

A man and a woman are riding a bicycle together in a bright, modern setting. The man is in the driver's seat, wearing a white button-down shirt and grey trousers, smiling as he looks towards the woman. The woman is seated behind him, also smiling, wearing a white long-sleeved top and dark pants. They are both looking forward and to the right. The background is a bright, out-of-focus interior space with large windows and other people in the distance.

COMMUNICATIONS
AND MEDIA

TheRecord



BOB DEHAVEN: MICROSOFT

Today's telco companies are on a journey to transform from vertically integrated service providers to enablers of services across the digital value chain. Recognising that this is no walk in the park, Microsoft and its partners are working hand in hand with telco companies of all shapes and sizes to make the process easier.

In this issue Rikke Helms tells us more about this, and TeleWare's Steve Haworth outlines the importance of partnerships. Plus, read about some of the latest implementations across the sector.

Supporting telco transformation



RIKKE HELMS: MICROSOFT

In this time of huge change, today's telcos need to transform themselves into nimble, technologically-advanced businesses. There are a number of digital capabilities that distinguish the most profitable organisations

In my conversations with telcos over the years I've learnt that, no matter how the industry evolves, customer experience is always top of the agenda. With this in mind, understanding – and meeting – customer needs is crucial. To do this there are two key things that telcos must do: they must transform themselves into digital businesses; and they must outsource non-core business processes and workloads.

Microsoft has all the solutions to enable a better, more effective and customer-ready platform. We will work with any device, and on any operating system.

Microsoft's hybrid cloud offerings can effectively address telcos' internal and external IT cloud

“The objective is to deliver new services at optimal cost and customer satisfaction”

environments, both of which can extend private cloud to an Azure Hybrid Cloud. Our productivity, data platform and business offerings can be implemented both for the internal use of telcos, and as a component of their portfolio of offerings to customers. In addition, we partner with telcos to enhance their external IT and devices portfolios.

In its recent publication, *Lessons from digital telcos: Five initiatives to improve business performance*, McKinsey identified five digital capabilities that distinguish highly profitable telco companies:

- establish customer-analytics capabilities
- digitise the order management process
- digitise the customer relationship management process
- streamline the company's application landscape
- standardise and automate the company's IT infrastructure.

Combining this with the five dimensions of the telco business provides a framework to support telcos in their digital transformation. The internal IT cloud, external IT cloud and internal network dimensions provide the 'standardise and automate capability', and the other four capabilities correspond to the solutions and services dimension.

In addition to improving digital capabilities the industry is hungry to develop new digital services for its markets and to extend these markets to the delivery of media content, as evidenced by AT&T's acquisition of DirectTV and the merger of the Dutch operations of Vodafone and Liberty Global. Telcos have built B2B and B2C businesses with some success, often partnering with major companies. Microsoft has channel relationships in place with telcos and there is potential to advance this to joint service development relationships with the leaders of the industry. By engaging with telcos as a supplier, partner and customer, we are able to join them in their journey to transform from vertically integrated service providers to enablers of services across the digital value chain. ■

Rikke Helms is managing director, global telecoms at Microsoft

Staying up to date



SIMON ANDREWES: X.NEWS

Keeping track of stories and events as they unfold is a key priority for journalists worldwide, and cloud-based solutions provide the ideal tool for monitoring internal and external sources in real time

How well do you know what you know as an organisation? In newsrooms, where my background is, this is a constant problem. News moves fast, and comes from many different places. The first hint of a story might be rumours circulating on Twitter. For example, I watched the news of musician Prince's death unfold as I was presenting to a customer – and at least 20 minutes elapsed between first indications and official confirmation.

Similarly, the first pictures might come from a news agency, or a member of the audience, or an affiliate in another state. Reporters in the online newsroom could be gathering and tweeting information that their TV colleagues are not yet aware of.

All of this information lives in different siloed systems, which need to be individually checked and searched in order to keep up to date. This is difficult in a fully equipped newsroom, but it's virtually impossible for a journalist in the field working under difficult conditions. Consequently, most newsrooms survive under a constant hail of e-mails, sprayed out to anyone and everyone who might need to know that a particular event has occurred.

Although the problem is long recognised, the solutions are less obvious. The BBC, CNN, NBC and others have built internal tools to surface information and aid collaboration. Some newsroom suppliers have adopted an open philosophy with platforms like Avid's MediaCentral which aggregate content.

Our tool, x.news, takes this philosophy a step further – into the cloud. Running on secure Microsoft Azure servers, it constantly monitors and indexes a wide range of external and internal sources, including agency wires, newsroom systems, social media,



video, stills and text. Journalists use a browser interface to search for and monitor story information in real time, and all in one place. Plus, the joy of the cloud is that information can be accessed anywhere from a connected device, whether a laptop, tablet or mobile.

All the legacy systems are still in place, and doing what they do best, but the information is now liberated so it can be presented and filtered in customisable ways for the specific needs of each journalist. With the complexity of modern newsrooms, having a whole variety of production systems is inevitable. But using the cloud to look across all of them in a user-friendly way is a simple and cost-effective solution to the challenges of information silos.

However, this approach does not need to be limited to newsrooms. There are many people out there whose organisations could be doing much better when it comes to 'knowing what you know'. ■

Simon Andrewes is editorial director of x.news information technology

x.news' cloud-based solution allows news teams to save time and improve quality

Partnering for growth



STEVE HAWORTH: TELEWARE

Partnerships play a key role in helping telecommunications providers to improve customer experience, increase productivity and remain compliant

TeleWare, which provides integrated communications technology to help companies increase employee productivity, enhance the customer experience and meet regulatory requirements, hosted its Partnering for Growth event this March. The event highlighted how forming partnerships can help companies remain agile, meet evolving customer expectations and achieve longevity in today's rapidly evolving telecommunications (telco) landscape.

Speaking at the event, Gary Barnett, chief analyst of software at Ovum highlighted that the average lifespan of a company in 1960 was 56 years and fell to just 15 years in 2014. Is this decline the result of the increasingly competitive market in which businesses now operate? If so, we must find new ways for companies to operate more effectively.

TeleWare believes that partnerships play a key role in helping companies to gain a competitive advantage that ensures their long-term survival in the telco market. As a communications technology provider that has a history of forming strategic partnerships with leading businesses, we know that these relationships help companies to develop compelling propositions that improve customer experience, increase employee productivity and ensure regulatory compliance. This belief is echoed by both Ovum and Microsoft.

Business partners can share customer, market and competitor insight to ensure that they both stay at the forefront of changing markets and emerging technologies. Partnerships also enable businesses to explore new opportunities to drive growth, without increasing capital investments in additional resources.

During the TeleWare event, Microsoft's senior product marketing manager Ian Woolner noted



that for every dollar Microsoft generates, its partners generate eight dollars. He added that a common setback experienced by businesses is a stubbornness to invest in technology upgrades. Businesses ideally want to sweat their assets until the projected end of their lifespan. Unfortunately, many of these projections have been unable to account for just how quickly advancements in technology have come around.

“Partnerships play a key role in helping companies to gain a competitive advantage that ensures long-term survival”

Ovum research shows that on average, companies spend 82% of IT budgets on maintenance and just 18% on innovation. With so much spent on keeping the lights on, partnerships are a critical for businesses. They give organisations the flexibility and agility needed in this rapidly changing market and to keep up with evolving customer expectations. ■

Steve Haworth is CEO of TeleWare

The challenges of the mobile revolution



FLORIAN MALECKI: DELL SECURITY

The mobile revolution has been both blessing and curse for organisations. While it has enabled workers to be more productive away from the office, it has also introduced a whole host of new security threats

The trend of using the same device for both business and personal use raises a number of data security problems. Unsecured mobile devices can act as a conduit for malware and ransomware to enter corporate networks, while the use of unsecured WiFi – for example, during travel – also provides a tempting target for hackers to intercept corporate data. On top of this external threat, there is also a very real danger from un-vetted personal apps which can gain access to sensitive information held on the device.

In a world where mobile working has become so important to businesses and employees, it is

“Humans are often the weakest link in information security”

everybody’s responsibility to ensure that devices are secured. Businesses need to implement the right blend of technology, policy, and education; while mobile workers must adhere to corporate processes and take responsibility for protecting their devices against common security risks. This applies just as much to SMBs as it does to the largest enterprise.

Important as education and policy is, humans are often the weakest link in information security. That’s why it’s imperative that organisations that enable mobile working invest in the relevant mobile security solutions – ones that are adapted to their specific needs.

An effective mobile security solution must provide context-aware authentication which grants access only to trusted devices and authorised users who are then provided connectivity with granular policy-enforced SSL VPN, enabling them to access mission-critical applications and network resources, including shared folders, client-server applications, intranet sites, email, and remote and virtual desktop services.

Finally, it is essential that organisations consider the nature of their corporate data storage and security when implementing an effective mobile security solution. All back-end applications and data must be protected by adequate network security solutions, identity and access controls, coupled with context aware solutions which ensure only accredited users can access data within certain time and location parameters. Data in transit from corporate servers to mobile devices must be secured with encryption to protect against eavesdropping of network traffic by unauthorised users at rest on endpoints, while data at rest on endpoints must be protected by encryption of mobile data, containerisation and remote device wipe capabilities.

Overall, security solutions should be a starting point for businesses to think about how they balance the needs of their employees with the over-reaching imperative of protecting corporate data at all times and on all devices. ■

Florian Malecki is international product marketing director at Dell Security

Desktop-as-a-Service the way it should be

Emerio, an NTT Communications company, drives Desktop-as-a-Service by creating a blueprint for flexible, high-performance desktops

Emerio, an NTT Communications company, delivers a range of IT services. The company wanted to enhance its service offering to include Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS) and take advantage of the growing market.

A key challenge of desktop virtualisation has been vendor lock-in from proprietary solutions, which leads to costs rising significantly over time. Other issues have included large upfront investments in storage, to provide the performance needed for a fast and reliable desktop service. Emerio wanted to avoid these challenges and develop a DaaS offering based on a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) that offered reliability at a compelling price point for businesses of all sizes.

To find the right VDI software, Emerio ran tests on Citrix Xen Desktop, VMware Horizon and Wyse vWorkspace 8 from Dell. It was important to take into consideration that even though each solution has its merits, most customers may not have very complex requirements. “We found that Wyse vWorkspace was the right choice for its flexibility, manageability and cost-effectiveness,” says Gurprakash Sohal, vice president of Emerio in Australia.

Emerio also found HyperCache, an in-memory caching feature, on the vWorkspace host server was an important advantage. With this feature, frequently accessed data such as the operating system image is held in the server’s cache, which helps prevent latency problems when large numbers of people launch their desktops at the same time.

Soon after implementing and running Wyse vWorkspace 8 for its DaaS, Emerio participated in an opportunity with a bank in Australia for a fully managed infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) and DaaS solution. Bank personnel were accessing virtualised applications using remote desktop

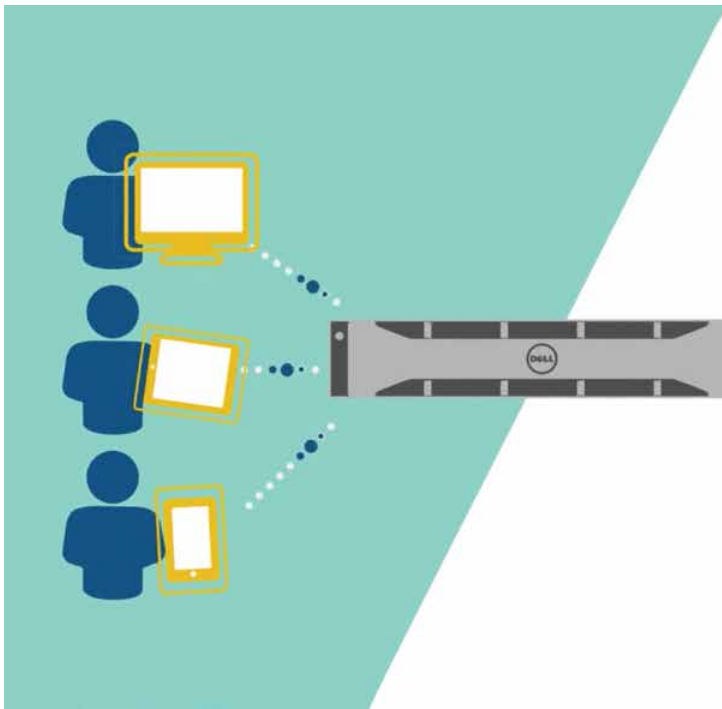
services (RDS) as part of Windows Server. The bank wanted to move to a full VDI solution to maximise security, simplify management and give employees a personalised virtual desktop. Against competition from providers offering alternative VDI software products, Emerio won the contract and proceeded to build the customer’s IaaS and DaaS infrastructure at its NTT data centre.

To avoid compliance issues, the bank needed the DaaS to be secure and carefully audited. Emerio met all the requirements, offering a single-vendor DaaS solution including software for compliance. This simplified the management process for Emerio while ensuring tight integration between all components. “We developed our IaaS and DaaS solution on an end-to-end Dell reference architecture proposed by Dell,” explains Sohal. “We had already used a number of Dell solutions and had a lot of confidence in the stability and performance of the underlying platform.”

At the heart of the IaaS/DaaS solution are Dell PowerEdge R720 servers with Intel Xeon E5-2630 and E5-2690 series processors. The servers, running on Windows Server 2012 R2 with Hyper V, support an IaaS and Wyse vWorkspace 8-based

Dell Cloud Connect portable cloud access devices provide personnel with mobility in the branch





Desktop virtualisation enables better use of resources and greater scalability

DaaS. Applications in the IaaS include Microsoft Exchange 2013 and Microsoft SQL Server Enterprise. Dell PowerVault storage arrays provide data storage for the IaaS and DaaS solutions, as well as additional capacity. A Dell PowerVault TL2000 tape library creates taped backups. All the hardware is covered by Dell ProSupport with Mission Critical onsite support service for rapid assistance in case of any issues.

Today, all employees at Emerio’s banking customer gain a virtual desktop and the same high quality end-user experience every time they log on. With the support of the end-to-end Dell platform, personnel using Wyse vWorkspace 8 can launch their virtualised desktops in less than 45 seconds and have fast access to all their applications and data.

The bank also wanted to refresh an ageing desktop based on HP T5565 and Dell Wyse T50 thin clients,

which staff had for their RDS sessions. Besides finding new endpoints, Emerio was asked to provide a solution for personnel to access applications through touch-screen monitors in some areas of the bank’s branches. Emerio proposed Dell Wyse 5020 thin clients, running Windows 8 Embedded, for personnel to access the VDI, and a combination of Dell Cloud Connect portable cloud access devices and Dell MultiTouch P2314T monitors for the branches.

Emerio keeps the DaaS secure and audited for its bank customer using Dell Defender and Dell Enterprise Reporter software. The bank has peace of mind that using Defender for two-factor authentication heightens the security of its virtual desktops, while Enterprise Reporter enables real-time assessments of who has access to what applications and data across the environment. Emerio has the support of the built-in Dell vWorkspace Monitoring and Diagnostics feature to proactively manage the performance of the DaaS. The tool helps the team quickly resolve issues before they impact the bank’s personnel or any other DaaS customer’s employees.

With the success of its DaaS solution supporting the bank, Emerio is looking forward to winning more business in the expanding DaaS market. “We have seen a lot of interest from customers,” says Sohal. “We can seize new business opportunities and build long-term relationships with customers by developing our DaaS offering around Dell vWorkspace and a Dell end-to-end architecture.” ■

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