Ban Ray and sipping on my favourite grape soft drink (yes, G, it had been a rough couple of weeks – overseas with a dismal exchange rate) the comfortable pause in conversation only old muckers can appreciate was rudely pierced by an until then silent Clive the Secure.

"Ray-Ban," he ventured. "I've just noticed that you really like your brands. Everything you're wearing is branded ... Adidas frames ... Polo shirt ... Tommy Hilfiger watch ..."

The faux grape juice stung my nose as I snorted laughter at Ray-Ban turning purple and choking on his favourite (branded) Irish. Clive the Secure was already craning his neck towards Ray-Ban's derriere. "Levi jeans ..."

"And the boots are John Wayne!" I managed to blurt.

Ray-Ban adjusted the yellow paisley cravat he periodically wears when he does some mirror self-appraisal and becomes self-conscious about advancing age and creeping "turkey neck". He quickly regained his composure – and his natural colour – and a barbed retort: "That's a bit rich from someone whose wife still buys his clothes for him – and from Mr Price."

"Oooh!" I stirred. "Catfight!"

The Secure One raised his hands in apology. "No offence," he said. "It's just something I noticed ..." and he reverted to his preferred, silent mode.

"There's nothing wrong with brands," Ray-Ban huffed.

"There isn't," I concurred. "Just ask Apple. They've just overtaken Coca Cola as the world's most recognisable brand."

At the mention of the word, Ray-Ban instinctively reached for his iPhone on the table and unconsciously scanned it for anything new. I shook my head. Clive the Secure reached across to his son, Lucky Luke, at the next table and promptly relieved him of the iPad he was playing on. "I've got Apple too," he beamed, turning the logo to show us. He quickly returned the tablet to Lucky Luke – there's a reason he's nicknamed after the Wild West comic cowboy.

"The power of the brand," Ray-Ban smiled smugly.

"Yup," I agreed. "And I think I just witnessed one of the best branding exercises I've ever seen while I was in San Francisco."

"Do tell," anything with an exotic name piques Ray-Ban's interest.

"Well, during Oracle's OpenWorld conference, the America's Cup yacht race just happened to be on at the same time."

"So?" Ray-Ban asked.

"So ... the final races were between the US, the holders, and New Zealand, the challengers." He shrugged his shoulders at me. I continued, "The US team is sponsored by Oracle and is called Oracle Team USA. Likewise, the New Zealanders are referred to as Emirates Team New Zealand. The sponsors must have some kind of clause in their contracts that ensures that everyone, media included, only refers to the teams by these names."

Now he cocked his head at me. "When we arrived for OpenWorld, Oracle Team USA was 8-1 down and the New Zealanders only needed one more victory to capture the trophy. During the course of the week, however, Oracle Team USA just couldn't go wrong and by the final day had pulled the race score back to 8-all. You know how patriotic Americans are, so you can imagine the media frenzy – every newspaper, every TV news channel harped on about Oracle Team USA and what they viewed as the greatest sporting comeback in history.

"You couldn't have scripted it better, but the US absolutely creamed New Zealand in the final race of the series to win it 9-8. You can imagine the media coverage. And the name Oracle was on every American's lips."

Ray-Ban whistled through his teeth, realising the millions of dollars' worth of coverage – news coverage that money can seldom buy.

"I reckon Larry Ellison got his sponsorship money-plus back on that coverage," I said. "Hell, even some of his customers forgave him for passing up his keynote to be at the final."

"He bunked his keynote?" Ray-Ban whistled again.

"He did," I nodded. "Thomas Kurian stood in for him, but it meant our coverage wasn't as exciting as the America's Cup coverage. Larry is always great for a one-liner, a biting quip, but he was the preserve of the mainstream US press that day."

Story ended, Ray-Ban turned to more pressing matters and gestured to Cynical Cynthia. "Three more of our favourite brands," Ray-Ban tested her. I smiled. I knew she'd return with the right drinks. Cynical Cynthia is not only our best-trained waitress, she's also a lot more intelligent than she lets Ray-Ban know.



By Mark Davison

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The Ponelepe Oracle Secondary School, which came to life through a partnership between Oracle and the Department of Basic Education, celebrated its sixth year in operation at an Open Day recently. This “no-fee” school officially opened in March 2007 and is situated in Kaalfontein, Midrand. It employs more than 50 teaching and support staff and accepts approximately 1 300 learners annually.

The school boasts a hall which is unique to schools in the area; has three computer labs and a library. There are several sports facilities as well as tunnel gardens where vegetables are grown.

Minister of Education Angie Motshekga commented at the Open Day: “I cannot begin to express my appreciation to Oracle for what they have done for the school. It confirms the importance of collaboration between government and our private sector partners. Government alone cannot succeed in educating the country. Oracle South Africa is very committed to transformation.”

The Open Day was to showcase the school and celebrate recent achievements including a national award for best English teacher won by Ms Shape Msiza; learners Bongkinkosi Peters, obtaining a second position in the Gauteng public Speaking competition; and Praise Ndebele, who recently won the National South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) Pastel Accounting Olympiad.





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Wipro held its annual Spirit of Wipro Run and family fun day at the Johannesburg Zoo on 29 September. More than 500 Wipro employees, customers and partners gathered to participate in a variety of activities including a 5km race, a family 1km fun walk, a Relay Challenge and some fun children's races.

Konica Minolta South Africa has been supporting South Africa's national greening and food gardening social enterprise, Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA), for five years, most recently planting 500 trees in the impoverished Lawley Township in Gauteng. This brings the total of trees donated by the company across the country to 18 178. The 500 River Bush Willow trees were planted in Extension 1 of the Lawley township, under the FTFA's Trees for Homes initiative, and also in celebration of Arbor Month. Having worked in this area previously, the FTFA had already trained community educators, who helped gauge the community's interest in receiving trees and checked the space available. Lawley residents then convened at the local fire station where they were educated on the importance of proper ground preparation, planting techniques and aftercare, before being given their trees to take home to plant. The appointed community educators will also undertake follow-up checks throughout the year and provide support and assistance where needed. This will ensure that the trees will flourish and will be enjoyed by generations to come. Pictured from left to right are, from Konica Minolta South Africa's Johannesburg branch in black shirts: Hayley Britton, Tasmyn Ashby, Desiree Bothe, Andrew Kruger.



First Distribution won the award for "Best Distributor for the Mid-Market for 2012" at Huawei's recent Annual Channel Summit. First Distribution Huawei brand manager Pieter Nel (left) receives the award from Huawei Enterprise Channel Manager John Whiting (right).





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Personnel at Dac Systems understand the principle of ubuntu and apply it in everything they do, including the rollout of the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) Programme – at the heart of which is engagement with the people of Shongwe, Mpumalanga. The Shongwe Project, which has been running for a decade, forms part of the company's ongoing corporate social initiative programme, which also involves mentorship programmes under the banner of the Nkomazi Trust. The Trust owns shares in Dac Systems. Once a year Dac Systems employees go to Shongwe and build a house over four days for someone that has been chosen by the community. The houses are usually built in the Nkomazi area, but the precise location does differ from year to year.



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The way we engage with the rest of the world is changing. We want to communicate in real time, wherever we are, and on whatever device we have with us at the time. It is with this that Microsoft has developed and is today delivering Microsoft Lync.

Available from Westcon-Comstek, Microsoft Lync is a unified communications platform that is designed to bring together and integrate a range of common business communication platforms. This includes instant messaging (IM), VoIP (Voice over IP), file transfer, Web conferencing, voicemail and even email.

This is not to mention its video conferencing capabilities, as well as its integration with the rest of the Microsoft enterprise and productivity suites. The real benefits of Lync is that it will link your business with your customers, a member of your supply chain or a host of individuals – paving the way for true collaboration.

More than just software

At Westcon-Comstek we are acutely aware that software solutions bought in isolation are only as successful as the people installing them and the technology upon which they are hosted. It is with that that we are offering you a single point of access for a Full Lync Solution.

How? Through our partnerships with leading global vendors we have developed a full service Lync solution. This combines the software, hardware and training you will need to enable your business to hit the ground running with Microsoft Lync.

What? Our partnerships on this specific solution currently extend and are made up

of the Microsoft Lync software and the HP networking equipment. In addition, through our Westcon Academy, we will provide your teams with the skills needed to execute and deliver on the Lync offering.

Why select Lync

But why Microsoft Lync when there are so many other unified communications platforms available in the market? Lync is the next step in Microsoft's vision to move its customers from an IT environment governed by bricks and mortar, to an environment that is hinged around the delivery of superior software solutions hosted in the cloud.

Lync is specifically designed to integrate seamlessly with your full Microsoft environment, allowing you to collaborate across teams as well as within your own business software eco-system.

To this end Lync enables functionality across a variety of communications devices and platforms, it is also exceptionally user-friendly and is purpose built to enable communications integration between a myriad Windows 8 devices, platforms and architectures. Its ability to integrate with and into the Microsoft Office environment is particularly beneficial when working with teams.

One of the most exciting features of the Lync suite is its video capabilities. The new iteration of the software allows for multiparty high-definition (HD) video, ideal for video conferencing, it is also an enabler of and for content sharing. This is specifically useful for real time meeting experiences between teams across geographies as it allows them to share content and collaborate from within the environment. Notably, as Lync isn't purely for your own teams and it can be shared across multiple environments and organisations, this feature enables multiparty engagement.

When engaging in this environment users will be able to simultaneously view up to five different videos of multiple participants, across a host of different environments and from a range of mobile devices including those on the Android and iOS platforms.

A single environment

According to Microsoft, the new Lync is its boldest and best release of the product ever as it promotes and embraces innovation

across the board. The new environment doesn't only make it easy for people to communicate wherever they are, but also makes the nature of the communication that much more pleasurable, efficient and effective.

At Westcon-Comztek our knowledge of the Lync environment began with its first iteration and as the product has developed, so has our knowledge and understanding of it. Today we are able to deliver our resellers the capability to not just provide their customers with a Lync software solution, but rather an end-to-end unified communications solutions, combining all the components they need to start collaborating.



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Microsoft Lync enables you to engage, interact and collaborate:

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Use the device you want

Lync makes communicating easier with a consistent and familiar experience available on Windows PCs, Windows Phone, iOS, and Android smartphones. The new immersive Lync app for Windows 8 and Windows RT provides a seamless touch-first experience.

Communicate in the right way

Lync unifies voice and video calls, Lync Meetings, presence, and instant messaging (IM) in one easy-to-use client, making it simple to choose and switch between different forms of communication.

Connect with the outside world

Lync federation extends unified communications securely over the Internet to customers, suppliers, and partners using Lync or Skype.

Take advantage of standards-based HD video

Lync uses open standards including H.264 SVC to provide a high-quality video experience on a wide range of devices.

Make virtual meetings more effective

See up to five meeting participants simultaneously with new multiparty HD video support. You can choose who to see or let Lync choose for you.

Easily join meetings

Joining a Lync Meeting requires only a single touch or click on smartphones, tablets, and PCs.

Extend Lync Meetings outside your organisation with browser-based access

The Lync Web App allows PC and Mac users to join a Lync Meeting from a browser and delivers a full online meeting experience including IM, voice, multiparty video, data collaboration and sharing.

Take notes in OneNote

OneNote share allows users in to create and share OneNote digital meeting notes within Lync Meetings.

Quickly and intuitively find the best way to communicate

Quick Lync is a menu that appears over a contact in the Lync contact list and shows available communication modes.

FORMULA ONE in FOCUS

Quo vadis Team Lotus?

The imminent departure of Kimi Raikkonen for pastures new will have serious implications for the continued competitiveness of Team Lotus.

Already suffering from a shortage of funding, fuelling rumours of drivers and staff not being paid, the Enstone-based team has lost the services of key personnel, including technical director James Allison and Dirk de Beer, the South African aerodynamics chief, who have both left to join Ferrari.

What's more, press reports also point to the possible departure of computational fluid dynamics boss Jarrod Murphy.

It's an open secret that Lotus' wages are not on par with other teams' pay scales. This was confirmed by the team's chief executive Patrick Louis, who claims salaries offered by some leading teams "exceed average standards".

The fact is that Ferrari will pay over the odds for the best talent in the paddock – drivers and technicians alike – as the beleaguered outfit desperately tries to conjure up a world championship, either for its star performer, Fernando Alonso, or for the team in the form of a valued Constructor's title.

Unfortunately, this leaves Lotus, a race winner and fourth place finisher in the 2012 Constructor's championship, in an unenviable position going into the 2014 season. Next year will see sweeping changes to the Formula One regulations. They will place greater emphasis on hybrid power performance and the longevity of the new turbo V6 engines. Technical expertise will be at a premium up and down the pit lane.

For Lotus, which carries the name of the famous Colin Chapman-founded team from the 1950s and bears the iconic black-and-gold John Player Special livery of Lotus F1 cars of the late 1970s and early 80s, a lack of technical expertise will be an enormous setback - particularly as rivals Mercedes-Benz and Ferrari are adding significant depth to their organisational structures and

strength to their skills bases.

Of course, Lotus' association with the Chapman racing heritage is tenuous. Perhaps better known as the former Benetton and Renault F1 team, Lotus only gained its current branding in 2010 and official title in 2012, thanks to a partnership linking the team with Malaysia's Proton cars which acquired Group Lotus (a separate entity to Chapman's former race team) in 1994.

The sponsorship package is co-ordinated by Genii Capital, part of the Genii Group, a global enterprise overseeing the business activities of, among others, Gerard Lopez, Genii founder and now the sole owner of Team Lotus.

Complicated it might be, but there are whispers that the Lotus link could be kicked to the curb if Lopez can persuade Renault to come back on board, bringing with it meaningful financial support. Team principal Eric Boullier has gone further and alluded to a possible tie-up with the French engine supplier and car maker.

Sadly, at this time of financial austerity, there must be little incentive to hold on to the visual cues bonding Lotus with its glorious past. A past that includes 73 F1 race victories, many by a legion of world champions including Jim Clark, Graham Hill, Emerson Fittipaldi, Jochen Rindt, Mario Andretti and Ayrton Senna.

"I wouldn't mind if the team has to change its name," reveals Lopez, with seemingly scant regard for the gravitas associated with the seven World Constructor's titles amassed by the Team Lotus of old. "It doesn't matter whether it's called Lotus, Genii, Renault or something else."

So what of the future? The team has confirmed its former rookie, the accident-prone Roman Grosjean, as a driver for 2014. Who will join him? Insiders say the choice is between the German, Nico Hulkenberg, and Felipe Massa. The



Graham Duxbury is the MD of Duxbury Networking, Formula 1 commentator, South African champion and Daytona Speedway USA Hall of Fame inductee.

Brazilian, having been shown the door by Ferrari, is still in play.

For the many conspiracy theorists, there is the whispered complicity between Lotus and Ferrari to consider. It has been noted that the Lotus-Ferrari personnel exchange has not been all one-way. Nicolas Hennel de Beaupreau, a well-regarded aerodynamicist, has left Ferrari for Lotus in a seemingly straight swap with De Beer.

Both have already started work with their new employers and neither was asked to accept the customary "gardening leave" method of completing a contract, isolated from team secrets.

Speculation is rife that Massa will move to Lotus in a swap with Kimi. Reportedly, one of the "carrots" offered to Lotus in return for accepting the deal is substantial financial support from Swiss watchmaker Richard Mille, orchestrated by Massa's well-connected manager, Nicolas Todt, son of FIA president Jean Todt.

Time will tell ...

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Oracle set to transform itself into the cloud

Oracle CEO Larry Ellison may have bunked his keynote at Oracle OpenWorld for a climactic America's Cup, but executive vice-president for product development, Thomas Kurian, ably picked up the ball and made three new cloud announcements he says will see Oracle being perceived in a new light.

Chairman of the Oracle board, Jeff Henley, apologised for Ellison's absence before Kurian launched into his presentation.

"He [Ellison] wishes he could be here, but he can't be in two places at once," Henley said.

Kurian says that when Oracle announced almost three years ago that it intended being a serious player in applications, many had doubted it could be. But with the development of Oracle Application Suite, he says, the company had proved them wrong.

"We now have more than 20-million users, 10 000 companies in 180 countries and in 34 languages," Kurian says. "And it's all one community."

Now, he adds, it is time for the next step.

"We took our Application Suite and said: Wouldn't it be nice if people got a great platform to go with it?" Kurian continues. "So, today, we're introducing a broad set of platforms to go with these applications."

The trio of announcements include: Oracle Database as a cloud service; Java as a service in Oracle Cloud; and Oracle Infrastructure as a service through Oracle Cloud.

"This suite of platform services is unique in three ways," Kurian says. "It will integrate with all your applications; it is the same software that you use on your premises; and, most importantly, we will manage the

software for you."

The first new product, Oracle Database Cloud Service, will support both 11g and 12c versions of the company's database.

"What is it?" Kurian asks. "Simply, we are taking the world's best database and making it available in the cloud. You can go to Oracle Cloud and get a dedicated database. And Oracle manages it for you – all patches, all upgrades – so that you can focus on using the database and building applications."

Oracle Database Cloud Service will be available to users on a subscription, pay-as-you-go basis with three levels – basic, managed and maximum availability.

"Step two," Kurian says, "is we're taking Java as a service into Oracle Cloud. Again, it is the same WebLogic you use on your premises and, again, Oracle will manage it for you.

"With these two new products, customers can now have a database and a Java environment up and running within 20 to 30 minutes," Kurian says.

"Just think about how long it would normally take for this going through the normal on-premise process ... days at least."

The new Java offering will also have three tiers of service in basic, managed and maximum availability.

Rounding off the trio of new products is Oracle Infrastructure as a service through Oracle Cloud which, Kurian says, offers two new crucial services – storage and compute.

"With our storage service, users will have the ability to use the cloud to store anything from files and objects through to logs," he says. "But it is with the compute services

More than 60 000 customers and partners attended this year's Oracle OpenWorld in San Francisco where the IT giant announced a slew of new products, additional services and future strategies around the key emerging trends in the industry: cloud computing, big data, security and mobility. Mark Davison was among the delegates at one of the world's largest IT conferences and exhibitions.

that we're really excited. You can build your applications in Java, but what if you want to build in Ruby ... or C++? Now you can use our compute services for this.

"These compute environments are fully isolated – customers will get full management access, full root access, but full network isolation."

Kurian says that these two new services on their own move Oracle forward in the era of infrastructure as a service.

"People told us three years ago that we wouldn't be a cloud company," he says.

"But 21,5-million people and 10 000 companies will tell you they love Oracle Cloud. Add to that application platforms and infrastructure and it allows you to do two very important things: it gives the customer a platform to change IT; and it makes them more agile.

"It saves costs and gives speed," he adds. It is easy to provision, easy to use and it's easy to move workloads – and it's all based on software you run on-premise.

"We believe in this vision that we've worked on for nearly five years now, and we're seeing Oracle being perceived in a new light," Kurian says. "We can change your experience and we can transform the way we deliver software to companies all around the world."



Channel key for Oracle in Africa

With triple digit growth over the last year on the continent, Africa is proving to be one of Oracle's more attractive international markets – and it is one that the company intends nurturing in the years to come.

David Callaghan, senior vice-president, EMEA alliances and channels, says that while Oracle's latest growth figures in Africa may come off a low base, they are still phenomenal in today's current economic climate. He also recognises that a large part of the company's success in the various regions is down to its network of business partners.

"The high growth we've experienced in Africa is off a low base," Callaghan says. "And over time, we are confident that strong growth will continue, but that it will inevitably slow as the numbers become bigger. It is still a very attractive market for us, but we need to pace its development – we don't want to overheat things."

Callaghan says that the channel has a key role to play for Oracle in Africa.

"Our whole strategy going forward is that we are moving more from a volume approach to a value approach," he says. "We have more than 25 000 partners worldwide and 50% of these are in EMEA, and we will continue to look for niche partners in areas where we feel we are uncovered – in territories like Africa and other emerging markets like Eastern Europe.

"There are also a number of our partners in Western Europe who are interested in investing more into Africa," Callaghan adds. "And they are actively looking to form alliances and partnerships with African businesses."

Callaghan says that in Africa, companies have a major advantage over their more mature counterparts in Western Europe in that they are more forward-facing and less inclined to be tied into any legacy approach. This, he says, has led to a boon for Oracle's engineered systems such as Exabyte.

"Exabyte in EMEA has done incredibly well and has grown about 68% for partners in terms of units," he says. "There has been very broad acceptance of our engineered systems, Exabyte in particular, and in Africa quite a number of them are being sold, mainly into greenfield sites."

Oracle to up investment in Africa

While Oracle is looking to transform businesses with its latest technologies, in Africa it is looking at the potential to transform whole economies – and seems prepared to put its money where its mouth is.

Loic le Guisquet, executive vice-president for EMEA at Oracle, says that over the coming year the company will not only open additional offices on the continent, it is also looking to significantly boost its staff complement by nearly half the number of its existing employees.

"While customers can transform their businesses using Oracle technology, there are other ways we can help with technology to transform economies, particularly in a regions such as Africa," Le Guisquet says. "Africa is very exciting and is growing at an incredible rate. It is the fastest growing continent and seven out of the top 10 fastest growing countries in the world are in Africa. It is a huge place full of opportunities and where the size of middle-class households has tripled over the past few years," he adds.

Le Guisquet says that while Oracle already has an established presence in Africa, it is looking to bolster this over the next year.

"Currently, we have 1 000 employees across 14 countries in Africa and about 1 000 partners," Le Guisquet continues. "We decided last year to increase our investment in Africa and are looking to add another 400 employees and are opening offices in Mauritius and Botswana, as well as other countries in the region that warrant it."

Le Guisquet points to projects such as mPesa in Kenya, whereby the rural population gained access to online banking via their cell phones, as just one instance where technology can help to transform communities and economies. And it is in areas such as this that Oracle technologies can be used to huge benefit.

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New apps in Cloud Marketplace

In amongst a slew of new cloud offerings, Oracle has also introduced the Oracle Cloud Marketplace aimed at giving businesses easy access to innovative and trusted business applications.

The company says the Cloud Marketplace, which features more than 100 business applications developed by Oracle partners, is not only designed to meet the demand of customers, but also to create new opportunities for its partners.

Leveraging Oracle Cloud Platform Services, Oracle partners can quickly build applications, extend and integrate with Oracle SaaS applications, and publish their applications on the Oracle Cloud Marketplace to reach Oracle customers.

"To remain competitive in today's highly-connected business environment, organisations are increasingly adopting innovative cloud applications to support their everyday business operations," says Steve Miranda, executive vice-president of applications development at Oracle.

"Oracle partners can leverage Oracle Cloud Platform Services to quickly build applications, extend and integrate with Oracle Cloud SaaS applications, and give our customers the best and most complete cloud experience.

"The Oracle Cloud Marketplace is specifically designed to help organisations quickly and easily find, evaluate, and purchase the applications they need to reach their business goals," he adds.

"As the perfect distribution channel for cloud applications, it also creates exciting opportunities for our partners by enabling them to easily develop, integrate, publish and monetise their innovative applications."

Currently, the range of applications available cover channel management, lead generation, data quality, reporting, productivity tools, quoting, contract management, forecasting, sales incentives and compensation management.

Oracle seeks to invest in emerging markets

Oracle president, Mark Hurd, revealing that the company had more than \$39-billion in cash after its first quarter, hinted that Africa could well be on its radar for future investment.

"We try not to be discriminatory from a geographic perspective with our investments," Hurd says. "Two years ago, for example, we made a big investment in Europe when everyone else was avoiding that marketplace. Who invested? We did.

"My view is that when we see a certain economy dip then that is the time to increase distribution," he says. "People keep the drive to purchase, they just defray it, and if you're not in when that economy gets better then you won't get them. We defied gravity in Europe and now we are looking at big investments in terms of sales and distribution in Eastern Europe, Africa – MEA – and Latin America.

"It is important to invest not when the economy is like this (indicating upward), but when there is a bit of a downturn. You'll see some significant investments from Oracle in the coming months," he says. "It won't show on our P&L, but you will see more going to markets that are emerging in various regions."

White hat hackers on the front line

White hat hackers are leading the charge against cyber threats, having uncovered well over 2 000 threats and earning over \$8-billion in the last eight years on the HP Zero Day Initiative alone.

Jacob West, chief technology officer of HP Enterprise Security Products, explains that HP has a relationship with 3 000 independent researchers who are all involved in uncovering malware and vulnerabilities on systems across the board.

When they uncover a vulnerability, they disclose it confidentially to HP, which then offers a market-related price, or bounty, for its details.

Once this transaction has taken place, HP ensures that its customers systems are secured against the vulnerability and also alerts the software developer to it. The software developer will then develop its own patch for widespread distribution and use. If it doesn't do so, HP makes the vulnerability public after 180 days so customers have the option of securing against it themselves.

The Zero Day Initiative, however, is just one of the ways that HP is working on understanding the world of cyber threats in order to secure systems.

West comments: "The reality is that we are in a war against increasingly advanced adversaries, who are increasingly motivated by financial gains.

"In the last few years we have heard about hacktivists, nation states and cybercriminals. However, we believe that focusing on the type of adversary is a red herring: what we need it to understand that we are up against a marketplace of adversaries that specialise in breaches, and who share their information. This is a marketplace with works well together and collaborates to cause damage."

HP thinks of security breaches in terms of an attack lifecycle. Adversaries research – to understand the technical aspects of the organisation and the individuals inside it; they infiltrate the systems – gaining a foothold by compromising a network or an application; in the discovery phase they move around in the systems; they then capture the target organisation's digital assets; and exfiltrate when they gain ultimate control over those assets outside of the system.

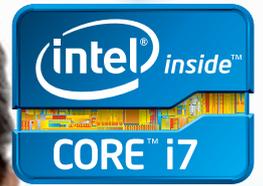
HP Security believes there are specific actions that organisations can take to protect at each phase.

To counter the research phase, users should be educated and counter intelligence can be used to understand who the adversary is; infiltration can be prevented by denying adversaries an initial foothold through a system vulnerability; more resources could be deployed to prevent discovery once the adversary is in the system; capture can be mitigated with better asset protection; and, once exfiltration has occurred, companies should have a response plan in place to lessen fallout and long-term damage.

HP Security Research is mandated to provide innovative research, actionable security intelligence and thought leadership, West explains.



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Enterprises urged to revisit security

The information security measures that companies used in the past won't work in the future, and organisations are increasingly going to have to make informed compromises about their security.

This is according to Neil MacDonald, vice-president and Gartner fellow, speaking at yesterday's HP Enterprise Security event. He says organisations should look to beef up diversion, detection and response capabilities instead of investing more in physical solutions like firewall and network IPS.

"Companies need to invest in better control up the stack to enable an application and information centre security strategy," he says. "They are going to require their vendors to deliver virtualised and cloud-based implementation; and look for opportunities to integrate their security services into the software-defined networking strategy."

We are witnessing a changing threat environment, MacDonald says, where cloud, consumerisation and mobile computing are converging.

In the face of this, organisations are facing three top threats:

- * Advanced targeted attacks are increasing. To prevent these, signatures are futile and organisations are unable to stop criminals at the network perimeter. They have to work out new ways to protect their organisations from threats that have never been seen before.

- * The threat from an increasing loss of control by IT. This has been caused by the explosion in consumer devices, and by running applications and data in the cloud, on infrastructure that is not owned or controlled by the IT department.

- * Lack of security alignment with the business. Zero risk is simply not possible, MacDonald explains, and organisations need to strike a balance between effective security and business agility.

To address the threat of advanced targeted attacks, MacDonald says that companies have to stop thinking about the traditional ways they have protected themselves in the past and move to a lifecycle approach that

lets them deal with threats strategically.

"The problem is that we are focused on prevention, with the misguided delusion that we can stop everything. But we have to assume that we will be infected and start being able to detect it once it's happened.

"No-one is talking about diverting attacks to begin with, but this is an emerging area: making it more difficult to target us to begin with by employing fake vulnerabilities, fake networks and systems, cloaked systems, shifting systems, obfuscated data and user interfaces, fake applications and information, sprinters information and splinted network traffic.

"There are a lot of start-ups working on this area of information security."

We also need new ways of detecting these advanced targeted attacks, MacDonald says. We've tried to identify "badness" and protect against it, but have found it doesn't work, so he proposes turning the model on its head.

"We need to understand what goodness looks like, and then look for deviations.

Security threat keeps getting bigger

Organisations are already battling to stay ahead of the IT security game – and millions of new hackers are poised to enter the market as emerging markets become connected.

Andrzej Kawalec, global chief technology officer: enterprise security services at HP Enterprise Security, tells delegates to an HP Enterprise Security event that CISOs (chief information security officers) are under constant pressure to protect their organisations' assets, in an environment where they have to be right all the time, but the attacker only needs to get lucky once.

"One of the pressures they face is a need to respond to new markets and new companies entering the connected world," he says. "There is massive growth coming from the developing nations and potentially millions of new hackers coming from those countries."

Among the new threats emerging are cyber-cartels, where the convergence of traditional and cybercrime is taking place; cyber militia, where cyberspace is being used as a national battleground or terrorism target; and cyber altruism, where individuals or groups are driven by their social conscience.

Of concern to CISOs, he says, is the fact that it takes on average 243 days before organisations detect a breach – and 94% of the time they are discovered by third parties. In addition, 84% of breaches are occurring at the application layer – although most protection is not aimed here – and the time taken to resolve a breach has grown by 71% since 2010.

According to HP Security research, 56% of organisations have been the target of a cyber-breach. With the average cost of each breach having increased 41% to \$8.6-million, cyber security has become a consideration in market capitalisation.

Kawalec adds that CISOs are still intent on spending their budget on securing infrastructure instead of on management, processes and controls. "However, if you are investing only in what you see, you are heading for a crash. You need to step away from what you know and become more proactive.

"At the same time, 57% of board members and CISOs disagree that information risk is making their organisations less agile," says Kawalec. "We need to change this."

One of the major challenges is that the biggest risk – at 56% – is within the organisation itself.

"The real risks remain internal: data leakage; employee carelessness; and staff turnover. We can't just rely on machine intelligence, but need to understand how people operate."

The HP Enterprise Security operation addresses security in three ways, Kawalec says: providing technology to disrupt the adversary; managed security services to help organisations manage risk; and security consulting so that organisations can extend their capabilities.

"There is a global epidemic, but we are fortunate to have a huge number of security professionals on board as well as operation centres around the world," Kawalec comments.

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This involves things like baselining, anomaly detection and predictive failure analysis."

Big data would be employed within the IT security organisation to do this, MacDonald says, as monitoring and analytics become more important.

"The goal is to gain insight or intelligence derived from the data we gather."

Consumerisation, cloud computing and mobile are all taking control away from the IT department, and MacDonald explains that we need to find ways to compensate for this.

"IT doesn't own or control all the infrastructure; and the mistake they make is in equating ownership with security – this is a flawed assumption. We need to come up with new models of trust and trustability.

"We have to change the way we think about security. It's not about ownership and control. In fact, it never was about device lockdown or dictating applications; but was always about protecting data. That's our job and we need to develop compensating controls that allow us to protect data on devices we don't own, running on systems we don't manage."

To do this, MacDonald says IT has to stop thinking about bottom-up control and start developing a top-down approach that emphasises application security and considers the information embodied in people, processes and systems.

"If we can secure the application, we can do a better job of securing the information," he says. "Application security must be a key element of any information centric security strategy."

Context is another powerful tool that IT could use to secure applications and information, he says.

"Context is the circumstances within which something exists or happens; and that can help to explain or understand it," MacDonald says. "Context-aware security is the use of context information to allow security decision-making at the point of use.

"There are many sources that companies can use to determine the trustability of people or systems. These include identities, e-mails, e-mail addresses, content/files, URLs, UIP addresses, devices and certification."

Counting the real cost of cyber-attacks

The cost, frequency and time to resolve cyber-attacks has risen for the fourth consecutive year, according to Ponemon Institute research for HP Enterprise Security Products.

The "2013 Cost of Cyber Crime" study found that the average annualised cost of cybercrime incurred by a benchmark sample of US organisations was \$11,56-million, representing a 78% increase since the initial study was conducted four years ago.

The results also reveal that the time it takes to resolve a cyber-attack has increased by nearly 130% during this same period, with the average cost incurred to resolve a single attack totalling more than \$1-million.

The sophistication of cyber-attacks has grown exponentially in recent years, as adversaries both specialise and share intelligence in order to obtain sensitive data and disrupt critical enterprise functions.

According to the study, advanced security intelligence tools such as security information and event management (SIEM), network intelligence systems, and big data analytics, can significantly help to mitigate data threats and reduce the cost of cybercrime.

Key findings from the 2013 study include:

- * The average annualised cost of cybercrime incurred per organisation was \$11,56-million, with a range of \$1,3-million to \$58-million. This is an increase of 26%, or \$2,6-million, over the average cost reported in 2012.

- * Organisations experienced an average of 122 successful attacks per week, up from 102 attacks per week in 2012.

- * The average time to resolve a cyber-attack was 32 days, with an average cost incurred during this period of \$1,035-million, or \$32 469 per day – a 55% increase over last year's estimated average cost of \$591 780 for a 24-day period.

The most costly cybercrimes are caused by denial-of-service, malicious-insider and Web-based attacks, together accounting for more than 55% of all cybercrime costs per organisation on an annual basis.

Information theft continues to represent the highest external costs, with business disruption a close second. On an annual basis, information loss accounts for 43% of total external costs, down 2% from 2012.

Business disruption or lost productivity accounts for 36% of external costs, an increase of 18% from 2012.

Recovery and detection are the most costly internal activities. For the past year, recovery and detection combined accounted for 49% of the total internal activity cost, with cash outlays and labour representing the majority of these costs.

Cybercrime cost varies by company size, but smaller organisations incur a significantly higher per-capita cost than larger organisations.

Organisations in financial services, defence, and energy and utilities experience substantially higher cybercrime costs than those in retail, hospitality and consumer products.

The study found that organisations using security intelligence technologies were more efficient in detecting and containing cyber-attacks, experiencing an average cost savings of nearly \$4-million per year, and a 21% return on investment (ROI) over other technology categories.

Deployment of enterprise security governance practices including investing in adequate resources, appointing a high-level security leader, and employing certified or expert staff can reduce cybercrime costs and enable organisations to save an estimated average of \$1,5-million per year.

"Information is a powerful weapon in an organisation's cyber security arsenal," says Dr Larry Ponemon, chairman and founder of the Ponemon Institute.

"Based on real-world experiences and in-depth interviews with more than 1 000 security professionals around the globe, the Cost of Cyber Crime research provides valuable insights into the causes and costs of cyber-attacks. The research is designed to help organisations make the most cost-effective decisions possible in minimising the greatest risks to their companies."

Acer in major commercial drive

Acer, possibly better known as a vendor of consumer notebooks, tablets and smartphones, is making a major investment in the commercial market.

Senior corporate vice-president Walter Deppeler pointed out that the PC industry is currently undergoing the biggest transformation in its history.

This change embraces the new devices that are available on the market, from ultrabooks to tablets; coupled with the longer replacement cycles being experienced for commercial desktop and laptop PCs.

"And this increased desktop lifecycle is largely being driven by the new content devices that are on end-users' buying list," he says.

Windows 8, which was expected to breathe new life into the PC industry, has also seen a slow start, Deppeler says, and the full benefit of the technology has not yet been seen by the end-user.

"But with the current challenges, there are also opportunities, and the new device iterations give us the possibility to grow our business in the future."

Deppeler also points to the emerging markets as offering new opportunities for vendors. Moving forward, in a strategy aimed at increasing its penetration into the commercial market, Acer has made investments in a number of areas.

"The most important is the organisation," Deppeler says. "We have a strong new team in EMEA, with strong leadership on the commercial side. We are establishing strong value creation on a regional basis, and are also looking to ensure brand relevance."

He tells IT-Online that a key element of the organisational change has been to separate the commercial product development and sales teams from the consumer side of

the business. This move, which has taken place over the last few months, has allowed products and go-to-market strategies specifically designed for the commercial market to flourish.

Acer starts with an advantage in terms of brand relevance, since it is a market leader in the consumer mobile market. It also has a broad channel presence, with more than 60 000 outlets in EMEA currently selling Acer products.

"We are planning to improve our point of sales," Deppeler says. "We are currently shipping massive volumes and we are planning to ship millions more products."

When it comes to value creation, he says it's important to strike the right balance between risk and opportunity. To do this, Acer has appointed different types of business managers within its country offices to interact with different market. In addition, the company has been able to increase its average selling price based on the better value that it offers.

"Then, of course, we are also planning effective execution – we need to walk the talk in order to expand the commercial business."

Deppeler adds that the consumerisation of IT is changing how users want to use technology and, as a result, it's changing how IT departments need to deploy systems.

While the end-user want attractive products, with great design and new technology – particularly when it comes to mobile devices – IT still needs to consider TCO (total cost of ownership), standards, security and performance.

Acer is coming to the party with products that give the user what he wants while helping IT to address the properly manage enterprise systems.

The company has a full range of end-



Walter Deppeler,
senior
corporate vice-
president of
Acer.

user products that meet the needs of management users, mobile workers, back office users and specialists; running the gamut from handheld devices right up to desktop PCs and workstations.

"Our strategy for the commercial business is to create value for all of our stakeholder: end-users, channel and key strategic alliance partners," Deppeler says.

Importantly, he says, Acer is very clear on its go-to-market strategy and has a 100% indirect business model. The new team based across EMEA is tasked with growing the commercial side of the business, he adds, while service remains a core focus.

The initial focus of the commercial business will be in the SMB space and the education market, says Deppeler. He stresses that these two vertical markets are a starting point only, and the company will expand into new verticals in a phased and disciplined way.

Jakob Olsen, vice-president: commercial division at Acer EMEA, explains that Acer has made massive investment into the commercial market, including into products, services and partner networks.

He points out that the company has a strong history in EMEA and is currently the

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Acer looks to Africa for new growth

Acer, along with most other IT companies, is looking to Africa to fuel substantial growth in the future.

Jakob Olsen, vice-president: commercial division at Acer EMEA, believes a phased and disciplined approach to the continent, coupled with a strictly indirect go-to-market strategy, will help the company achieve success in Africa.

Acer already sells its products only through partners – the 100% indirect model is a point of pride for the company – and it will address the burgeoning African markets through careful partnering, Olsen says.

Importantly, the new commercial strategy that the company is unveiling this week will be driven through a simplified partner programme.

"We have an increasing focus on partners," Olsen tells IT-Online. "And we are trying not to simply recite slogans, but ensure that we have the programmes to back them up."

Acer is supporting partners across the region in three areas: with a complete product range that spans from servers and storage right down to handheld smartphones and includes notebooks, ultrabooks, tablets and desktops; monthly special offers that help resellers to understand what's available and make it easy for them to recommend Acer products; and a Back2Business run-rate portal to assist with repeat orders.

"We make it easy for resellers to do business with Acer, and we allow them to make money," Olsen says. "But, importantly, we build trust with our partners: we don't do business without our resellers; and we don't punish them."

"Our channel strategy is built in simplicity and trust."

Acer is currently relatively weak in Africa, although it has a particularly strong presence in South Africa and is also well represented in the Middle East. The rest of the continent is a huge market opportunity, and one that Acer will be addressing with its new commercial product line-up.

However, Olsen stresses that the company will always partner with local resellers and distributors to address each new African market.

"The challenge is to get the right distribution for Africa, and to offer it at the right time," he says, pointing out that African customers are not prepared to wait for products. "Our supply chain and our resellers are going to be absolutely key in the African market," Olsen says. "We think we can offer tremendous value with the proper partners."

top consumer vendor in the region.

"Importantly, we are strong in execution," he says. "We have made the investment, and we have the information, so we are well positioned to make a difference."

Consumerisation, which has been a buzzword for some years now, is already entrenched in some areas of the market and is becoming an issue now in the SMB and consumer space.

BYOD (bring your own device) has also made its way into most organisations, and enterprise IT departments are finding that they have to deal with myriad devices whether they are prepared for them or not.

"Cloud is another buzzword – but it's real," he says. "Users are now able to access information wherever they are."

These are the trends that Acer has to address in order to make a difference in the commercial market, Olsen says. "We come from a position of strength in the consumer market, so this is our time; our chance to

take consumerisation into the B2B market. Few companies are better positioned to be able to do this."

Acer not only offers a full product line-up for the commercial market, it is putting its money where its mouth is when it comes to guaranteeing the quality and reliability that business users demand.

"Customers want to know if our TravelMate devices are reliable, and if they can trust Acer," Olsen says. "The answer is, yes you can – and if we let you down we will pay you. If your TravelMate breaks down within the first year, we will fix it and we will give you half of your money back."

"That's a strong message that we are sending to the market."

The fact that the B2B product portfolio covers a range of areas – servers and storage; desktops; workstations; notebooks; tablets; smartphones; monitors; projectors; and thin clients – means there are few companies that can match Acer's solution line-up, he adds.

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Channel is central to Acer's commercial expansion plans

Acer has made a commitment – coupled with major investments – to the commercial market, aiming to become a serious contender in the B2B environment.

As a historically channel-centric company, it has developed a partner strategy to help it make the move with the aid of its channel partners.

"Our channel strategy revolves around our need to serve both the B2B channel and the needs of our commercial customers," says Jakob Olsen, vice-president: corporate division at Acer EMEA.

"The strategy is actually very simple: we are 100% channel; we do not go director and we never will go direct. This is something that the channel appreciates."

He adds that the product line-up is in place to address the commercial market, targeting users across various B2B scenarios: managed enterprise products; managed IT products for medium and small companies; and non-managed IT products for Soho companies.

In addition, they cover a range of form factors from notebooks and ultrabooks to tablets, smartphones, desktops and workstations.

"Few companies have the same product line-up that we do," Olsen says. "So I feel that we are strong on the product side."

It's the go-to-market that he believes will make the real difference, and help Acer to become a serious player in the commercial market.

"We are 100% direct and this means we are easy to get in touch with," Olsen says. "We want resellers to understand the profitability of dealing with Acer. And we need resellers to know that they can really trust us – we do not have direct sales at all."

The new Acer Synergy Partner Programme is simple to work with, he adds, and makes it easy for partners to do business with Acer while selling more products.

There are three levels to the programme: silver, gold and platinum. Resellers can select a specialisation area such as online sales or education.



Jakob Olsen, vice-president: corporate division at Acer EMEA.

"Resellers told us they want more than products; they want a demo programme," Olsen says. "So we've done that. They want to understand when there are good offers, so we are rolling out the offer of the month, so every reseller knows what's hot this month and what special offers are available.

"Resellers also need an easy way to do run-rate business, so we are setting up our Best4Business run rate selection programme to help with this. They have asked us to make it easy to do business with us, so we're setting up rewards for smaller resellers and a simple one-page contract for larger resellers.

"We are working on our relationships, helping to bring business to our partners, through marketing and a deal management CRM system."

As well as co-operative marketing, Olsen says Acer has also set up an Acer Synergy portal and will build Acer business corners in retail outlets across the region.

Service has always been a strong focus for Acer, and this will continue in the company's commercial push. With centralised customer service, resellers can quickly get access to the information they need, while selling extended warranties is a further revenue

Acer focuses on education

Education is a focused market area for Acer, and one that it is aggressively pursuing across the EMEA region.

Walter Deppeler, senior corporate vice-president of Acer, explains that the company has set up a focused geographical expansion targeting the education market.

Apart from its existing product line-up, Acer offers a full line of complementary products for the education market as well as specially-designed solutions.

The company has set up enhanced communication channels with the teacher community; it takes input from advisory boards structure to get direct input on product usage; and communicates with university students.

Acer also offers pre-sales support and has a dedicated certified channel programme for the education market, Deppeler says.

Jakob Olsen, vice-president: commercial division at Acer EMEA, points out that Acer has been strong in education for a long time.

"Our mission has always been to bring down the barriers between people and technology, and education is a good place to do this."

Currently, Acer has 300 resellers focused on education throughout the EMEA region, and hopes to grow this footprint over the coming months.

The benefits for resellers to partner with Acer in education include a dedicated brand and business development manager; an ecosystem that includes content; a dedicated marketing team; and a special area in the Acer Synergy partner portal.

During 2014, Olsen says Acer hopes to convert a number of existing partners to becoming education partners.

opportunity for them.

In addition, partners can become authorised service partners, adding a new value proposition to their offerings.

"We are here to create growth for Acer in the B2B market," Olsen says. "We have invested in the product, in the marketing and in the partner programme. Now we hope to give our resellers and customers just a little bit more – making it a bit easier, a bit more secure and a bit more reliable."

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DEEP THROAT

A sign of the times

As an indicator of just how tough the market has become during the current economic crisis, one of South Africa's top components distributors, Asbis, has announced that it is getting out of the components business and will, in future, concentrate more on its mobile and plug-and-play devices from Canyon and Prestigio. "The local IT components distribution business has become overtraded in an already shrinking integration environment," the company said in a mailer to customers. "As such, we have taken the decision to remove the majority of the PC hardware components from our portfolio."

The memo goes on to say that Asbis "will be winding down the sale of our discontinued lines through the month of October at reduced prices on a first come, first served basis. The warranty support for products purchased from Asbis Africa will transfer to those companies who continue to distribute the same products."

The affected product lines include Seagate, Intel, Acer, Samsung, LG and Asus.

Deep Throat swallows ... beer ... and wishes the company well in its future re-focusing. We well remember the heady days nine years ago when industry stalwarts Peter Blaauw and Wade Calenborne (who sat through a one-year restraint) started Asbis on the back of a Seagate distribution agreement and in the face of, what was then, considered very stiff competition.

Trying times

It's been said for years that the channel is no place for the faint-hearted and that if there's any sector where you want a further kicking when you are down, then this is the place to be. Just as a sense of normality seemed to be returning to MB Technologies and its flagship Tarsus, rumours have been doing the rounds that there is further turmoil on the horizon. According to sources, the boardroom purge which saw the departure of Tarsus CEO Pierre Spies, could be on the verge of claiming another victim – the group's CEO, Glenn Fullerton. Fullerton was seriously injured in a cycling accident earlier in the year and, on the advice of specialists, has been restricted in his daily running of the company. This, it seems, has irked certain shareholders who are now reportedly baying for him to step down. We haven't managed to confirm the rumour, but will, dear reader, have a definitive update on the situation in next month's Deep Throat.

Prick(le) of the Month:

Needless to say ...

When regulator Icasa announced a reduction in CTRs (or call termination rates) recently, some mobile operators were quick off the mark and online newsites carried comment from them within minutes. Unfortunately, not all of them had speedy responses – as can be read in the following release that was sent out with all the usual boilerplates, banners and logos:

XXXX acknowledge the publication of the draft call termination regulations released by Icasa on Friday. XXXX will study the proposed regulations and revert with comments at a later stage, if necessary.

Needless to say, the above release was ... well ... needless. Oh, and five days after it appeared in our inbox, we're still waiting for a more solid statement from the operator concerned. They obviously felt that comment on quite a significant (well, we thought so) announcement from Icasa wasn't necessary. We'll now stop holding our collective breaths in the newsroom.



Pic of the Month:

Revenge of the Eds

A certain veteran hack shows his true feelings for bloggers at a recent international conference where it has become almost commonplace for this new breed of "journalists" to be afforded the same coveted facilities as traditional, genuine Press men and women – as in reserved areas for keynotes and the likes. It seems his ire was particularly raised when he decided to sit among the bloggers for a better view of the stage and podium, and a spotty, greasy-haired youth on a smartphone apparently told him he couldn't sit there because he was Press and not a blogger. As can be expected after spending countless years in the dark underbelly of various newsrooms, said youth quickly withered under his venomous "Missed Deadline" stare and a curt bark to "go forth and reproduce". We're also happy to report that, comfortably seated in the aforementioned blogger's spot, he filed a number of decent stories – all well within his deadline and, believe it or not, read by a great deal more readers than some of the bloggers seated alongside him.





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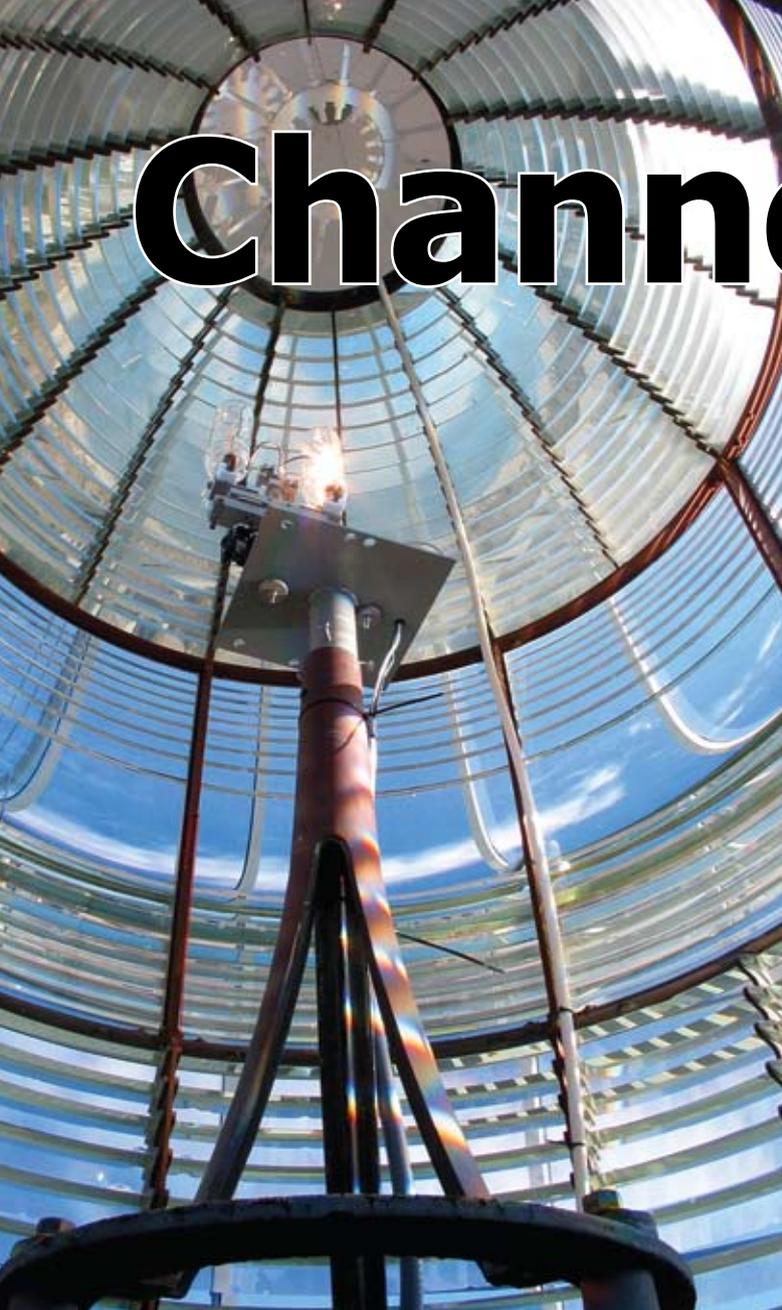


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Channel influe

When Channelwise's panel of channel veterans - who between the three of them have nearly a century of hands-on experience in this sector - sat down to consider the biggest influencers in today's channel, they soon realised that it was time to get back to basics.

Over the years that we have carried this feature we have included not only prominent individuals, but also institutions such as banks and mobile operators which have started to encroach on the operations of the traditional channel, as well as technologies such as cloud and mobile which have, quite literally, changed the reseller and distribution game as we have known it.

This year, however, we decided that while the abovementioned entities still have, and will continue to have, certain influence on the channel, it may be time once again to recognise and highlight the actual individuals within the sector that wield real and tangible power. Now don't get us wrong, there are any number of talented and entrepreneurial individuals that in each of their own ways can

Waiting in the wings ...

Ready, willing and able

Pierre Spies, consultant at MB Technologies

In a few months, the "consultancy" period that former Tarsus CEO, Pierre Spies is serving with holding company MB Technologies will be over ... and almost the entire channel is waiting with bated breath to see what his first move following that will be. As great lovers of gossip, within the channel there are many rumours: he will head up AxizWorkgroup; he will be country manager at Ingram Micro ... or Aptec ... or another foreign distributor; he will buy Tarsus out of MB Tech; he will form his own distributor. There are too many to list, but all we do know is that "he does have several options open to him".

Whatever he decides to do, there is little doubt that it is going to catch most of the industry by surprise. And, as far as we can speculate, it will be something in the channel. After all, what else does someone who has literally spent his entire working life in the channel do? And there's little doubt, that whatever path Spies chooses, it is certain to send ripples through the local channel. A regular on our Top Influencers list for years, Spies' larger-than-life persona, never-say-die attitude and an almost Calvinistic work ethic are sure to secure him a spot on it in the years to come.

Getting to grips

Anton Herbst, CEO of Tarsus Technologies

It has only been a few months since Anton Herbst officially took the reins at Tarsus and, while he has been relatively quiet – certainly in the press – as he gets to grips with his new role, it can only be a matter of time before he makes his presence felt in the South African channel. Herbst, who has been involved in the channel for decades (most notably with SDD and ACT), is considered by many to be one of the leading visionaries in the IT industry and in the coming months will be able to put his skills to good use as MB Technologies goes ahead with the consolidation of all its group companies in its new campus in December.

While many competitors may quietly smile about the recent events at Tarsus and the ensuing fallout, the company has reportedly had some record months under Herbst's tenure. An omen for the future? We think so ... and we also think it won't be long before Herbst settles into his CEO position and starts making strategic moves that, once again, will have a ripple-affect throughout the channel.

ncers

influence the daily operations within the channel, but for the purposes of this article, we decided we wanted to highlight those key executives who, with the swish of a pen, the barking of an order, a decision on strategy or by exercising their own individual influence, can send ripples not only down the spines of their competitors, but through the entire channel itself.

In other words, the real game-changers within a channel that, while relatively stable during the current economic downturn, recognise that the game is changing and that they have to speedily adapt and re-shape their businesses with new strategies, new policies, new services, and even new products to ensure their on-going success. And who, at the end of the day, make that sole, determined decision to follow a certain path. The individual executives who are visionary enough to see the way the channel is heading and who are strong enough, powerful enough and forceful enough to persuade others to follow their lead in the transformation that they know is inevitable and has to be addressed.

The Channelwise panel is, as always, totally subjective (and totally ruthless) in its assessment of who it considers to be these 'select few' and they base their nominations purely on the years that they have spent observing and monitoring how each of these executives have matured and performed. More specifically, how they have gone about their business in the past year and what real impact they have had on the channel during the course of this.

As we mentioned, there may be many in the channel who others deem worthy of being dubbed a 'Top Influencer', and many who may be disappointed by their omission. But no slight is intended as, in the following pages and in no particular order, Channelwise turns the spotlight on the executives it considers to have had the biggest influence in the channel in 2013, as well as a couple of personalities we think could have significant impact in the near future, those who are 'waiting in the wings'.



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Taking Pinnacle to new peaks

Arnold Fourie, CEO of Pinnacle Technology Holdings



Picture by Gary Streak

There is no doubt in anyone's eyes that the darling of distribution at present is JSE-listed Pinnacle Technology Holdings, and only one man can be truly credited with its current standing – CEO Arnold Fourie. From the very beginnings of the company, and through thick and thin (and there have, believe it or not, been some lean years), Fourie has been at the helm guiding, steadying and sometimes cruising the now R6-billion organisation.

Fourie has always been highly regarded for his shrewd acquisitions – software specialist Workgroup being one of them - and a couple of years ago he further cemented the distribution foundation of the group by buying Axiz for around R330-million. It was a move that stunned many in the industry and they were even more surprised when he folded Workgroup into it. But as is the case with many of his strategic gambits, Fourie's gut-feel and business sense in merging different entities has proved correct. Many thought that Axiz would be swallowed into Pinnacle itself, but he has resisted the temptation and has again been proved right as both organisations continue to buck market trends and produce sterling results year after year.

Another major coup for Fourie – and another that confounded the market – was the successful recruitment of former Compaq and HP country head, Henry Ferreira, to sit among his executives. Ferreira is credited not only with smoothing

troubled waters within AxizWorkgroup, but also making it among the most successful distributors in the country. Fourie obviously has future plans for Ferreira and recently appointed him head of distribution for the entire group. It remains to be seen, though, whether Ferreira is the heir-apparent at the group as many gossip, or whether Fourie's acumen extends outside the realm of pure distribution to encompass management and employee relations.

Seemingly one who enjoys surprising the market, Pinnacle's latest acquisition of 39% in Datacentrix shares only months ago is another that has everyone guessing about his next move. But there is little doubt that there is a sound business reason behind this purchase, and that Fourie has a specific vision for Datacentrix within the burgeoning group. And that he continues to keep his competitors on their toes.

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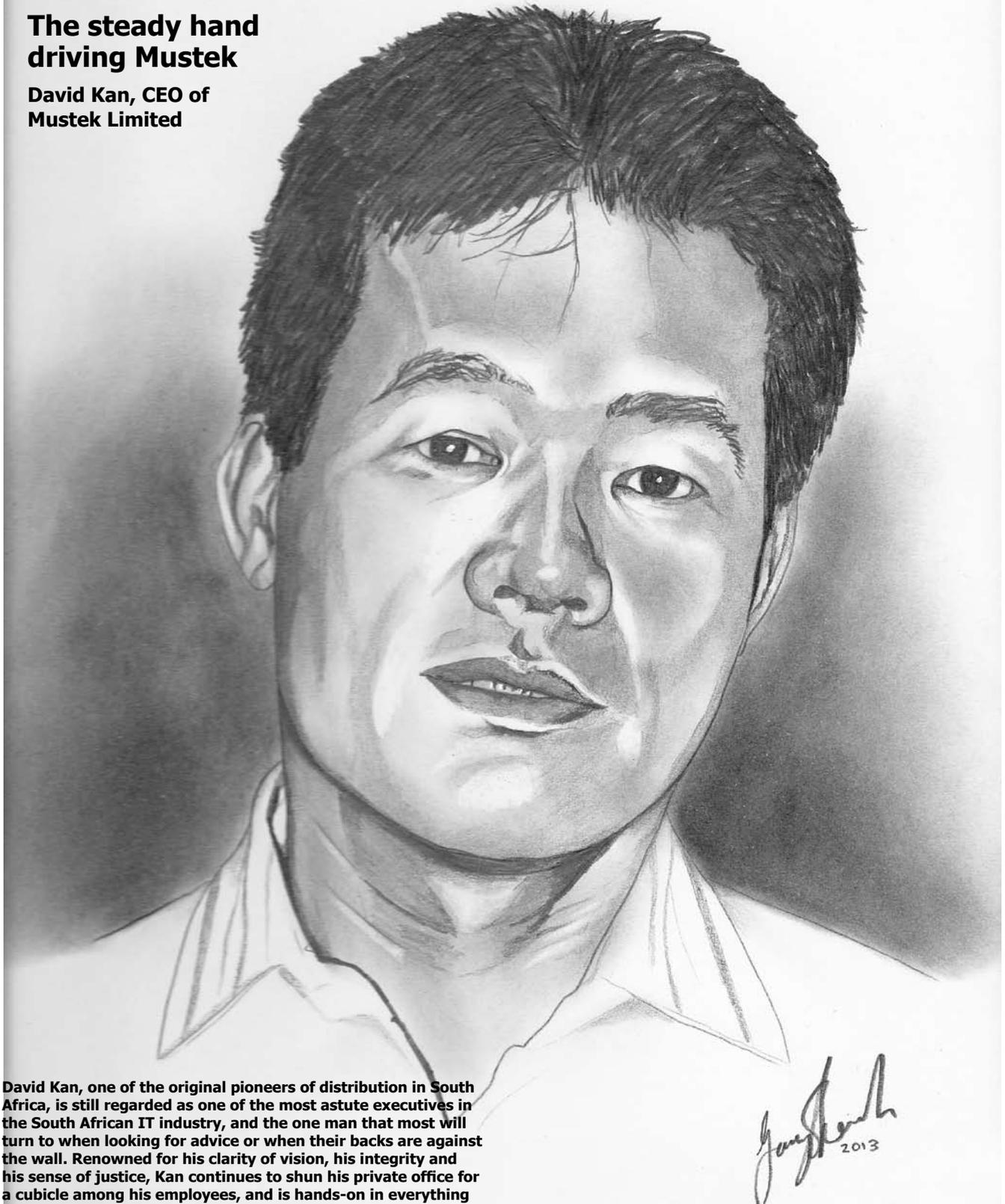
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The steady hand driving Mustek

David Kan, CEO of Mustek Limited



Picture by Gary Streak

David Kan, one of the original pioneers of distribution in South Africa, is still regarded as one of the most astute executives in the South African IT industry, and the one man that most will turn to when looking for advice or when their backs are against the wall. Renowned for his clarity of vision, his integrity and his sense of justice, Kan continues to shun his private office for a cubicle among his employees, and is hands-on in everything from shipping and pricing to delivery and warehousing as he continues to drive not one, but two of the country's leading distributors.

While focusing on the day-to-day running of Mustek, Kan has also become more involved in the daily operations of sister company Rectron as it evolves from a more component-centric distributor towards providing total Tier One-like solutions.

While the group has been affected like all others in the industry by the poor global economy and, in particular, a yo-yoing rand, Kan's guiding hand has ensured that the only other listed distributor in the country has maintained its dominant position and profitable outlook. Increased revenues and profit in the double-digits is no mean feat nowadays.

But it is not just Kan's business acumen that sets him apart from his peers. His influence among vendors is also the stuff of legend, and one only has to look at the pivotal role he has played in securing brands such as Lenovo, Acer and Huawei and, of course, the recent securing of volume licensing from Microsoft, as examples of this.

While Kan remains tight-lipped about future strategies for the group – he "never likes to tip-off competitors" – the word on the channel street is that he may be considering more consolidation within the group, as well as prospective acquisitions that will complement the vision he has for the it over the next few years. No doubt, any moves he does make in the coming months will be keenly watched by all in the channel.



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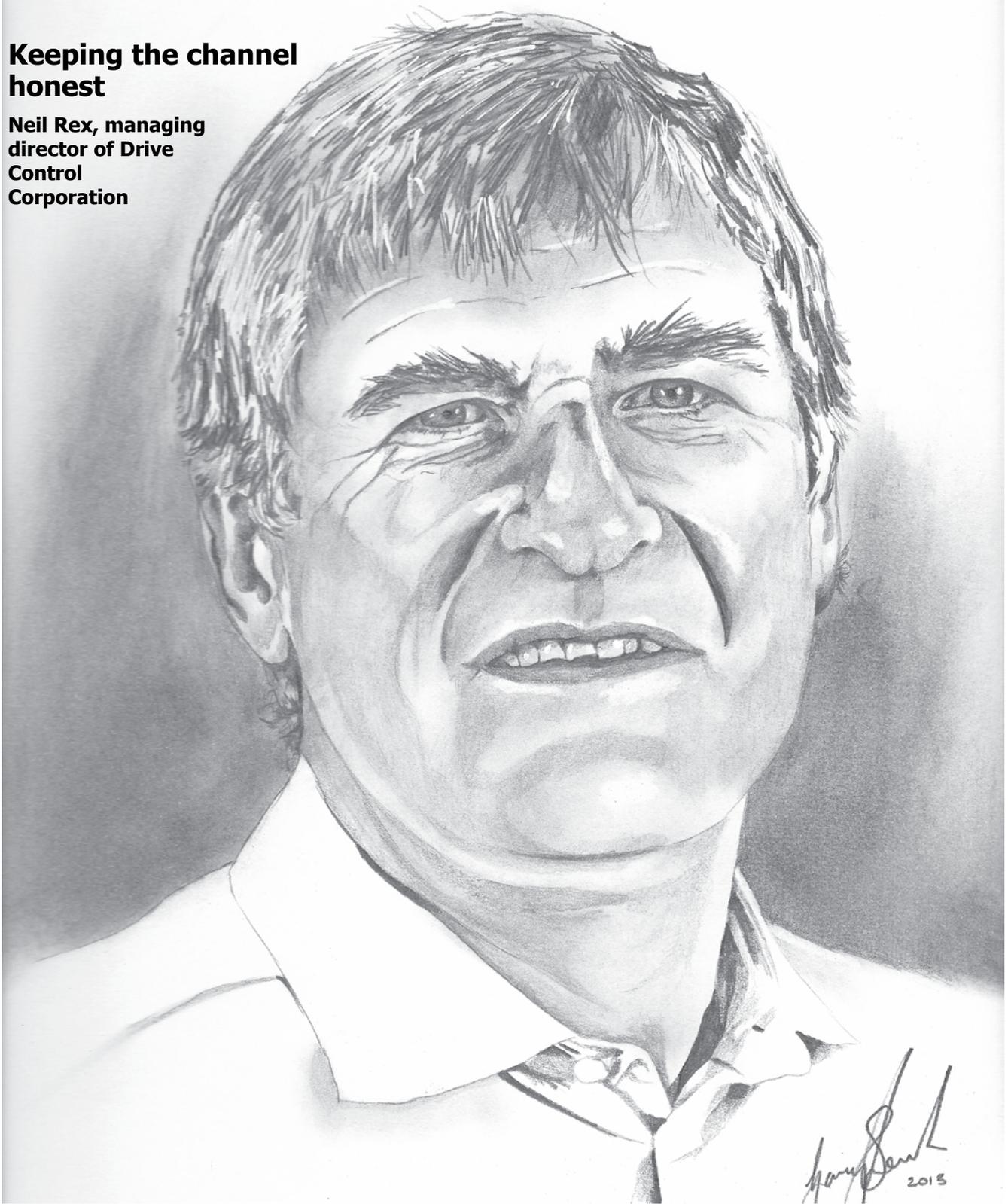


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Keeping the channel honest

Neil Rex, managing director of Drive Control Corporation



Picture by Gary Streak

Another pioneer in local distribution, Neil Rex started Drive Control in 1988 and has personally guided it to become the largest independent distributor in the market. There was little hesitation among this year's Channelwise panel in forwarding Rex's name. As one panellist noted: "Neil Rex keeps the whole channel honest – vendors and competitors alike."

Beholden to no-one (apart from wife Jenny, perhaps) Rex is well-known for his forthright views and to-the-point opinions. Woe betide any vendor that tries anything out of hand: Rex is known to be as sharp on figures as he can be with his tongue – and there have been many occasions when both have come together over his boardroom table.

Speculation is always rife that DCC is on the threshold of being sold and the rumours continue to circulate on a regular basis

about potential deals in the pipeline. In his own, forthright way, Rex's honesty comes through on this subject. "If the price is right, a deal can always be done," he is wont to say. Needless to say, no-one has yet come up with the right price, although Sahara and the Guptas apparently came close a few years ago with a R600-million offer. Rex dismissed it on the due day for signing when it was suggested that instead of cash, the deal be split into part-cash, part-shares.

But if he ever did sell the company, it wouldn't only herald the end of a dynasty, it would have significant impact on the channel as we know it. But until such a day dawns and Rex can spend more time on his beloved farm, the channel can continue to rely on him to keep all its major players on the straight and narrow.



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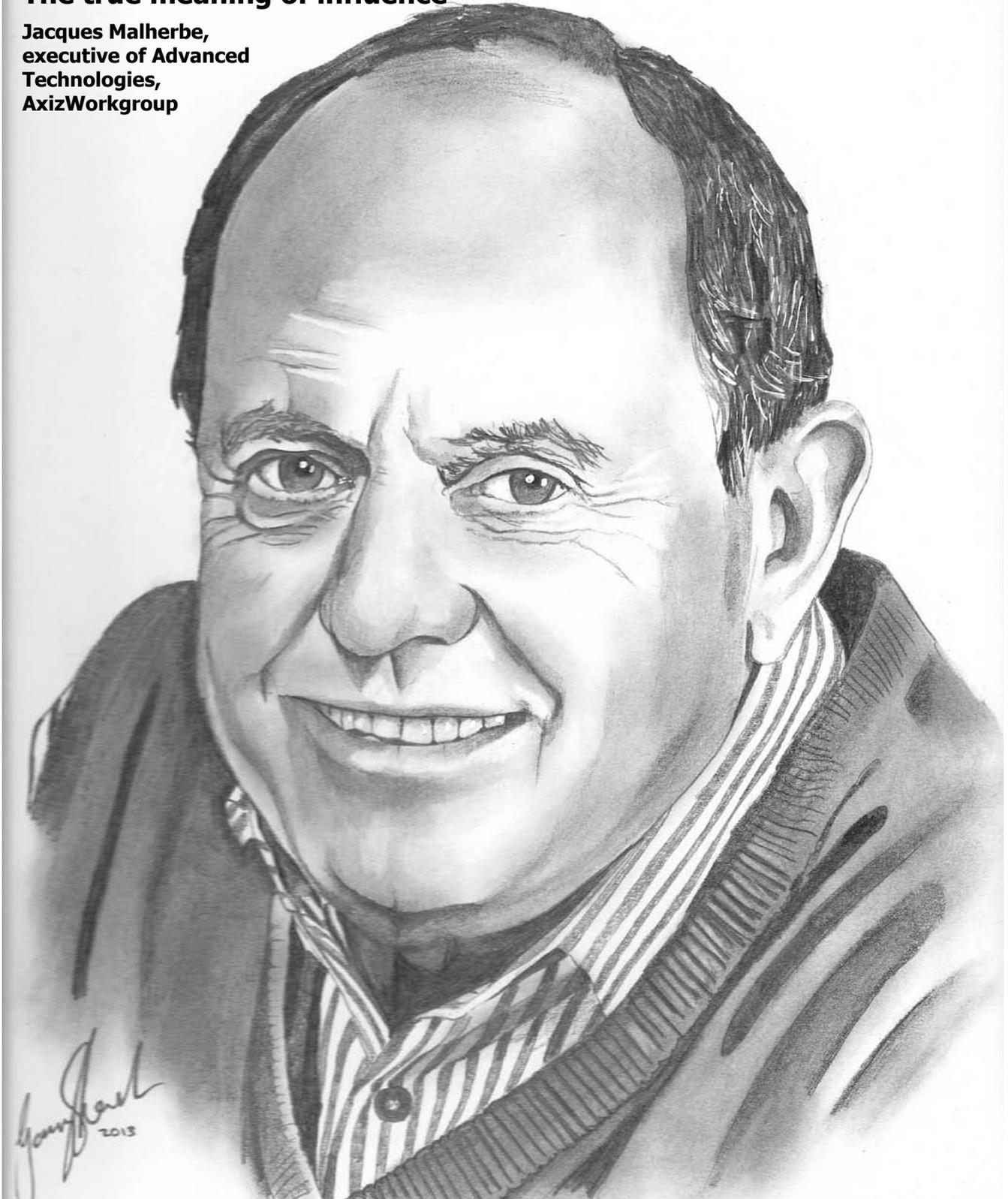
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The power to do more

The true meaning of influence

Jacques Malherbe,
executive of Advanced
Technologies,
AxizWorkgroup



Picture by Gary Streak

The panel pondered, briefly, over the nomination of Jacques Malherbe with one of them pointing out that "he is no longer a CEO of a major disti" Malherbe, as head of Westcon Africa, regularly featured in Channelwise's Top Influencers, but relinquished his CEO position soon after the acquisition and merger of Comzteck by Westcon. Since then, Malherbe has rejected several offers – including country manager of Ingram Micro – to finally take up the position as head of a newly-created division within AxizWorkgroup, Advanced Technologies.

Few can misunderstand the intention of this new division. It is clear that it has been created to address the needs of enterprise and, more specifically, enterprise networking clients, and that it will grow to compete against the likes of Westcon-Comzteck. And in Malherbe, the executive of AxizWorkgroup and, indeed,

Pinnacle, could not have asked for a better lead. Decades of experience in enterprise networking, coupled with one of the brightest minds in the industry, have seen Malherbe make his mark within the space of a few months. Few are under any illusions that Malherbe heavily influenced the decision by Cisco to award distribution rights to the company, closely followed by Trend Micro and, more recently, HP Security. And it is not only among vendors that Malherbe wields significant influence. Over the years, he has established very strong relationships among key enterprise clients, another arrow in his quiver – and one that is sure to be unleashed once he has firmly bedded down the new division.

Our "rogue" panellist was soon convinced that Malherbe should retain his position among our Top Influencers.

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Man with a mission

Paul Conradie, CEO of Westcon-Comztek



Picture by Gary Streak

With Jacques Malherbe resigning from Westcon late last year, the merged entity that has become Westcon-Comztek could not be in more capable hands than those of former Comztek chief exec Paul Conradie. Known for his no-nonsense and pragmatic approach to business, Conradie now heads up the largest specialist distributor in South Africa and, arguably, Africa, with both Westcon and Comztek having extensive operations throughout the continent.

The merger to create this new multi-billion rand organisation is still in its infancy, but bearing testimony to Conradie's skills and management are the number of major awards Comztek itself has garnered from global multinationals such as Cisco and Microsoft. His negotiating strengths are also a core asset

as witnessed by Comztek securing and maintaining Microsoft's Xbox rights for South Africa, against stiff and reportedly fiery competition. And, of course, Comztek has been lauded for years by a fiercely loyal channel – an asset that Conradie is particularly proud of.

A merger of this magnitude is no easy task, but those in the know say Conradie will take it in his stride and is more than capable of successfully seeing it through - and that some of the decisions he makes regarding the company and its operations in the year ahead will have a profound effect on the channel as we know it. They have no doubt that he will pull many in the local channel into the next phase of its evolution and see them operating profitably in areas they currently view with a degree of suspicion, such as cloud computing, security and big data.



How to succeed

Along with the personal computer market, printers and other office equipment segments have had a patchy 2013 so far. Overall, product shipments are down, but vendors are coming out with new, different and high-value products, solutions and services designed to keep the channel in the game, while adding value to end users.

As large IT service providers move to include managed print services (MPS) in their overall packages, smaller resellers are feeling the pinch. Good relationships with customers and an enhanced MPS offering will help them compete, says Rectron.

Bruce Bradford, group business unit manager - Printer Category at Rectron, says the biggest issue facing the printer market is trying to find value in the marketplace.

"It's a competitive environment, and we are seeing many of the larger IT services providers including managed printer services as part of their overall offering, in response to demands from their clients.

"This eats into the potential market for smaller resellers. We are also seeing distributors looking at vertical acquisitions in the channel; and office automation vendors such as Ricoh coming into the IT channel and taking established players head on. Now there's a lot more competition for smaller guys."

Bradford says the days of "box dropping" are ending – to survive, resellers need

Document scanner market grows in 2Q13

The Western European document scanner market has shown growth in the second quarter of 2013, increasing by 29,9% year-on-year to 89 000 units.

This is according to the International Data Corporation (IDC) Western European Quarterly Document Scanner Tracker.

"The large volume of paper documents that need to be either archived or processed in automatised digital workflows is driving demand for robust high-capacity business scanners in Europe," says Arnaud Gagneux, research director, Imaging Printing and Document Solutions, IDC.

"The flow of unstructured or variable data and information will increase and systems will need to be flexible to cope with various types of data and the ability to access it through several different media types," says Julio Vial, research manager, Western European Document Scanner Tracker, IDC.

The distributed document scanner segment has increased by 30,2% year-on-year and accounts for 96% of the overall document scanner market. The production document scanner market grew by 9,8% in 2Q13 year-on-year. This segment accounts for just over 3% of the market share.

The top five vendors in Western Europe in 2Q13 were Fujitsu, Canon, Epson, HP and Brother, accounting for 85,8% of total document scanner shipments.

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in the print market

to deliver added value, such as managed printer services.

"MPS is growing at a rate of around 20% per annum, because it allows corporates to control their total cost of printing. We have been identifying resellers with the potential to offer MPS and are helping develop them. This is obviously easier for those with in-house IT skills. Those who have been pure resellers may have to invest in skills and certification."

However, Bradford believes the investment in upskilling and vendor certification will stand resellers in good stead as competition in the market becomes increasingly fierce.

"It's also important for them to develop a good relationship with their clients, in order to understand their business needs and be in a position to recommend new solutions and services," he adds.

Bradford says the biggest trends in the printer market at the moment are a move from mono to multifunctional colour



Ravi Perumal, HP PPS printing LES HW category manager.

devices, the slow end to demand for fax functionality, and growing demand for wireless connectivity in printers.

"As the cost of colour multifunction device cartridges drops, we are seeing more companies opting to have only one device for mono and colour prints – possibly with controlled access to colour printing options," he says.

"There has also been a drop in demand for 4-in-1 (copy, scan, fax and e-mail) devices, in favour of 3-in-1 (copy, scan and e-mail) devices. And a critical decision factor when making a hardware purchase now, is connectivity – it's really important to enterprises that printers can connect to mobile devices."

On the 3D printer market, now making waves abroad, Bradford says he is seeing a great deal of interest from local resellers and expects it to take off in the future.

"We are monitoring this very closely – it's a promising and very exciting field," he says. "We believe it will be very relevant to hobby businesses, and prototype development – both in small offices and homes. Funny enough, we believe people are seeing great value in 3D printing to repair household goods too. They are printing out widgets and repairing broken products."

Ravi Perumal, HP PPS printing LES HW category manager, comments: "To adapt to new ways of working in and outside the office, today's print devices have evolved to provide an entirely new level of functionality, including the ability to easily upload, access, and print content from mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and notebooks.

"Driven by technology industry mega-trends like mobility, security, cloud and big data, we're seeing Web connectivity, print apps, and cloud printing capabilities further enhance the experience and productivity



Bruce Bradford, group business unit manager - Printer Category at Rectron.

for users who are increasingly relying on mobile devices.

Perumal says companies should expect printers to continue to evolve well beyond the realm of paper. Indeed, there may soon be no limit to what printers can do.

"There are other ways to use printers to simplify highly specialised business processes, including using inkjet printers with biological inks to print living tissue for drug testing, 3D scanning for modelling and other business purposes, and 3D printing to make houses, create copies of artifacts, and even to make dentures.

"As printers get smarter and more capable, they're just going to make outputting the tasks you complete on your computer of choice – be it a laptop, desktop, tablet, smartphone, or something else – easier and of higher quality."

Affordable 3D printing comes of age

Worldwide shipments of 3D printers (3DPs) priced less than \$100 000 will grow 49% in 2013 to reach a total of 56 507 units, according to Gartner's first forecast of the less than \$100 000 consumer and enterprise 3D printer market.

Rapid quality and performance innovations across all 3DP technologies will drive enterprise and consumer demand. Gartner says that shipments will increase further in 2014, growing 75% to 98 065 units, followed by a near doubling of unit shipments in 2015.

In Western Europe, shipments of 3DPs will reach a total of 14 335 units in 2013, a 42,6% increase in 2013 and will amount to 24 784 units in 2014.

"The 3D printer market has reached its inflection point," says Pete Basiliere, research director at Gartner. "While still a nascent market, with hype outpacing the technical realities, the speed of development and rise in buyer interest are pressing hardware, software and service providers to offer easier-to-use tools and materials that produce consistently high-quality results."

In 2013, combined end-user spending on 3DPs will reach \$412-million, up 43% from spending of \$288-million in 2012. Enterprise spending will total more than \$325-million in 2013, while the consumer segment will reach nearly \$87-million. In 2014, spending will increase 62%, reaching \$669-million, with enterprise spending of \$536-million and consumer spending of \$133-million.

"As the products rapidly mature, organisations will increasingly exploit 3D printing's potential in their laboratory, product development and manufacturing operations," says Basiliere. "In the next 18 months, we foresee consumers moving from being curious about the technology to finding reasons to justify purchases as

price points, applications and functionality become more attractive."

From an enterprise point of view, current uses of 3D technology focus on one-off or small-run models for product design and industrial prototyping, jigs and fixtures used in manufacturing processes and mass customisation of finished goods.

As advances in 3D printers, scanners, design tools and materials reduce the cost and complexity of creating 3D printed items, the applications of 3D print technology will continue to expand to include areas such as architecture, defence, medical products and jewellery design.

Gartner predicts that 3D printing will have a high impact on industries, including consumer products, industrial and manufacturing; a medium impact on construction, education, energy, government, medical products, military, retail, telecommunications, transportation and utilities; and a low impact on banking and financial services and insurance.

"The hype around consumer 3D printing has made organisations aware that the price point and functionality of 3DP have changed significantly over the last five years, driving increased shipments beginning in 2014," says Basiliere.

"Most businesses are only now beginning to fully comprehend all of the ways in which a 3DP can be cost-effectively used in their organisations, from prototyping and product development to fixtures and moulds that are used to manufacture or assemble an item to drive finished goods.

"Now that many people in the organisation, not only the engineering and manufacturing department managers but also senior corporate management, marketing management and others, have heard the hype, they want to know when the business

will have a 3D printer."

3D printer prices will decrease during the next several years due to competitive pressures and higher shipment volumes, even after allowing for providers who will be offering devices with higher performance, functionality and quality that enable them to hold the line on pricing.

Gartner expects that by 2015, seven of the 50 largest multinational retailers will sell 3D printers through their physical and online stores.

"Major multinational physical and online retailers have the means to market the technology to consumers and enterprise buyers, generating demand for the devices and revenue by selling printers and supplies, as well as from sales of individual 3D-printed pieces," says Basiliere.

"Office superstore Staples is already in the market, and other superstores and consumer goods retailers, such as Yamada Denki, are prime candidates to sell printers and finished 3D printed items. Their presence in the market will have an impact on average selling prices, forcing providers into low-margin consumer 3DP by 2017.

"Simply experiencing the technology and conceiving ways to use it will mainly drive makers and hobbyists, not the average consumer, to purchase a 3D printer to begin with," says Basiliere. "However, we expect that a compelling consumer application - something that can only be created at home on a 3D printer - will hit the scene by 2016."

This application, which will be the most compelling use case yet for consumer 3D printing, will arise from work done by makers and other enthusiasts who push the envelope of consumer 3D printing uses and enabled by manufacturers who develop "plug-and-play" tools.



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PRINTING SHOULD BE
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Think solid ink ...

By Craig Green, OPB Channel manager at
Bytes Document Solutions, authorised distributor of Xerox

For any company, printing is vital to the smooth running of its business. With the huge volume of printer use in an office environment, companies are starting to re-assess how to stay reliable and become more efficient. Traditional printing methods, such as laser printing have dominated this space for many years, so the move to a different, more innovative solution is often seen as a slightly uncomfortable jump for any business.

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What is solid ink?

Solid ink is a proprietary printing technology, exclusive to a number of Xerox colour printers and multifunctional peripherals (MFPs). Xerox's solid ink technology is a hybrid of liquid ink and toner-based technologies. Unlike liquid ink technology, solid ink printers use resin-based ink sticks - think of a giant crayon. During the imaging process, the ink is melted into a liquid form, jetted onto a transfer drum, and that drum is then pressed against the paper to transfer the image. The ink solidifies instantly on contact with the substrate (paper), preventing any smudging.

Gone are the days of fussing with ink cartridges and dealing with spills. Solid ink's innovative design provides an easy refill system with colour-coded ink sticks that can simply be dropped into the printer. Office workers can easily replace the ink sticks – with no fuss and no bulky packaging. After the ink is consumed, there is no messy cartridge to remove and throw away, which is convenient and environmentally friendly.

How will 'rethinking my ink' impact my business?

How can printing be used to help businesses stay competitive? On the surface, printing is a business necessity, but not a business gain. Solid ink improves efficiency, productivity and energy consumption so businesses can produce high quality, low cost documents. Solid ink can create vivid images for both colour and black and white printing, with the same solid ink sticks. It can also print across a range of paper types allowing businesses to produce multiple types of documents all on one device, with the same great print quality. Solid ink also has up to 90% lower printing waste, versus comparable laser printers.

Sustainability

Solid ink devices are a viable option for companies considering the sustainability credentials of their printing equipment. One of the most compelling "green" features is the cartridge-free design of solid ink devices. The nature of the ink sticks means that there are no cartridges to package, ship, discard, and/or recycle. The compact nature of the ink sticks minimises packaging and, according to Xerox, results in up to 90% less printing waste compared to colour laser printing technology. Unlike toner-based technology, there also are no hardware fuser imaging units to replace or dispose.

One interesting aspect of solid ink is that it is entirely safe and clean, with no mess or toxins produced during the printing process. As Solid ink image quality is consistent across media, recycled and lighter weight paper stock can also be used.

Businesses today move faster than ever and for a printer to be truly productive, it needs to be easy to set up, easy to use and easy to share. The hidden costs of printer downtime, user frustration and delayed print jobs can be enormous. Solid ink can improve office productivity and give companies a way to increase competitive edge by providing a refreshed and smarter way to take advantage of colour printing.

So what are you waiting for? Make your business better, rethink your ink and introduce a solid ink MFP to your office.



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HP, Canon, Xerox lead in EMEA printing

Worldwide page volume generated on home and office digital hardcopy devices decreased to 2,98-trillion in 2012 from 3,03-trillion in 2011, reflecting a year-on-year decline of 1,5%, according to new research from International Data Corporation (IDC). The volume contraction was primarily due to declining pages printed on laser devices in developed economies.

Page volumes in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region recorded a 2,3% decline from 2011; the Middle East and Africa (MEA) was the only sub-region to post page volume growth. Western Europe (WE) and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) recorded declines of 3,1% and 3,2%, respectively. Pages generated in Western Europe still represented over 63% of EMEA total page volume.

In total, almost 2-million pages were printed in EMEA every minute. In other words, every minute in 2012, almost 17,5 football pitches were covered by paper.

"A recession economy and slow business activity, tightening budgets and pressure to cut costs, digitisation of document workflows, increasing adoption of managed print services (MPS), and environmental concerns across Europe were the key factors behind the page volume decline in EMEA last year," says Ilona Stankeova, research director for Imaging Printing and Document Solutions, IDC CEMA.

Recent research conducted by IDC reveals that the fast-growing adoption of tablets and smartphones (TS/SP) is not currently a factor in the page volume decline. The reason for this is that most handheld mobile devices are currently purchased by home users, who contribute only around 5% of total page volume (generated at home and office).

In addition, the IDC study "Mobile Device Users versus Non-Users: Print, Scan, Document Management, 2012" indicates that TS/SP owners are printing, on average, more than non-TS/SP owners. TS/SP

owners have indicated that they are inclined to print more if they have applications that allow them to do so easily.

Moreover, TS/SP owners have a greater preference than non-owners for reading documents in printed format than on a PC or TS/SP. That said, whether end-users print or not, or how much they print, seems to be a characteristic that is determined more by lifestyle and work habits, as well as the ability to print from a mobile device.

"The perception of the negative impact of TS/SP on overall page volume is today just a myth. Actually, tablet devices are killing the PC/notebook business, but not printing volumes," says Mitri Roufka, research director for Imaging Printing and Document Solutions, IDC CEMA.

IDC believes that two key factors really determine the need to print and page volume dynamics. The first is economic conditions and subsequent business activity (end-users report higher numbers of pages printed when business performance is better).

The second is the need to print certain documents and process them on paper (due to different legal requirements, low adoption of electronic document workflow and solutions and so on).

"This means that, in the long-term future, the most important factor that could significantly impact page volume is the shift of document processing from paper to electronic format; which is a trend already taking place, particularly in the large business segment," according to Roufka.

IDC expects that EMEA page volume will continue to decline slowly in the future, dragged down by increasing adoption of document digitalisation and workflows.

MPS adoption in Western Europe and in some of the maturing markets in CEMA will have a negative impact as well, but will be limited to large organisations, as SMBs are mainly potential customers for

BPS contracts. Africa and CIS countries represent the greatest opportunity for installed base and page volume growth in the EMEA region.

"Page volumes from mobile devices are expected to grow, and thus represent an opportunity for vendors, as over 50% of pages printed from TS/SP are pages that users would not have printed from a PC.

"However, TS/SP users are reporting a need for better tools and applications to help them print from those devices. Over 50% of smartphone users and 35% of tablet users indicate that they do not know how to print from their devices. This is a real opportunity that manufacturers need to address," says Stankeova.

In 2012, the overall installed base and page volume of colour laser devices in EMEA both increased. Page volume generated by colour laser devices grew over 12% year on year, with most printing done on MFPs.

Mono laser devices represented 82,1% of the total HCP installed base in EMEA and almost 74% of total page volume generated by laser devices. Both figures represent a year-on-year decline, as users have been migrating to colour devices. Average monthly page volume (AMPV) for mono laser devices was approximately 40% lower than for colour laser devices.

While the installed base of inkjet devices declined by more than 7% from 2011, the page volume increased due to the growing share of inkjet devices dedicated to business use. However, inkjet devices' contribution to overall page volume remains very low, at less than 8% of total pages generated.

HP retained the number one position for overall EMEA page volume share, being one of few vendors to increase overall page volume in 2012. Canon and Xerox held on to second and third place, respectively.

The structure of the installed base is critical; a large installed base does not necessarily translate into a large page volume. Vendors with a smaller installed base, but in printing-intensive segments like midrange laser MFPs, tend to have a higher page share than vendors with a large installed base of inkjet or entry-level laser devices.

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Brother adds new printers

Focused on the office printing needs of home offices and small-medium businesses, Brother International South Africa has added four new models to its range of colour LED printers/multi-function centres models. The four models - HL-3150CDN, HL-3170CDW, MFC-9140CDN and MFC-9330CDW - offer print speeds of up to 22ppm for both monochrome and colour prints and copying (for multi-function models only).

The new series brings a balance of flexibility and business sensibility to users in home offices and small-medium businesses. Users who are environmentally-friendly and cost-conscious will find the automatic two-sided printing feature simple to use, while the mobile print capability allows users to print directly even from their mobile devices.

For increased productivity without compromise, the HL-3150CDN and HL-3170CDW colour LED printers provide consistently high

quality printout speeds of up to 22ppm for both monochrome and colour printing.

The MFC-9140CDN and MFC-9330CDW multi-functions with print, scan, copy and fax capabilities, with copying speeds at up to 22ppm.

The series is friendly on the wallet and the environment. All four models provide automatic two-sided printing, giving the flexibility to print on both sides and save on costs and paper usage.

Sharing the printers over the network is easy – the HL-3150CDN and the MFC-9140CDN can be connected to multiple users via the built-in network, while the HL-3170CDW and the MFC-9330CDW can be connected wirelessly.

Other convenient features include the mobile print capability, which allows users to print presentations and documents from portable devices (iPhone/iPad/iPod touch connected to a WiFi network, or mobile devices on Android).

Offices with large print volumes will appreciate the high-yield colour toner cartridge options that will allow them to print up to 2 200 pages per toner cartridge.



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OKI introduces private labelling solution

The Anytron Digital Label Press from OKI South Africa is a new, full-colour digital label printing machine, producing high resolution output at up to nine metres per second.

OKI product manager Emile Pitout says the device is ideal for manufacturers, store branding, and labelling of food, supplements or other products.

Private label products are typically manufactured by one company for sale under another brand, such as “own brand” goods in supermarkets, and the quality of the packaging is paramount.

“That’s where the Anytron Digital Label Press has a particular advantage. Not only is it faster and more reliable than any of its competitors, it also prints at a maximum resolution of 1 200 dots per inch.”

Reliability and a high output speed is a result of the device’s Single Pass

technology and a sophisticated take-up and feed unit.

“Manufacturers and consumer goods resellers can bring label production in-house. For fast moving consumer goods in particular, this represents a massive opportunity: it is no longer necessary to outsource label printing, which takes time and complicates the process of packaging and delivering goods to market.”

The Anytron Digital Label Press measures just over 1.6 metres long and 58cm wide. Capable of handling 4-, 6- or 8-inch label stock, it produces high-definition, full-colour labels which are also waterproof and scratch resistant. A wide variety of self-adhesive label stock is available.

It is also possible to instantly change or update labels “on the fly”, and integration with Microsoft Excel files

means no special software is required for its operation.

The Anytron range includes a digital laser die cutter which, combined with the Digital Label Press, provides a complete labelling solution that can fit into even small factories. The die cutter supports vector files, roll and sheet media and has an in-line laminating unit.

With support and service from OKI South Africa, performance and reliability are assured.

“We’ve added Labelling Solutions to our range as we’re satisfied that it fits the measure of market-leading technology, quality and performance. The machines open an exciting new opportunity for resellers to meet the needs of any company looking to improve performance by taking charge of labelling, which is an essential component of branding their goods,” he concludes.

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OKI launches mono MFP range

OKI Europe has launched its new range of A4 mono multi-function printers (MFPs), the MB700 Series, which will soon to be available in South Africa.

The MC700/MB700 Series uses sXP (smart Extendable Platform) to offer enhanced workflow integration and document management.

“Our new portfolio of A4, colour and mono MFPs extends our successful approach to the larger workgroup and enterprise market,” says Harry Takahashi, MD, OKI Europe.

The MC700/MB700 Series enables businesses to move from a manual, paper-based workflow into a digital workflow. The open architecture sXP enables seamless integration of workflows into the end-user’s information infrastructure, allowing businesses to benefit from lower costs, and improved productivity and operational efficiencies.

The series includes software for effective device management tasks such as remote diagnostics and document output controls.

The MC700/MB700 Series models have a convenience stapler as standard to facilitate post-production finishing. The dfn models come with an internal finisher for automated document collation and stapling.

The new mono and colour MFPs benefit from the latest OKI LED print engine technology. All models come with a 23cm, colour-backlit touchscreen with an easy-to-use control panel, enabling personalised user settings.

The models deliver print speeds of up to 40ppm (MC780) and 52ppm (MB770). Other enterprise-class functionality includes duplex printing and scanning, flexible scan destinations and formats, and a large-capacity 160Gb hard drive as standard.

These eco-friendly mono MFPs have advanced security features including secure PIN printing, data encryption and disk wiping, and a secure print with card release option.

The MC700/MB700 Series is also backed by OKI Europe’s three-year warranty.



HP LaserJet MFP boosts productivity

The HP LaserJet Enterprise 700 colour MFP M775z+, available from AxizWorkgroup, combines functionality with high print quality. This A3 MFP increases colour printing capabilities with Pantone matching and allows users to print from smartphones or tablets from virtually anywhere with HP ePrint.

The printer has a 4 350-sheet paper capacity and high-volume print jobs can be automated, using the 100-page automatic document feeder.

HP’s colour access control also makes it easy to manage the business’ colour printing, while the easy-access USB port allows users to easily save and print files directly to the MFP.

HP LaserJet Enterprise 700 colour MFP M775z+ has

robust scanning capabilities that will streamline workflow. The printer’s scanning functionality avoids paper wastage by removing blank pages in scanned documents.

Touchscreen controls allow users to preview, edit and digitally send documents via the device. Users can also easily incorporate paper documents into digital workflows by sending scans to fax, e-mail or network folders.

Fleet-level security solutions boost printing and imaging safeguards protect business data. A further security feature is the hardware integration pocket that allows users to add security solutions such as card and badge readers.

The printer also helps to control expenses with energy-saving features.

Functions of the printer include:

- * Print, copy, scan, fax, digital send, easy access USB, offset and staple capabilities;
- * Multitasking supported;
- * Print speed in black of up to 30ppm, and in colour of up to 30ppm;
- * Print quality black (best) - up to 600 x 600 dpi;
- * Print quality colour (best) - up to 600 x 600 dpi;
- * A variety of print languages, including HP PCL 6, HP PCL 5c (HP PCL 5c driver available from the Web only), HP Postscript Level 3 emulation, native PDF printing (v 1.4) and Apple AirPrint;
- * Display - 20,5cm touchscreen Colour Graphic Display (CGD);
- * Processor speed - 800 MHz; and
- * An automatic paper sensor.

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Ricoh's mono MFP and printer boasts low energy consumption

The Ricoh SP 311DN(w) and SP 311SFN(w) are small, smart and energy-efficient.

The black and white A4 laser MFP and printer are compact enough to fit unobtrusively on a desk, easy to operate and simple to maintain.

Their energy consumption is very low at 890W maximum and just 50W in Energy Saver mode, they have built-in network cards, PCL support and WiFi, a short warm up time at 26 seconds, and fast print speeds of 28 pages per minute, with low running costs and print both sides of a single sheet.

They have long lasting, high yield toners for 3 500 printed pages, the MFP scans six originals per minute in full colour, they print at 1 200 dots per inch and the feeder trays hold 250 sheets in standard trim.



Ricoh debuts lightweight ultra short-throw projector

Ricoh's PJ WX4130 and PJ WX4130N network-connectable ultra short-throw projectors use a free-form mirror system that allows the units to be placed just 11,7cm from a wall or flat projection surface.

They weigh a mere 3kg and display images up to 80 inches or just over 200cm. They can be used with interactive whiteboards, video or Web conference systems and, with Ricoh's Tamago Presenter app, can be integrated with iPads to control or share presentations from the tablet.

These projectors work extremely well in general ambient lighting conditions, with no need to dim the lights in offices or public spaces such as museums, classrooms, meeting rooms, bars, shops or restaurants.

They display at a maximum resolution of 1280 x 600 at a 16:10 aspect ratio, have a five-second start time, offer HDMI connectivity, the -N model has direct USB connectivity and both wired and wireless LAN, and both auto-synchronise to input.

The 2 500-lumen lamp cools quickly so it can be immediately transported after use in its carry bag.

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Epson showcases printer variety

Epson SA hosted its first large format commercial and industrial printer exhibition recently, with resellers demonstrating the capabilities of various units on display to channel guests and end users.

“Epson hosted the exhibition to showcase its leading large format, commercial and industrial printers to resellers and their customers,” says Vernon Mellors, business account manager at Epson South Africa. “We made it possible for visitors to experience the superior colour production, versatility and speed of our printers on display, first-hand, while discussing their individual business requirements directly with experts.”

Launched at the exhibition was the Epson SureColor SC-F2000 T-shirt printer available in two versions: as a high-speed, four colour printer (CMYK), and a five colour (CMYKW) printer that offers the added benefit of white ink for printing on dark or coloured fabrics.

Combining high performance with low maintenance and running costs, the two models make it possible for businesses such as online t-shirt printing companies, mass production t-shirt companies, small businesses and corporate users to offer fabric design and printing services limited only by the imagination.

The printer is capable of printing a single white T-shirt in 27 seconds when using dual colour mode, and a dark coloured T-shirt in one minute 51 seconds, using white and colour ink, ensuring production is quick without sacrificing print quality. The Epson SureColor SC-F2000 also offers a resolution of up to 1440x1440dpi for accurate dot shape and placement, while its wide colour range produces vibrant colours, sharp contours and smooth gradations.

“For over three years, Epson dedicated a team of mechanical, chemical, and software engineers to create an all-new imaging technology dedicated for printing directly to garments,” says Mellors.

“Designed using the latest advancements in performance imaging,



like our purpose-built Epson MicroPiezo TFP print head, along with our all-new garment ink technology – Epson UltraChrome DG – the Epson SureColor SC-F2000 series will become the new benchmark in high-performance garment imaging,” he says.

Also under the spotlight was the Epson SureColor T-Series wide-format printer range. These cost-effective, high-speed, four-colour printers for CAD, GIS and POS applications offer fast, reliable printing on coated and non-coated media up to 44-inch (1118mm), 36-inch (914mm) and 24-inch (610mm) wide.

Designed to fit seamlessly into the office environment, their small footprint and low noise levels are appealing in open plan or shared printing environments, while front-driven operation makes it convenient to place the units against walls or office dividers.

The full range on display at the exhibition included:

- Epson SureColor SC-T7000 printer, which offers fast, reliable printing on media up to 44-inches wide (1118mm), showcased by Digital Distributors;
- Epson SureLab SL-D3000 printer, a professional dry lab that offers a complete printing solution for retail photo labs, presented by ImageMed;

- Epson SureColor S-Series, signage printers that produce everything from signage to wall paper, with the SureColor SC-S30610 printer exhibited by Eco Alpine, the SureColor SC-S50610 printer displayed by Antalis and the SureColor SC-S70610 printer put on show by Colour Corporate;

- Epson Stylus Pro Range, a 17-inch printer for pre-press, packaging, design, commercial photographs and fine art reproduction. The Stylus Pro 4990 was demonstrated by Colour Corporate and the Stylus Pro 7900 by Kemtek;

- Epson SureColor SC-F7000, designed to produce a wide range of soft signage, sportswear, apparel, accessories and promotional items, exhibited by Chemosol; and

- Epson SureColor SC-F2000 T-shirt printer, a new printer that prints directly onto a wide variety of garments and fabrics, introduced by Chemosol.

“Collaborating with our resellers made this event possible,” says Kelvin Reynolds, GM of Epson in South Africa. “They are our brand champions in the marketplace, and we valued this opportunity to work with them to showcase our large format, commercial and industrial printer range, with the intention of growing our market share in this sector.”

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Syntech, FSP present FSP Twinkle 65

As people commute extensively for business today, a standard battery pack can become a burden. The FSP Twinkle 65 is a convenient, compact, portable and lightweight universal adapter which weighs only 100g.

The Twinkle includes exchangeable plugs and can be used in 157 countries. It also has a 91% power conversion rate that reduces power loss and saves energy, thus protecting the environment.

FSP was founded with a mission to fulfil the electronics needs of home consumers, small office professionals and enterprise environments. FSP now provides \$5-million in product insurance for its products, including PC power supplies, notebook adapters and power banks.

“Syntech is proud to be the exclusive distributor for FSP AC adapters in South Africa. FSP remains dedicated to the core belief of improving the lives of their consumers by manufacturing products that are efficient, save energy, and are reliable,” says Ryan Martyn, director of Syntech and the chairman of EO (Entrepreneurs’ Organisation).

The FSP range is distributed by Syntech, and is now available for purchase at Incredible Connection and other leading retailers.

Fortinet unveils fast firewall appliance

Fortinet has announced a new high-performance, compact network firewall appliance for enterprise data centres, large service providers, cloud providers and carriers. The new FortiGate-3700D, which includes four 40GbE (QSFP+) and 28 10GbE (SFP+) ports, is able to achieve up to 160 Gigabits per second (Gbps) firewall throughput.

Using Fortinet’s new custom NP6 ASIC, the FortiGate-3700D is able to deliver best-in-class performance, low latency and IPv4 to IPv6 performance parity.

Fortinet is the first network security company to deliver 100Gbps+ firewall throughput and 40GbE ports in a compact appliance, which redefines the standard for price per gigabit protected,

price per port density, power dissipation per gigabit and space per gigabit.

Infonetics recently conducted a high speed firewall survey of large organisations (over 1 000 employees) that have already deployed high-end firewalls, defined as firewalls that currently support greater than 40Gbps aggregate throughput.

The move to faster network technologies is forcing enterprises to look at upgrading every component of their IT infrastructure, and the need to add new high speed interfaces to firewalls (10GbE, 40GbE and eventually 100GbE) tops the list of drivers for investing in new high-end firewalls.

The new FortiGate-3700D leverages

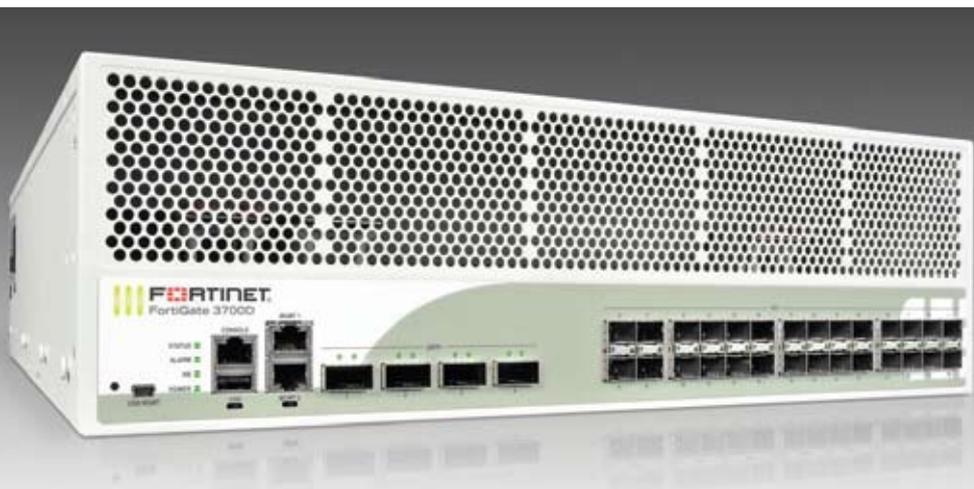
FortiOS 5, the industry’s most advanced network security operating system. FortiOS is a security-hardened, purpose-built operating system that is the foundation of all FortiGate network security platforms. It can be used across large or small enterprise infrastructures and multiple security application personalities.

FortiOS 5 allows for flexible deployment models within the data centre such as core firewall, which provides very high performance firewall with ultra low latency, or edge firewall, which can be used to serve internal or external communities with varying trust levels using different firewall personalities, including firewall + VPN, firewall + IPS, NGFW, advanced threat protection and more.

Fortinet offers physical, hybrid or virtual network segmentation via its virtual domain (VDOM) capability.

The FortiGate-3700D features the latest FortiASIC NP6 processor, which has been designed in-house by Fortinet’s network ASIC experts.

The Network Processor ASIC delivers huge performance benefits over a traditional CPU plus software approach. This enables FortiGate high performance network security appliances to have a smaller footprint and consume less power, but still deliver the highest throughput numbers at a very low price.



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WD releases My Book AV-TV

WD has introduced its My Book AV-TV to the South African market, allowing customers to instantly enable their TV recording features to store and playback hundreds of hours of entertainment by simply connecting the My Book AV-TV drive directly to a compatible TV.

Additionally, customers watching live TV with the My Book AV-TV connected can press pause and rewind, or fast-forward afterward, to control and enjoy live TV at their convenience.

My Book AV-TV, available in 1Tb, easily connects directly to televisions with built-in recording capability to provide plentiful storage capacity for standard or high-definition entertainment programming.



Built with WD GreenPower Technology, the drive inside is engineered for the audio/video market in order to optimise the customer experience with smooth video playback of recorded content. Additionally, the WD GreenPower Technology is engineered to use less power and stay cool even in a hot entertainment centre full of electronics.

Says Anamika Budree, WD Branded sales manager – South Africa, “The South African market now has access to an affordable solution to record their favourite TV programmes and movies without a monthly subscription.

“In addition, the My Book AV-TV delivers the convenience of playback at a suitable time and is compatible with TV’s

with a USB port.”

The drive’s super-fast USB 3.0 connection enables multiple HD streaming for simultaneous recording and playback for customers that connect their My Book AV-TV to a dual-tuner television. For example, if users have a dual-tuner TV, they can record a favourite movie whilst watching a sporting event or stream a recorded programme.

Additionally, the sleek and compact design of My Book AV-TV ensures that the drive fits neatly in most entertainment centre consoles. It can stand upright or lie horizontally, making it easy to neatly position the drive near the television while maximising airflow and minimising heat around the drive.



WD announces 4Tb WD Green drive

WD has recently announced the addition of a 4Tb drive to its WD Green family of drives.

WD Green drives are designed to be used in PC systems that require cool and quiet operation. Alternatively, they can be used in external enclosures and other applications for which low noise, heat and energy are a key requirement.

Equipped with WD Green Power Technology, WD Green drives yield lower operating temperatures for increased reliability and low acoustics, which are ideal for ultra-quiet PCs and external drives.

Upgrading a drive has never been easier with WD Acronis True Image, available to download for free from the WD support Web site.

This function allows users to copy all data to the new drive without having to re-install the operating system.

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Beware complacency: it could be death of a stable industry sector

IT distribution appears to have reached a point where it can be regarded as one of the most stable sectors in the overall information and communications technology (ICT) industry in South Africa.

This stability and the maturity that seems to characterise this multi-billion rand sector has enabled most distributors to weather and even overcome several major problems that have hit the local and international economies in recent years.

These challenges have included the global financial meltdown towards the end of 2008; the world-wide recession that followed; the trend towards rapid commoditisation of IT products that has been underway for more than a decade; and the many difficulties that are, perhaps, more specific to doing business in South Africa, such as the sheer inefficiencies associated with an aggressive and disruptive trade union movement, and lack of service delivery in the public sector.

It is against this background of economic volatility and significant change in the technological landscape over the past five or more years that IT distribution appears to have avoided too many spectacular liquidations or major consolidation deals based on enforced or rescue-driven mergers and acquisitions.

A further measure of the current state of stability in the industry is that, with one or two exceptions, most multinational vendors appear to be reasonably happy that they are being represented in the distribution channel by the right companies, with the reshuffling of agency agreements between various rival distributors being a relatively rare occurrence.

The maturity and resilience of the local IT distribution sector can, without doubt, be attributed in no small measure to responsible management and the focus concentrated by all major players on the fundamentals of what distribution is all about – debtors, creditors, stock and cost containment.

The five Top Influencers named in this issue represent a fitting and eloquent testament to not only the organisations that they serve with distinction, but to the IT distribution sector in this

country as a whole.

The blend of privately held and JSE-listed companies that are represented by this year's Top Influencers also highlights the fact that business success is not necessarily directly dependent on a rigid corporate structure or the freedom of entrepreneurial flair, and that leadership plays a vital role.

However, all too often stability and maturity in any industry leads to complacency and massive exposure to risks associated with sudden or unforeseen changes in the trading environment.

These changes could include factors such as unpredictable, aggressive or disruptive moves initiated by direct competitors, along the lines currently being experienced by the two major networks in the battle for market share against the third and fourth network operators in the cell phone sector.

Another obvious risk is posed by the well-worn IT industry cliché - the so-called "paradigm shift" in technology.

Any distributor complacent enough to believe that they can rely exclusively on existing vendors and their product offerings to build and sustain profitability indefinitely is asking for trouble. The emergence of trends such as "cloud computing" and the rapid convergence and integration of telephony into information technology to create a unified communications infrastructure that drives mobile devices is already having a significant impact on traditional distribution products such as servers, desktops and notebooks.

The list of factors that can impact distribution is almost limitless. Awareness of this fact needs to drive innovation in a sector that is faced with rapidly increasing changes to how it has operated in the past.

The possibility exists that this time next year the ChannelWise Top Influencers will not be individuals heading up key organisations but products or applications that revolutionise the role of distribution.

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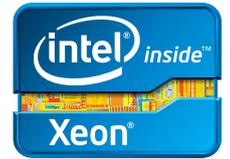
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