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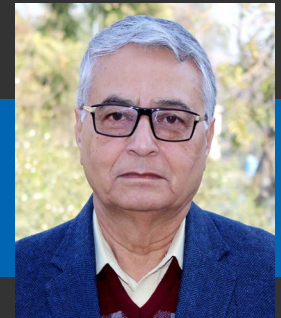


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Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of Teletimes International.

This edition is focused towards the telecom industry's largest global gathering, the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. As always, Teletimes is a supporting partner and I am judging the GLOMO awards.

MWC will focus on themes around 5G, 6G, immersive technology, and fintech and how these technologies are shaping the greater telecom industry and our lives. Teletimes team will be present at the event and you can book meetings and pitch your solutions for coverage and interviews directly to me on khalidathar@teletimesinternational.com

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate stc for announcing a total revenue exceeding \$13B for the first time. This is a major milestone which is just a reflection of the leadership's vision and efforts.

As always, you will find the latest news and updates from the industry in this edition of Teletimes as well.

Your feedback is welcome on info@teletimesinternational.com

Enjoy Reading!

Khalid Athar

Chief Editor

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5G and the future of International Relations

In the current digital era, 5G technology is at the forefront of innovations in the Information and Communications Technology industry (ICT) as it carries with it great opportunities for the development of businesses and services to end users, thus contribute to supporting the economic recovery of countries, especially after years of stagnation following the COVID-19 pandemic, oil price fluctuations, the current state of war between Russia and Ukraine and the new international alliances that rely heavily on the capabilities of technology to make a difference in the arena of competition.

One of the most important features of 5G is its positive impact on the future of various sectors and industries at the level of upgrading communication and providing more digital services and taking advantage of the integration capabilities with other important technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), cloud, computing and industrial applications,

all of which inject new capabilities on the path of digital transformation and social and economic development.

Experts say that whoever owns the keys of the next generations of telecommunications technology such as the currently booming fifth generation (5G), the fast approaching 5.5G and the sixth generation (6G) with its R&D competition is already heating globally.

One of the main reasons for the tension between the United States and China is actually based on the struggle to control the advanced technologies, specifically the global 5G market. The United States is confident that China's strategy of focusing on technological superiority and conquering global markets through its giant companies such as Huawei is a major concern for its history of dominance of technology globally. This has led to a sustained crackdown on China and its companies in the context of allegations that China's technology threatens national

security and many other claims related to cybersecurity breaches

The US campaign against China and its companies, in cooperation with its various allies, is to ban Chinese companies from accessing any products that might contribute to their technological superiority, most importantly advanced chips. The United States is trying to convince all its allies not to accept 5G technology from China's most important companies such as the government ZTE and privately owned Huawei who already established itself as a fierce competitor in the 5G market. Hence, the competition arena in the field of 5G is driven by political alliances and decisions are made with geopolitical motives away from scientific facts and factual evidences. There is a real need to neutralize technology from politics, not to limit the spread of its positive benefits to humanity.

Many Middle East countries have

managed to create good balances between the US and China in buying and utilizing technology. The GCC countries for example, have become world leaders in 5G deployments and have had no conservations on using 5G technology from China's most important company, Huawei. But the US campaign against Huawei which does not stop, is gaining momentum and its influence reaches countries in the region planning to launch 5G, especially countries with strategic alliances with the United States.

Jordan is the current example, as the announcement of the 5G launch is already

As for the selection of vendors that will build 5G networks for telecom companies in Jordan, it is important for them that the Jordanian government focus on ensuring a healthy business environment and fair transparent competition opportunities for all vendors interested in bidding for the project, regardless of the nationality of the supplier. The enabling business environment for global suppliers will encourage them to offer their top expertise and capabilities to support Jordan spreading 5G benefits to all verticals, industries and citizens. It is vital to provide equal opportunities for suppliers on the basis

globally. Jordan should benefit from the experiences of other countries such as the GCC, which have become a world leader in 5G implementation in partnership with Huawei, and become a global model to follow.

The launch of 5G in Jordan is an example of decisions that must be taken away from any considerations other than the technology domain and its advantages to citizens. If Jordan decides to deal with the 5G launch project in light of its alliances with the United States and block Huawei from working on building the 5G network business in accordance with the NATO and US intelligence recommendations, Jordan could lose many gains from the project, and a state of fluctuation may encounter the relations with China, Jordan's most important economic partner.

Pressure on telecommunications companies in Jordan under the intelligence direction to refuse to work with Huawei and providing them with alternative such as ad free spectrum or financial compensation may not be a realistic as most importantly telecom operators are keen not to miss on the opportunity to build on their existing telecom networks successes with Huawei.

Industry experts say that Huawei's leadership in 5G was due to the early and big investments in R&D. The company began research and development in 5G in 2009 and spent more than 132.5 billion dollar over 10 years. In 2021 alone, invested 22.4 Billion dollars in R&D, which counts for 22.4% of its annual revenue. Huawei has the largest number of patents globally, and by 2021 has received more than 110,000 patents, contributing to the 5G business boom. Huawei's 5G base stations have been at the forefront of innovations that have passed the GSMA's network security test, the most accredited and trusted in the telecom industry. The company holds a leading position in cybersecurity at the global level. To date, it has built more than 1500 telecommunications networks serving more than one third of the world's population in more than 170 countries and regions. **T**



made and the project would be a turning point in Jordan digitalization journey as is expected to achieve significant gains in-line with Jordan Economic Modernization Vision.

It is important for the Jordanian government to address significant challenges related to the project. The privately owned 3 telecom operator companies in Jordan can not do the project without the support of the government, which has already provided stimulus package and incentives to carriers, not sufficient from their point of view as it does not address their realistic concerns.

of their competencies, experience, price compatibility and adhering to the international standards, apart from other considerations such as international political alliances.

Facts indicate that Huawei is the first-choice candidate to support the 5G launch project in Jordan due to its existing footprint in the telecommunications market with the three operators Zain, Orange and Umniah and its advanced innovations in 5G outperforming competitors, and its global expertise and latest solutions, products, services and best business use cases proven success in many markets regionally and



LEAP23 concludes as largest global tech show

Huawei leads the show with innovative showcases and major announcements

To invest \$400 million to establish Cloud Region in the Kingdom

Khalid Athar

LEAP23 becomes the world's largest technology event, attracting 172,000 visits from attendees including thought leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, and innovators from around the world to discuss the latest developments in technology and their impact on society and business. This year's conference was held in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia.

Organized by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and Tahaluf, LEAP aims to accelerate the Kingdom's digital transformation and boost its position as the largest digital market in the Middle East and North Africa. LEAP23 saw over 300,000 visitor registrations, and US\$9 billion of on-event transactions. LEAP24 aims to attract even more innovative technologies, digital entrepreneurs, tech startups, and high-profile guest speakers, and drive growth across the international technology sector.

The conference was focused on a number of key themes that are shaping the future of technology, including AI, 5G, blockchain, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things (IoT). These themes were explored in detail through a series of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and workshops, providing attendees with a comprehensive overview of the latest developments and their potential applications.

stc, a pioneer digital champion focused on innovation and evolution, was the Strategic Partner of the event. Huawei, involved as an ICT Innovation Partner of LEAP '23, was one of the key participants. Exhibiting under the theme 'Unleash Digital', Huawei showcased its latest innovative solutions for customers spanning across enterprise, carrier, digital power, and cloud.

During the LEAP 2023, HUAWEI CLOUD announced it would launch a cloud region

in Saudi Arabia to boost the country's digital economy and enable access to more advanced and secure cloud services for government, corporate and individuals. HUAWEI CLOUD followed this with a recent announcement to bolster digital transformation in the Kingdom by investing \$400 million in the next five years.

This renewed focus is based on the realization that cloud is the foundation of digital transformation and the driver of a dynamic digital world. Cloud provides the building blocks of advanced technologies such as AI, Big Data, IoT, Blockchain, and more.

To help customers migrate to the cloud smoothly and derive maximum value from it, give them quick access to leading technologies on the cloud, and support its mission to unleash the power of digital, HUAWEI CLOUD advocates an Everything-as-a-Service vision, which includes Infrastructure-

as-a-Service, Technology-as-a-Service, and Expertise-as-a-Service.

With years of steady investment in AI, HUAWEI CLOUD has launched a range of leading AI products, such as the AI development pipeline ModelArts, large pre-trained Pangu models, digital human, and spatiotemporal computing services. ModelArts is a one-stop AI development platform that covers every phase of developing an AI application, including data processing, algorithm development, model training, model management, and model deployment. Pangu Drug Molecule Model, one of Huawei's large model practices, accelerated the discovery of lead compounds from several years to just one month and slashed R&D costs by 70%.

HUAWEI CLOUD also provides a data governance pipeline, DataArts, a one-stop

public service, finance, telecom, utility, Oil & Gas, transportation, retail, manufacture, entertainment and startups to accelerate their digital transformation and intelligent upgrade. Furthermore, HUAWEI CLOUD will cultivate the digital economy and talent ecosystem for Saudi Arabia and the whole region. HUAWEI CLOUD, in Saudi, for Saudi

stc Group led the operator side at the event, as it concluded its participation in the LEAP 2023 conference by signing more than 40 agreements and showcasing several innovative services and technologies that contribute to accelerating the digital transformation of the public and private sectors. During the event, the group presented advanced and secure technology solutions contributing to the digital empowerment of various business sectors. stc also announced projects on which it will be working with Huawei as a key partner.

Central Asia, said: "Our massive participation at LEAP this year reflects Huawei's commitment to accelerate digitalization in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Huawei is already an active contributor to the Kingdom's digital transformation process."

The event featured multiple executives and thought leaders from Huawei who delivered keynote speeches on Day 1 and Day 2, covering topics such as innovation, FTTR, digital energy and sustainability, all under Huawei's theme of 'Unleash Digital'.

Ahmad El Chami, Chief Fixed Access Network Architect, Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, presented a keynote speech titled 'FTTR Full Speed Everywhere Experience'. Chami highlighted the need to ensure customers have access to the best download speeds and services, as connecting to the internet through home Wi-Fi is now an essential daily need.

Safder Nazir, SVP for Public Sector, Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, was also amongst Huawei speakers at the event, delivering a speech titled 'Ecopolis Now', addressing the triple challenge of sustainability, circularity and resilience facing the world.

The event brought a lot of focus towards renewable energy and sustainability within the ICT industry. Emerging as a leader in this aspect, Huawei demonstrated its focus on renewable energy during its multiple keynotes and the technology showcase. Huawei's focus on renewable energy is on converging and innovating technologies with the idea of accelerating the digitization of energy and enabling various industries to upgrade. During the event, Huawei presented its latest solutions and technological updates that address climate change and drive clean energy development.

LEAP is expected to double its attendance next year and will move to a new 120,000 square metre venue for its next edition from March 4-7, 2024. LEAP24 aims to attract even more innovative technologies, digital entrepreneurs, tech startups, and high-profile guest speakers, and drive growth across the international technology sector. ■



Alan Qi - MD, Huawei Cloud KSA

data development and governance platform where big data and AI converge. This platform includes GaussDB - a cloud database service and data warehouse, and FusionInsight - an intelligent data lake solution. It helps enterprises to build a data foundation and maximize the value of data.

HUAWEI CLOUD, with 29 regions and 240+ innovative cloud services, now serves more than 170 countries. The recent investment commits Huawei to promote the adoption and implementation of cloud and AI technologies in Saudi Arabia for all industries, serving customers in government and

A core enabler in Saudi Arabia's ambitious Vision 2030, the four-day LEAP23 saw an unprecedented number of visitor registrations from more than 100 countries, and welcomed a high-profile faculty of 1,000 global investors - up from 350 last year. Comprising major investor groups, sovereign wealth funds, private family groups, as well as major venture capital and private equity funds focused on technology, LEAP23's investor faculty boasted assets under management totalling US\$2 trillion.

Talking about Huawei's participation at LEAP, Steven Yi, President of Huawei Middle East &



Regional President reiterates

support for Saudi digital transformation goals



In Saudi Arabia, Huawei is actively cooperating with the government and industry partners to promote the evolution of the latest connectivity technology that will empower connectivity, allow ubiquitous uninterrupted giga internet access everywhere and meet industry requirements for reliability and ultra-low latency.

Steven Yi - President, Huawei M.E & Central Asia



Steven Yi, President of Huawei Middle East and Central Asia, gave a keynote on the second day of LEAP. In his speech, Yi highlighted how Huawei works with partners to help the Kingdom build a more robust infrastructure to achieve its global computing power goals, including green and efficient data centers,

AI platforms, and future computing architecture research.

Under the theme of 'Unleash Digital', Huawei is participating in LEAP 2023 as a Strategic Partner. At the event, Huawei is exhibiting its end-to-end innovations, focusing on 5.5G, cloud computing,

AI, digital power, cybersecurity, and industry applications designed to meet the needs of various sectors, including government, utilities, oil and gas, health, energy, and more.

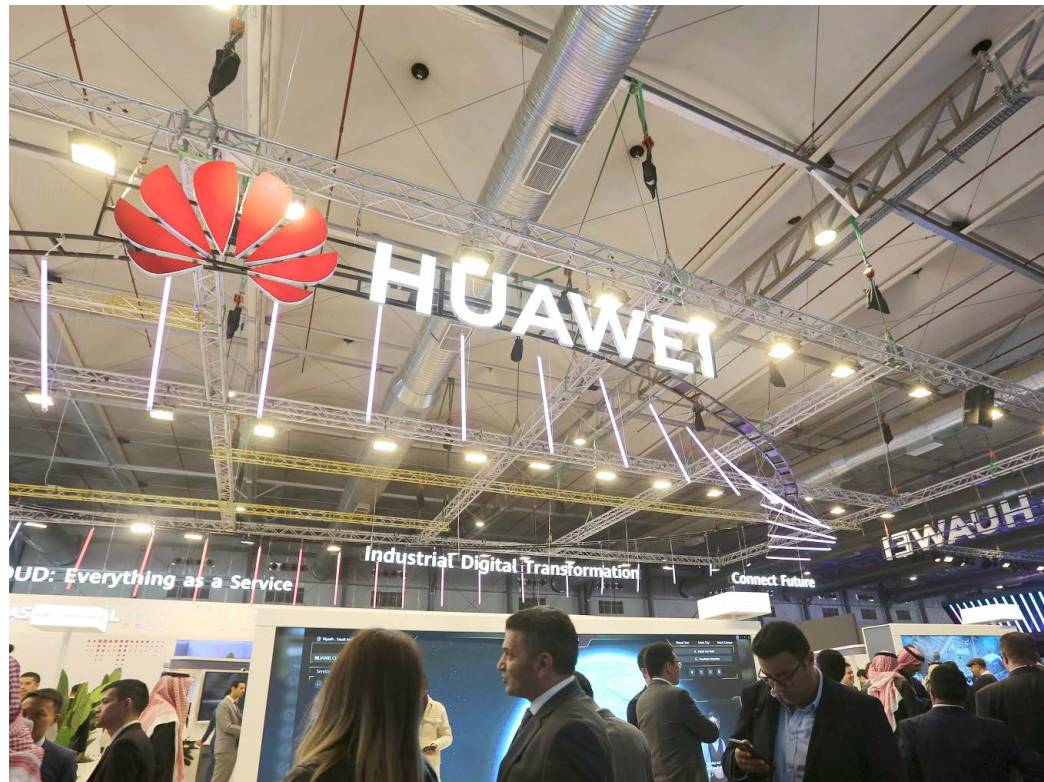
Steven Yi took note of Saudi Arabia's rapid digital transformation, particularly

the government's pursuit of innovative e-government strategies. In parallel, he stated that Vision 2030 includes increasing the share of non-oil exports from 16% to 50% and improving the Kingdom's GDP ranking in the global league table. "Global GDP growth has fluctuated dramatically over the last three years, owing to numerous uncertainties such as the COVID pandemic and high inflation. The digital economy, on the other hand, has remained strong; and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as one of the world's largest economies, has maintained positive GDP growth throughout the uncertain period and thrives on economic diversification."

Yi added that driving the economy's expansion was the industry's urgent demand for advanced digital technology to improve productivity, achieve industrial evolution, and promote economic development. "Huawei has always been committed to supporting the Saudi government and industry sectors in their digital transformation to achieve the Kingdom's vision. In Saudi Arabia, Huawei is actively cooperating with the government and industry partners to promote the evolution of the latest connectivity technology that will empower connectivity, allow ubiquitous uninterrupted giga internet access everywhere and meet industry requirements for reliability and ultra-low latency," he said.

To continue on this successful path, Yi mentioned that there is a continuous need to strengthen the country's digital infrastructure. Today, late starters and early adopters expect more from connectivity and computing. In terms of connectivity, Yi noted that Huawei is actively leading the evolution towards the 5.5G era, dramatically increasing network capacity, ensuring pervasive 10G speeds, and meeting the industry's requirements for reliable and low latency connectivity.

In parallel, enterprises need to make the most of cloud and achieve leapfrog development. "There is no doubt that



the cloud is the future, especially in accelerating the industry's digital transformation. In Saudi, an increasing number of enterprises have included 'cloud first' in their transformation strategy and plan to migrate more than 50% of their businesses into the cloud," Yi observed.

Huawei is building a public cloud node in Saudi Arabia to help customers make the most of the cloud and build AI and IoT solutions based on HUAWEI CLOUD for smart cities, governments, and large enterprises.

Additionally, Yi noted that stronger local digital ecosystems are vital to supporting digital transformation. Towards this end, Huawei promotes open collaboration and shared success across localized digital ecosystems. In December 2022, an MoU was inked between the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and Huawei for a strategic partnership to realize the 10 Giga Society. He then expressed how adopting Huawei's

advantages in Communication, Enterprise Solutions, Cloud, and green energy solutions will support Saudi to build a promising future in the full digital era.

Finally, Yi highlighted Huawei's support in cultivating a new generation of digital talent. Huawei has collaborated with governments, academia and industry to enrich the region's ICT talent ecosystem. CSR initiatives such as Seeds for the Future, the annual Huawei ICT Competition, Huawei ICT Academy, joint innovation centers, labs and other CSR initiatives empower thousands of Arab youth annually to supercharge their ICT careers. In the Middle East, Huawei has set up 167 Huawei ICT Academies training over 11,000 local digital talents, while more than 3,500 students have participated in the flagship program Seeds for the Future, helping over 40,000 people obtain Huawei certification. Overall, the company has trained over 120,000 ICT talents for the Middle East and is committed to achieving more in collaboration with partners. ■

GSMA MWC Barcelona trend watch

What comes after one billion 5G connections? The 2nd Wave of 5G

Peter Jarich, Head of GSMA Intelligence

As forecast by GSMA Intelligence at the start of 2022, the mobile industry celebrated an incredible milestone as the first billion 5G connections were made by the end of 2022. While this is a key turning point for the industry, it was one of many important 5G accomplishments realised in 2022, including:

- Standalone and mmWave 5G momentum
- Early messaging and interest around 5G-Advanced
- The launch of 5G in India

Individually, each of these represents unique aspects of 5G deployment and the wider 5G ecosystem. Together, they point to the fact that we are entering the 2nd Wave of 5G deployment.

Where the 1st Wave of 5G was driven by relatively mature markets and consumer use cases like eMBB (enhanced Mobile Broadband), the 2nd Wave will engage a diverse set of new audiences. To be



sure, many familiar dynamics will remain, including a focus on compelling and affordable devices, continued network modernisation, and “the three S’s” – sustainability, security, and spectrum. However, the extension to new use cases and markets will challenge the mobile ecosystem to prove that 5G truly is flexible enough to meet diverse industry-, market- and operator-specific demands in a way that’s both inclusive and innovative.

In short, it’s no exaggeration to say that this 2nd Wave will be more important than the 1st Wave. Yes, 5G has got off to an incredible start. But now it must deliver, enriching lives and societies in all corners of the world.

That’s quite a tall order. So will 5G step up?

It is very likely that the 2nd Wave will be successful in extending the reach and value of 5G in a sustainable and secure manner. The ecosystems of operators, solution providers, and end-users (consumer and enterprise) will demand that it succeeds in living up to its potential.

The real question, then, is how quickly the 2nd Wave will unfold – will we see evidence of it in 2023? Will economic headwinds mean that the 2nd Wave gets off to slower start than its predecessor? Will 4G remain the dominant mobile broadband technology well beyond 2025?

It may seem trite to suggest that the answer is “time will tell.” But that’s completely accurate.

Looking ahead

That makes MWC Barcelona 2023, in turn, one of the most important editions in the MWC series. At the dawn of 5G’s next phase, MWC Barcelona provides an incredible opportunity to take stock of the accomplishments we’ve made as an industry, but also gain insights into the industry’s trajectory.

It’s why I’ll be there in February with the GSMA Intelligence team, and why I hope you will be too. **T**



For the first time ever, stc Group exceeded 17B\$ total revenue

stc has announced the company's annual consolidated financial results for the period ending at 31 December 2022:

- Total revenue for the year 2022 reached SAR 67,432m with an increase of 7.02% as compared to year 2021.
- Gross profit for the year 2022 reached to SAR 37,393m with an increase of 10.65% as compared to the year 2021.
- Operating profit for the year 2022 reached to SAR 15,088m with an increase of 14.93% as compared to the year 2021.
- Earnings before Interest, Taxes, Zakat, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) for the year 2022 reached to SAR 25,079m with an increase of 9.80% as compared to the year 2021.
- Net profit for the year 2022 reached to SAR 12,171m with an increase of 7.60% as compared to the year 2021.

In accordance with the dividends distribution policy for three years period starting from the 4th quarter of 2021, which was ratified during the Ordinary General Assembly Meeting on 30-11-2021. In addition to the amendment on the dividends distribution policy, which was ratified by the Extraordinary General Assembly Meeting on 30-8-2022, by distributing an amount of SAR 0.40 per share per quarter, stc will distribute a total of SAR 1,992.87 million in cash dividends to the shareholders for the 4th quarter of 2022, representing SAR 0.40 per share as the total number of Treasury shares related to the Employees Stock Incentives Plan stood at 17,821,798 shares at the end of the fourth quarter 2022 and those shares are not entitled for any dividends distribution. The eligibility of dividends shall be for the shareholders at the close



Eng. Olyan Mohammed Alwetaid
Group CEO, stc

of trading on Sunday 26-02-2023 and as per the registered shareholders in stc's shareholders registry in the Depository Center at the end of the 2nd trading day following the eligibility date. Dividend distribution date will be on Thursday 16-03-2023.

Commenting on these results, Eng. Olyan Mohammed Alwetaid, stc Group CEO, stated that 2022 was a year of successes and achievements, as the Group delivered on many initiatives and investments that had a positive and clear impact on increasing and diversifying the Group's revenue through expanding its business in the Kingdom and the region, in addition to entering into promising and new domains. The Group sought to diversify its investments portfolio by launching a number of companies in the fields of cloud computing, internet of things and digital infrastructure. These investments are in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, which will contribute to strengthening the Kingdom's position as a main digital hub in the region and the world, and will support

the Group's profitability and growth in a sustainable manner, and in line with the Group's vision and ambitious strategy (DARE 2.0).

Alwetaid went on to say that, stc's recent capital increase is considered one of the largest capital increases in the Saudi stock market. This increase aims to support the Group in achieving its strategy that aimed at expansion and growth, along with maximizing the return for its shareholders, by increasing and diversifying investments and seizing the expected growth opportunities in the telecommunications and information technology sectors in the kingdom and the region.

In light of the Group's role as a leading digital enabler in the kingdom and the region, stc Group announced that it has committed an additional \$300 million on top of its original \$500 million investment in STV, the largest independent technology investment firm in the MENA region. This additional investment reflects stc's future vision and its significant contribution to the digital transformation in Saudi Arabia and beyond, as well as, it deepens the Group focus on innovation and technological development in the Kingdom and the MENA region.

As a continuation of stc's leadership, the Group has succeeded in maintaining the first rank as the most valuable brand in the Middle East in the telecommunication sector for the third year in a row, according to Brand Finance's Global 500 2023 report. Over the last five years, the brand's value has increased by almost twofold, from \$6.2 billion in 2017 to \$12.3 billion in 2022. This achievement results from the brand's outstanding performance in maintaining its leadership position and enhancing its commercial strength in the Kingdom and the region. ■

stc enables future technologies with global investments and partnerships at LEAP23

The global technology conference "LEAP23" concluded its functions by announcing significant global partnerships and a billion investments to support future technologies, digital entrepreneurship and technology startups to achieve the Kingdom's Vision 2030 in diversifying the economy, localizing technology and progressing industries.

stc Group had the most significant portion of the conference, as it concluded its participation in the LEAP23 conference by signing more than 40 agreements and showcasing several innovative services and technologies that contribute to accelerating the digital transformation of the public and private sectors. During the event, the group presented advanced and secure technology solutions contributing to the digital empowerment of various business sectors.

stc announced its cooperation with major global and local companies, including Huawei, Ericsson, Samsung, Telefónica, Motorola, Airbus, Go Telecom, Sky Five for Air to ground internet services, and Oracle to update database technologies and accelerate the cloud transfer operation. Moreover, stc signed an agreement with Lucid, the electric car manufacturer, to provide customer communications services. It also signed a strategic partnership with Blacknut to increase awareness of cloud gaming solutions among individuals and businesses.

The agreements included the signing of several partnerships with the government sector, most notably an agreement for strategic cooperation in digital transformation & infrastructure, investment, and development of wireless communications with the Ministry of National Guard, and an additional agreement with the Royal Commission for Al-Ula Governorate to cover Wadi Ashar



with 5G technologies and an agreement with King Abdullah Economic City to work on developing digital products and solutions enabling the easy transformation into smart cities. At the same time, it signed an agreement with SDAIA to develop a platform for labelling data and encouraging innovation in the field of artificial intelligence. In addition to its agreement with the Fourth Industrial Revolution Center to govern the applications of emerging technologies, as well as an agreement for stc's inspireU program with the National Program for Information Technology Development, which aimed at supporting emerging technology companies and entrepreneurs. stc Group, represented by stc Academy and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, signed a strategic partnership for research and innovation. And iot squared, owned by the Public Investment Fund and stc, signed several MoUs with Software AG and Ossia to enable companies and sectors to digitally transform and use advanced Internet of Things technologies in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

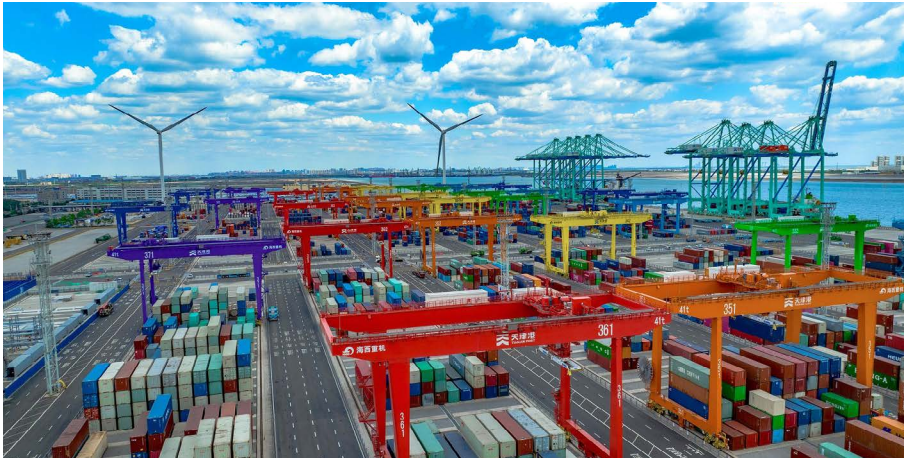
Furthermore, stc had announced the stc Corporate Investment Fund (CIF), through

which it aims to invest in emerging projects in the early stages in several fields; Among them are financial technologies, cyber security, artificial intelligence, digital games, the Internet of Things, blockchain and other promising areas.

stc implemented the fastest fibre internet experience in the Middle East in partnership with the integrated Dawiyat company. The experiment was carried out in one of the villas in the Sidra residential project in Riyadh, which is affiliated with the "Roshan" company, the leading real estate developer in the Kingdom.

Finally, stc Group presented in its booth, metaverse technologies, satellite communication technologies, and Air to ground internet services, the booth also included a display of the uses of IoT technologies and health digital solutions such as the Holo Doctor for telemedicine consultations, health robots and drone used to deliver medical equipment, and smart ambulance, stc reviewed smart port solutions that include smart monitoring, crane automation, and the use of smart cameras to support the automation of operational processes in ports. **■**

Tianjin Port Group and Huawei deepen cooperation to build a digital twin of the world's first smart, driverless, zero-carbon port terminal



Shunli Wang
VP, Huawei M.E & Central Asia

Tianjin Port Group and Huawei have announced that the two companies will deepen cooperation to build a digital twin of the world's first smart, driverless, zero-carbon port terminal, making it more automated and intelligent. Yang Jiemin, Vice President of Tianjin Port Group, explained that this plan consists of three parts: Construction of new automated terminals, upgrading traditional terminals, and comprehensive digital transformation.

The Section C Terminal in the Beijing Port Area of the Port of Tianjin was the world's first smart, driverless zero-carbon port terminal. It entered large-scale commercial operations in October 2021 and has been operating stably ever since. Using 5G and L4 autonomous driving technologies at the terminal makes operations safer and more efficient. At the terminal, remotely controlled quay cranes lift loaded containers from cargo ships and put them onto intelligent robots for horizontal transportation. Supported by the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, these robots are guided to automatic locking/unlocking stations to load/unload containers and then to the container yard along optimal driving routes that are calculated in real-time. The

entire process runs with clockwork precision.

Yang explained how the new solution, which combines 5G and L4 autonomous driving technologies, has been put into large-scale commercial application in a partially public scenario at the Section C Terminal for the first time. This has provided a new model for upgrading and transforming traditional container terminals worldwide.

"These innovations being used at the Port of Tianjin are having a huge impact on the port industry, creating new value for ports by improving operating environments, driving green and low-carbon development, and increasing operational efficiency. We believe that these practices will promote the intelligent development of the global port industry," said Yang.

Shunli Wang, Vice President of Huawei Middle East and Central Asia, said, "Ports in the Middle East are set for revolutionary, smart, zero-carbon fully automated digitalized operations that leverage 5G, AI and cloud and other advanced digital capabilities. We are keen to utilize our expertise to enable ports in the region to be

safer, more efficient, smart, green and more intelligent."

Yue Kun, CTO of Huawei's Smart Road, Waterway & Port BU, stated, "Ports are a vital link in the international supply chain, connecting trade and supply markets across the globe. Building more efficient smart ports is becoming an increasingly pressing requirement for the global supply chain. Section C Terminal of the Port of Tianjin has been operating stably for over one year, proving that 5G and L4 autonomous driving have already been successfully adopted by industries in China and are creating true commercial and social value." Kun believes this progress will benefit various industries, with next-generation digital technologies, such as 5G and AI, combined to solve industry problems, promote digital industry transformation and upgrading, and generate social value.

As a major modern port, the Port of Tianjin boasts 300,000-ton-class terminals with a channel depth of 22 m. It has 213 berths of various types. In 2022, its container throughput exceeded 21 million TEUs, ranking among the top 10 ports worldwide. **T**

e& international launches 'e& partner networks'

e& international has announced the launch of its new business program, the 'e& partner networks', leveraging e&'s position as one of the world's leading telecom providers to support telecom operating companies in regional markets.

Capitalizing on the Group's continued growth in international markets, with over 162 million subscribers in 16 countries, the program invites independent telecoms operating companies from around the world to partner with e&.

Partners will benefit from e&'s superior expertise across a range of business verticals, with a focus on adding measurable top and bottom-line meaningful business impact.

Mikhail Gerchuk, Chief Executive Officer of e& International, said: "The world has opened up to opportunity again, allowing us to adopt a resilient business growth mindset, create a future-ready operating model and focus on value creation. Our strategic partnerships remain one of our key priorities and, through the 'e& partner networks', we will be able to strengthen these partnerships.

"The scale of the opportunity available to us through the 'e& partner networks' is enormous. With e& international at the forefront of the new strategy, 'e& partner



networks' will be able to leverage the privilege of the e& brand and benefit from a value-added engagement with telecoms-related business objectives.

"e& can support these independent partners who currently may be facing challenges in terms of matching the scale and expertise of their competitors, talent recruitment, and high operating costs. Together, we can create a business proposition for consistent growth with value-added benefits from operational savings and uplifting topline revenue growth for our partners".

Obaid Bokisha, Group Chief Operating Officer of e&, said: "As a trusted industry leader with decades of experience, we

understand the importance of reliable and efficient networks for connecting communities and driving economic growth. Through this program, we are looking forward to working with telecom operators across markets and empowering them with the resources and expertise necessary to drive sustainable development and enhance customer experiences."

The program will support operators in customer engagement and value management, sales channels and customer experience, pricing and proposition support, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning modelling, international carrier and wholesale channels, network procurement and overall Capex and Opex optimization and digital and mobile finance services, and many other opportunities.

Each partner will be allocated the necessary resources and additional staff. Selected teams from e& international will be seconded to the offices for future support and close collaboration with the partner's management team.

'e&'s partner networks' will enable e& international to share e&'s cutting edge expertise and apply e&'s best practices, tools and models to a wider customer base in new geographic markets. ■



Mikhail Gerchuk - CEO, e& International



Obaid Bokisha, Group COO, e&

e& international signs MoU with Tunisie Telecom

as part of 'e& partner networks' program

e& international has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tunisia-based Tunisie Telecom to join the 'e& partner networks' business programs developed to collaborate with telecom-operating companies in regional markets.

Tunisie Telecom is the first company to join the e& partner networks business programs, providing Tunisia's national fixed and mobile operator with unparalleled access to best practices, cutting-edge expertise, and services. Tunisie Telecom acceded to the Group's scale and efforts in supporting regional and global operators in achieving sustainable growth and best-in-class customer experience and service solutions.

The MoU, signed by Mikhail Gerchuk, Chief Executive Officer of e& international, and Lassaad Ben Dhiab, CEO of Tunisie Telecom, outlines the collaborative framework for both parties to synergise and share knowledge, including full support in commercial, procurement, wholesale and roaming capabilities and access to innovative technologies.

Hatem Dowidar, Group CEO of e&, said: "The signing of this MoU marks a significant milestone in e& Group's collaborative vision to create value and connect global communities. Leveraging our position as one of the world's leading telecom providers, we have opened our doors to support telecom-operating companies in regional markets with the e& partner networks program. We are proud to be providers of the most advanced technology and next-generation solutions within the telecom industry."

As part of the MoU, Tunisie Telecom



will have access to services, including outsourcing international voice traffic, customer value management services, and future expansion and investment opportunities.

Lassaad Ben Dhiab, CEO of Tunisie Telecom, said: "We are proud to be the first company to join the e& partner networks business program and share valuable resources and support. This will expand our reach, increase our customer base, and drive more innovation within our business. e&'s transformation inspired us, and we look forward to inaugurate this partner program with one of the most reputable leaders in the industry, building a strong, lasting relationship that will benefit our customers."

Mikhail Gerchuk, Chief Executive Officer of e& international said: "We are happy to welcome Tunisie Telecom into our e&

partner networks program as our first partner. We created the e& partners network to support independent telecom operators facing challenges in matching their competitors' scale and expertise, talent recruitment, and high operating costs. By working together, we will kick-start a valuable and successful relationship in which we will create a consistent service support to grow revenue and subscribers market share, streamline operations, and find cost saving solutions while driving growth."

The e& partner networks program spearheaded by e& international, invites independent telecom companies from around the world to collaborate with e& and benefit from the superior expertise across a variety of business verticals, with a focus on adding measurable top and bottom-line meaningful business impact.■

LEAP23

announces investments of more than USD 9 billion to support future technology and STARTUPS

LEAP23 opened a four-day run in Riyadh on 6 Feb by announcing more than US\$9 billion in investments to support future technologies, digital entrepreneurship, tech startups, and enhance the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's position as the largest digital market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

The investments were revealed by His Excellency Eng. Abdullah bin Amer Alswaha, the Minister of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), during a keynote address on the opening morning of LEAP23, which aired on Riyadh Front Exhibition & Conference Centre until, February 9th.

H.E Alswaha confirmed the investments included Microsoft's US\$2.1 billion investment in a global super-scaler cloud in the Kingdom, Oracle investing US\$1.5 billion to expand its MENA business by launching new cloud areas in the Kingdom, Huawei's US\$400 million investment in cloud infrastructure for its services in the Kingdom, and the launch of a Zoom cloud area in the Kingdom in partnership with Aramco. An additional US\$ 4.5 billion has been invested in global and local assets across multiple sectors at LEAP23, added H.E Alswaha.

H.E Alswaha emphasised that the huge investment packages come with the full support of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The investments are part of the Crown Prince's empowerment of the technology sector, which is one of Saudi Arabia's most promising sectors amid unprecedented growth in the Kingdom's digital economy, Internet of Things, biological and healthtech, quantitative science, space, satellites, fintech, and open sources.

With LEAP23 set to fast-track the country's digital transformation, H.E Alswaha explained



that HRH the Crown Prince remains committed to accelerating development that will help Saudi Arabia achieve the objectives of Vision 2030 by leveraging technologies of the future in promising sectors.

An annual event that brings together the world's most important tech experts, LEAP23 is rapidly evolving into a global tech movement, with the event expected to attract more than 250,000 visitors from around the world this year. The tech industry magnet comes as the Kingdom continues its leadership as the MENA region's largest digital market, with more than US\$42 billion in active investments.

Across Saudi Arabia, more than 340,000 people currently work in the digital, telecommunications and information technology sectors, with female participation now standing at 32.5% - a higher rate than both the EU and Silicon Valley.

H.E Alswaha also confirmed plans to strengthen the outcomes of LEAP23 in diversifying the economy, localising technology, and advancing industries. Citing the two-year-old event's standing as one of the world's most important annual global technology platforms, H.E Alswaha said

LEAP23 boasts the unique capacity to connect innovators with entrepreneurs and thought leaders, and drive bold investment funds to launch qualitative partnerships in new investment areas.

Taking place alongside LEAP and starting 7th February, the inaugural DeepFest - in partnership with the Saudi Data & AI Authority (SDAIA) - will gather drivers of the global Artificial Intelligence eco-system to unveil life-changing, multi-sector initiatives in a thought-leadership conference and sector-specific tracks, trainings, live-demos, startup pitches and an exhibition featuring companies transforming the world we live and work in.

Themed 'AI Beyond Imagination', DeepFest will see thought-leaders, change-makers, big tech, data scientists, innovators, enterprises, academia, startups, and innovative business entrepreneurs unveil government AI initiatives and multi-sector innovations through a thought-leadership conference and sector-specific tracks, trainings, live-demos, and innovation sessions. The new conference program this year has tracks for clean tech, the Metaverse, and women in technology, while the DeepFest exhibition will feature the world's top tech companies and breakthrough stars. 📌

LEAP23 becomes world's most attended Global Tech Event

After setting numerous new industry records during its 2022 debut, LEAP23 has shattered benchmarks once again after confirming 172,000 attendees this year, making it the world's largest technology event by attendance.

Organisers of Saudi Arabia's LEAP – the world's most visionary, and now most attended, technology event – have revealed next year's edition, which will run from March 4-7, will move to a new home to ensure the pioneering platform continues to accelerate the Kingdom's digital transformation.

After two game-changing outings, LEAP24 will transition to a 120,000 square metre capacity venue next year, enabling the third event to double in floor size and cater for even more innovative future technologies, digital entrepreneurs, tech startups, and high-profile guest speakers.

Powered by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in conjunction with Tahaluf – a strategic joint venture co-owned by Informa PLC and SAFCSP – LEAP's expanded new venue will further enhance the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's position as the largest digital market in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

"Momentum continues to go into orbit. In its first edition, LEAP22 enjoyed the largest debut of any technology event in history. In its second year, LEAP23 has rewritten the rule book once more to become the world's largest technology sector event by attendance," said Michael Champion, who heads Tahaluf, Organizers of LEAP.

A core enabler in Saudi Arabia's ambitious Vision 2030, the four-day LEAP23 saw an unprecedented 300,000-plus visitor registrations from more than 100



Michael Champion
Head of Tahaluf, Organizers of LEAP

countries, and welcomed a high-profile faculty of 1,000 global investors - up from 350 last year. Comprising major investor groups, sovereign wealth funds, private family groups, as well as major venture capital and private equity funds focused on technology, LEAP23's investor faculty boasted assets under management totalling US\$2 trillion.

With on-event transactions exceeding US\$9 billion - a 32 per cent year-on-year increase on the US\$6.8 billion in deals announced in 2022 - LEAP23 has injected

fresh foreign direct investment impetus into Saudi Arabia's rapidly evolving digital ecosystems and startup economy. Major announcements this year have included mega infrastructure investments and multiple new data centres nationwide, a raft of billion-dollar-plus public-private partnerships, and new academies to foster and upskill homegrown talent.

During the closing remarks of LEAP23, Champion added: "There is no limit to the ambition of this event, or this nation. While the on-event investment announcements are truly unprecedented, the legacy of this year's show will extend further and deeper than anyone can truly comprehend.

"There are 380,000 technology professionals currently working in Silicon Valley – the world's tech capital - and there are 340,000 employed in Saudi's technology industry. We are still only seeing the tip of the iceberg and when we consider that technology investment, adoption, innovation, and entrepreneurship are key pillars in the Kingdom's ambitious economic diversification strategy, the potential for LEAP to power Saudi Arabia's digital transformation and galvanise growth across the international technology arena is unlimited." **T**

Cisco reveals top technology insights for 2023 ahead of LEAP in Saudi Arabia

Ahead of LEAP 2023 technology conference in Riyadh, Cisco has shared its insights into technological trends that will help businesses in the region make the most of digital transformation. Cisco sees security, hybrid work, multi-cloud architectures and sustainability as key themes in 2023, all powered by connectivity and a next generation of networks.

Future of Work: The future of work is hybrid, and it will enable more equitable and inclusive experiences, resulting in happier and more productive workforces. In 2023, we will also see natural language processing (NLP) and AI/ML used in new and innovative ways in collaboration solutions, powering hybrid work.

Security Resilience: Digitization opens endless opportunities, but at the same time there is a surge in cyber threats at all levels across organizations. Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated and the toolkits available to them have evolved. In 2023, the next evolution in security will have to include anomaly detection and behavior patterns, though the use of AI and machine learning.

Simplifying and Automating Infrastructure: In 2023, the network will become more experience-centric with increasing capabilities to predict potential issues and provide problem-solving options. Companies will increasingly access predictive technologies in integrated, easy-to-use SaaS offers. This represents an important step toward a future where connectivity will be powered by self-healing networks that can learn, predict, and plan. Predictive networks will be powered by the same predictive analytics that are gathered from myriad telemetry sources.

Accelerating the Cloud Experience: In the year ahead, we will see a noticeable shift in how companies leverage multi-cloud architectures. While 89% of enterprises are adopting a multi-cloud strategy for a variety



Salman Abdulghani Faqeeh
Managing Director, Cisco Saudi Arabia

of reasons (geopolitical, technical, provider diversification), the benefits come with additional complexity in connecting, securing, and observing a multi-cloud environment. We are seeing a move towards new multi-cloud frameworks, with more private and edge cloud applications and services ushering in a new multi-cloud operating model.

Internet for the Future: Changing the economics of the Internet is essential to connecting the world's next billion users. For four decades, Cisco connected the world safely to the internet and created immersive experiences. Today, for 5G, IoT, and the Internet to work for everyone, Cisco is evolving how networks are built to maximize operational agility and future proof infrastructure.

Sustainability and Journey to Net Zero: Net Zero will drive common standards to meet sustainability goals with advancements in Power Over Ethernet (PoE) design and hardware to transform data centers for a more sustainable future. Networking and APIs will become more advanced within data center platform management to monitor, track, and change the use of energy. IT vendors and equipment partners are focusing on the reuse of hardware (circularity).



Reem Asaad
VP, Cisco Middle East and Africa

Commenting on Cisco's participation at LEAP, Reem Asaad, Vice President, Cisco Middle East and Africa said: "With its rapidly developing and diversifying economy, Saudi Arabia looks to digitization to play a key role. For more than 25 years, Cisco has been working with the Kingdom on its innovation journey, through initiatives such as our Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) program and Cisco Networking Academy. As we continue to help the nation realize its Vision 2030, LEAP serves as a significant platform for Cisco to showcase the possibilities of a digital and green future."

Salman Faqeeh, MD, Cisco Saudi Arabia said: "Through our presence in the Saudi market since 1997, Cisco has shared its expertise and technology to positively impact economic growth, job creation and skills development. This year at LEAP, we aren't only unveiling our ground-breaking digital technologies, we're also highlighting our commitment to spurring innovation and growing the technology ecosystem in the Kingdom. We will also celebrate the 25th global anniversary of the Cisco Networking Academy, while showcasing its local impact in KSA. Till date, the academy has trained more than 274,500 learners in the Kingdom with in-demand IT skills, preparing them for the jobs of the future." **T**

LEAP23 announces further investments of USD 580 million as Saudi Arabia accelerates Digital Transformation



LEAP23 has announced a series of new investment and funding programs designed to accelerate the Kingdom's digital transformation in multiple fields.

The announcements, which equate to US\$580 million and follow more than US\$9 billion of investments revealed earlier this week, include the launch of a major new data centre and two dedicated academies to develop the technical skills of homegrown talent, and provide them with the tools of the future.

Powered by Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in conjunction with Tahaluf – a strategic joint venture co-owned by Informa PLC and SAFCS – LEAP23 boasts an exhibitor and convention line-up of transformational talent, a product showcase of advanced and generative technology potential, and a celebrity cast of billionaire entrepreneurs, business magnates, sporting heroes, and musical icons turned futurists and financiers.

On-show business across the show floor

at Riyadh Front Exhibition & Conference Centre has been unprecedented, with the latest announcements underlining the role of LEAP23 in realising the Kingdom's Vision 2030 objectives.

One of the most prominent announcements was revealed by Ignite – a program under Saudi's Digital Content Council - which launched several initiatives, a package of financing programs, and pioneering private sector partnerships amounting to US\$170 million.

Elsewhere, technology consulting services company Wipro announced investments of US\$110 million to expand its cloud studio service, develop digital healthcare solutions, and support the development of local talent.

Unity, the global games development platform, also announced the establishment of its first regional academy and a centre for developing electronic games - in partnership with the MCIT - to create and foster technical talents.

Zoho, a leading IT, software development,

and cloud computing company, outlined plans to expand its presence in the Kingdom with new office openings and the establishment of a cloud area for its services. Zoho also confirmed an allocation of US\$300 million over the next 10 years as a portfolio balance to support Saudi startups aiding the country's digital transformation.

Having entered the data centre arena in 2021, DAMAC Group announced the expansion of investments in large data centres in the Kingdom with a total capacity of more than 55 megawatts.

Finally, Amazon announced the establishment of its first regional academy to develop and train more than 30,000 talents. The academy will provide more than 35,000 professional certificates in the fields of cloud computing and artificial intelligence. The academy is part of a national partnership with MCIT that encompasses the Ministry's Future Skills initiative, affiliated Saudi Digital Academy, Human Capacity Development Program, and Tuwaiq Academy. [T](#)

'Fail until you succeed'

Global Tech Figures share Key Insights and Innovation Processes at LEAP23

American billionaire venture capitalist Tim Draper has expressed his regret at not investing in ChatGPT, believing the Artificial Intelligence-driven chatbot will change industries in a way unseen since the creation of the internet. Draper, whose most prominent investments include Hotmail, Skype, Tesla, and Twitter, was speaking during a session entitled Global Collaboration: The Fuel For Innovation at LEAP23 – the world's most visionary tech event – which runs at Riyadh Front Exhibition and Conference Centre until February 9.

Regarding governments, Draper said his travels to some 80 countries worldwide had left him with two clear conclusions when it comes to successful government: "Trust and freedom – you can't have one without the other. I have been thrilled to see what is happening in Saudi Arabia because these leaders have trusted their people and set them free and attracted other people to their country," he said. "And I know it's happened all over this region; a lot of places are starting to really trust their people and set them free, and it makes all the difference. It's the same as being in North Korea where they don't trust you to do anything and in South Korea where they trust you to do everything."

Draper also revealed that his California-based Draper University has seen 120 Saudi Arabian students graduate from its 10-week start-up program, the last five weeks of which are focused on going out into the world and building a business. "We tweak people's brains to go out and try things," he added. "We say: 'Don't worry about failing, do whatever you can'. One of the lines of our pledge is: 'I will fail and fail again until I succeed'."

Shortly after the 64-year-old stepped off stage, 17-year-old Gitanjali Rao took his place – two globally renowned innovators representing two very different demographics yet sharing a similar message of not fearing failure, embracing mistakes, and persevering until success is achieved.

Rao, an American student, author, and STEM promoter, has already created an array of patented innovations, from a program that can diagnose snake bites to a device that can detect lead in drinking water;



a digital AI service that reduces cyberbullying to an electrically charged pollen screen that prevents airborne allergies.

A three-time TedX speaker, Rao outlined to LEAP23 attendees her "five-step innovation process that normalises failure": Observe, brainstorm, research, build, and communicate. Having shared the process with children as part of an innovation movement in the USA, Kenya, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, and the UAE, among others, Rao presented it in front of a packed-out conference hall filled with men and women of all ages and nationalities.

"Observe: identify a problem in your community that you are passionate about," she said. "Secondly, brainstorm: Come up with a list of solutions and focus on quantity over quality – it's always important to come up with as many solutions as possible. Third: Research, which is when you narrow down that list of solutions to one or two. Next, build them and bring them to life. And finally – the most important and underrated step – communicate. Post about ideas, leverage the power of social media. Get feedback and ask questions to improve."

The enduring legacy of this year's event, which is powered by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) in conjunction with Tahaluf – a strategic joint venture co-owned by Informa PLC and SAF CSP – is expected to be a huge catalogue of breakthrough products, ideas, and partnerships.

Michael Champion, Regional EVP of MEA at LEAP23 organisers Informa Markets, said the involvement and insights from such inspirational figures as Draper and Rao can only support the technological development of Saudi Arabia, which announced nine funds worth a combined US\$2.4 billion recently, all intended to support the growth of start-ups in the Kingdom as it embarks on creating a more competitive tech ecosystem.

"The speaker line-up at LEAP23 is unlike anything this region has seen before. It will help drive the development of Saudi, the wider region, and the entire global tech industry," said Champion. "This is only the second day of the event's second year, yet we are already seeing that LEAP is fast becoming unmissable on the international calendar of entrepreneurs, startups, and venture capitalists worldwide." **T**

Rise of the Robots as Saudi Arabia underscores Global Data and AI aspirations with DeepFest Debut at LEAP23

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has enhanced its game-changer status in the global data and artificial intelligence (AI) sectors with the opening installment of DeepFest - a new co-located event held in partnership with the Saudi Data & Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA) - on the side-lines of LEAP23, the world's most visionary tech event.

The inaugural DeepFest has gathered drivers of the global AI ecosystem to unveil multi-sector initiatives in a three-day thought-leadership conference with sector-specific tracks, trainings, live-demos, and startup pitches.

Complemented by a dedicated exhibition featuring companies transforming the world we live and work in, the DeepFest conference program – themed AI Beyond Imagination – homes in on AI implementation in areas such as clean tech, the Metaverse, women in technology, and more – including robotics.

Robots and avatars take center-stage in future vision of human-robot symbiotic society

Amid the assembled pool of change-makers, big tech pioneers, data scientists, innovators, enterprizes, academia, startups, and innovative business entrepreneurs, famed roboticist Hiroshi Ishiguro delivered an inspired session titled Avatar and the Future Society.

Ishiguro, the Director of the Intelligent Robotics Laboratory – part of the Department of Systems Innovation in the Graduate School of Engineering Science at Japan's Osaka University – has been pioneering advancement in humanlike robotics since 1997. The 59-year-old has also been creating eerily realistic androids for



over 15 years, including Geminoid HI-1 - the roboticist's own virtual twin, who joined him on stage at DeepFest.

Having spent his career dissecting the nature of what it means to be human, Ishiguro outlined how advances in robotics and avatars are narrowing the separation between human and humanoid.

"By 2050, we want to realize a society in which people are free from the constraints of the body, brain, space, and time. The technology is being developed already; with our automated robotic tech, we can create avatars that anyone can use easily. I believe we can create avatars that will allow anyone – from children to the elderly, and everyone in between - to play an active role in society. With avatars, I believe we can change the world. We can choose to work, study, and socialize with real-life robotic

or computer graphic (CG) avatars. Many companies in Japan are already using CG avatars for customer service - not in place of humans, but with humans controlling their own avatars. In Japan, we have an aging population problem, and we need to find solutions that allow people to work – this can be solved by using avatars and advanced robotic technology," said Ishiguro.

Other sessions in the day one DeepFest agenda included Neural-Symbolic AI Driving Progress Toward Artificial General Intelligence with Dr. Benjamin Goertzel, CEO of the SingularityNET Foundation; Generative AI Revolution with Leonid Zhukov, Director of Boston Consulting Group's Global AI Institute; How Technology is Inspiring the Future Workforce with Beverly Rider, CCO of Tonomous and CEO Tonomous VentureStudio, and more. [T](#)

Telecom Operator Executive:

Jordan Government will secretly restrict Chinese companies from 5G and Rip-and-Replace existing network in 3 years

As per sources familiar with the updates of 5G launch project launch in Jordan, the government will very soon secretly order Jordanian telecom operators to restrict Chinese companies from participating in the project aimed at building 5G networks in the Kingdom, as a result of surging US pressure from intelligence agency. The government also plans to rip-and-replace the existing core network and wireless equipment provided by Chinese vendors in 3 years.

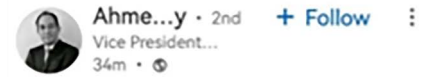
A Senior Executive with a Telecom Operator revealed that Jordan government has made the decision without public consultation, getting around the standard bidding procedures and laws. "Jordan intelligence agency warned the telecom operator not to include the Chinese companies Huawei and ZTE in 5G business bidding due to security concern, citing an unclassified NATO document issued in 2021," said the executive. The agency is persuading relevant authorities to subsidize the operators with preferential electricity and spectrum policies. It also threatens operators only to choose certain Western vendors, even not to conduct customs clearance for Chinese vendors.

This marks the latest move in Washington's ongoing campaign to curb Chinese telecom vendors increasing influence in 5G global markets.

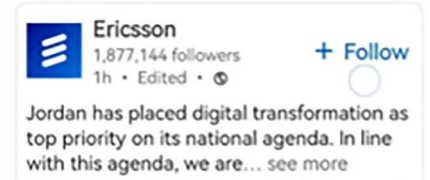
The executive also shared common concern among the 3 telecom operators that restrictions on Chinese companies will not only postpone the 5G deployment in Jordan, but may shore up the price of telecom equipment and make them miss the opportunities of building on the rich credit already exists in their networks as a result of their strategic long-term business partnerships with Chinese vendors, specifically Huawei who has a big stake in the Jordanian telecom market share. Telecom operators will waste even more money and lose customers satisfaction during the potential long rip-and-replace operation with the existing network undertaken by Chinese companies.

"Placing 'black box' restriction on companies from a certain country, is a violation of their legal rights, obviously destructive for creating a leveling playing field and attracting foreign investors into this industry, key to Jordan Economic Modernization Vision," said this executive.

The bidding process of 5G business between operators and 5G vendors is currently going on. Huawei, Ericsson, Nokia, CISCO, Rakuten, and ZTE is competing in different categories of the 5G business such as microwave, core and wireless. Till now, the 3 operators have made no announcement about the bidding process and TRC did not announce the official launch date of the 5G



Extremely energized to see the uptake of #5G in Middle East beyond GCC countries. A very wise decision of Jordan that will sure be followed by other regulatory authorities. Despite of the investment challenges and macroeconomics barriers within the region, Telecoms advancement is considered to be one of the important GDP drivers and enabler for FDI.



in the kingdom yet.

In September 2022, the Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC), Jordanian industry watchdog, finalised an agreement with the 3 telecom operators Zain, Umniah and Orange with a stimulus incentives package which supposed to pave the way for the introduction of 5G services in Jordan.

According to Ericsson official website on February 9, Jordanian operator Umniah announced Ericsson as its partner for the launch of its first phase of 5G technology deployment in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Right after the announcement, Ahmed Adelshafy, VP & Key Account Manager of Ericsson, posted on his personal LinkedIn that "Extremely energized to see the uptake of 5G in the Middle East beyond GCC countries. A very wise decision of Jordan that will sure be followed by other regulatory authorities." Later on Feb 9, he changed "regulatory authorities" to "markets".



RELIABLE & COMPETENT NETWORK SERVICES

CLOUD NETWORK DESIGN,
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PRIVACY



SERVICES OFFERED

- Data Center solutions
- Business Process Outsourcing
- Managed Services
- Data Migration & Integration
- Cyber Security
- Cloud Services



Intersec 2023 sets new visitor record to make this year its largest in 24 Editions

Intersec, the world's leading trade fair for safety, security, and fire protection, recorded its biggest visitor turnout in history when it wrapped up a three-day run at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) earlier last month.

Some 43,305 industry professionals from 131 countries attended the event's 24th edition, the largest in the series' history with over 800 exhibitors from 55 countries spread across nine DWTC halls and the Trade Centre Arena. The visitor turnout saw a significant uptick in international visitors, with attendees from the GCC, Europe, Asia, and the Americas accounting for 49 per cent of the total headcount. Footfall meanwhile was spread across 48,331 gross square-metres of dedicated product showcases for commercial and perimeter security, homeland security, fire and rescue, safety and health, and cybersecurity.

A new report from PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), produced in partnership with Intersec, found that the wider sector is trading a new pathway to cognitive security and surveillance, which will see the system evolve with active involvement from customers alongside their OEMs of choice to drive client-centric development.

"With emerging technologies playing a leading role in driving change across the ecosystem, the success and future of the security and surveillance industry lie in moving from an industry-driven strategy to a customer-focused strategy," says the report. "The shift can be enabled by partnership strategies with varying degrees of control and investment to strike a partnership equilibrium, while building a robust technology foundation as an enabler. This will require a collective effort throughout the whole

ecosystem."

Alex Nicholl, Show Director, Intersec, added: "This year's heightened visitor numbers underline the industry shift to this new era of cognitive security and surveillance likely to dominate the sector going forward. It demands a heightened focus on customised technology and partnership requirements, both of which Intersec deliver."

Partnerships were prominent from the first day at Intersec 2023 with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) being signed between video surveillance provider Hikvision and the UAE's Ministry of Interior, as well as headline collaborations between Sharjah Civil Defence and Austrian firefighting equipment provider Rosenbauer, and Indian satellite, digital cable, and broadband provider NxDigital and US cybersecurity



series with four focussed streams including the high-level Security Leaders' Summit. The UAE Cybersecurity Council hosted a conference with attendees ranging from government leaders to CSOs and CISOs across the oil and gas industry, BFSI, healthcare and hospitality, and energy and utilities. A dedicated Fire & Rescue Conference was also hosted by Dubai Civil Defence, while a highly focussed Safety & Health Seminar explored the new MENA regulatory changes.

Additionally, Intersec 2023 recognised the best of the security and safety industries through its awards program, with winners being presented at a gala ceremony. The show also hosted a successful bid by the UAE's Cyber Security Council (CSC) to achieve the first Guinness World Records™ title for the largest cyber drill competition.

The Guinness World Records™ team had set a requirement for 100 participants for the inaugural record attempt, which the CSC surpassed with 150 participants across three days. An official adjudicator was on site to review the record bid and present a certificate to His Excellency Dr Mohamed Al Kuwaiti, Head of Cybersecurity for the UAE Government.

Now, as Intersec organisers Messe Frankfurt Middle East begin planning for the event's silver jubilee edition to run at DWTC from 16 – 18 January, 2024, PwC has reiterated the importance of trade shows in meeting new industry expectations.

"Such events add real value to the ecosystem as solution providers get an opportunity to showcase their capabilities in the latest technologies and features, while end customers can see live demonstrations and gain a hands-on sense of the technologies they are interested in," the report states.

Intersec 2023 exhibitor Ateis Middle East, a leader in the life-safety industry, needs no convincing of the show's potential. Its COO Philip Witts called the event: "The number one global event for our industry." **T**



technology company Cybereason.

Technology and innovation remained front and centre of the event with the exhibitor profile featuring the biggest industry names alongside sector entrants and innovators. Major new exhibitors included Thales of France, Singapore's ST Engineering, Saudi Arabia's SAFE, Germany's AGMC/BMW, Israel's D-FEND, the UAE's Tabbara, Holland's Robin Radar, Sigma Security of Greece, Poland's Megavision, and VX Ray of the USA.

The event's special features, both vast and varied in their focus, drew large audiences across the three days. The Attack Zone hosted by the Loss Prevention Certification

Board saw exhibitors live demo their products, while there was also a Safety Walk protective gear showcase sponsored by EnSafe Evacuation Chair, Jutec, and Teijin. A Tech Stage featured VR solutions, anti-drone technology, and new safety materials; a Start Smart Zone connected start-ups with decision makers, buyers, and investors; and the purpose-built Future Defenders Hack Arena provided a space for cybersecurity teams from schools, universities, and CISOs to compete for prizes and industry recognition.

There were also full houses for the powerful Intersec 2023 conference and knowledge-sharing program – the biggest yet in the

Test. Measure. Innovate

Rohde & Schwarz showcases unique mobile test solutions at MWC Barcelona 2023



Rohde & Schwarz brings exceptional insight in wireless communications testing and a deep understanding of the entire mobile ecosystem to life at the Mobile World Congress 2023 in Barcelona. Under the motto "Test. Measure. Innovate." The company will present its exciting and innovative portfolio of mobile and wireless communications testing solutions.

Test solutions to accelerate 5G

5G services have become mainstream in the early-adopting countries, however, the full potential of the new technology will unfold with high performance 5G stand-alone deployments, private and industrial networks, and new devices supporting Release 17 reduced capability (RedCap NR) or non-terrestrial networks (NTN) enabling completely new use cases. In this context, the 5G ecosystem has to master an even broader range of challenges, from enabling devices to aggregate and sustain large numbers of band combinations efficiently to low power consumption and highly sensitive transceivers that can receive and send signals from and to space. Visitors can experience multiple demonstrations based on various use case tailored hardware configurations for the R&S CMX500 one-box

signaling tester, the test platform from Rohde & Schwarz for the entire value chain of 4G/5G device testing:

- User experience end-to-end test of 5G based virtual and extended reality applications (VR/XR)
- 5G VoNR audio quality POLQA® measurements integrated into the test platform
- LTE/NR cellular device carrier aggregation band combination testing up to 10CC (FR1/FR2) out of a single box tester
- 5G RedCap device testing, from R&D to conformance
- 5G FR2 RF conformance testing under extreme temperature conditions over-the-air in combination with the R&S ATS1800C CATR based mmWave test chamber and a novel temperature bubble setup.

In infrastructure equipment, Rohde & Schwarz will showcase the newly launched R&S PVT360A performance vector tester. Combining signal generation and analysis in one instrument, it is the ideal solution for non-signaling testing of 5G FR1 small

cells, base stations and for RF component characterization and production.

As 5G networks roll out, mobile network operators are focusing on network quality of service and quality of experience (QoS/QoE). Rohde & Schwarz will exhibit its next generation benchmarking solution to significantly reduce complexity and costs for network benchmarking campaigns while enabling NWOs to gain more value out of their collected data. Last but not least, Rohde & Schwarz will have a full end-to-end live streaming demonstration in collaboration with Qualco mm Technologies showcasing the delivery of content to smartphone devices via advanced live Broadcast/Multicast capabilities over 5G.

To address the testing needs, Rohde & Schwarz will present at MWC2023 a Wi-Fi 7 test setup with the R&S CMP180 and a Wi-Fi 7 device supporting IEEE 802.11be-compliant operation including 4x4 MIMO. Applied MIMO and MLO schemes of Wi-Fi 7 demand high performance and scalable test solutions like the new R&S CMP180, which comes equipped with two analyzers, two generators and two times eight RF ports in a single box, plus the possibility to scale up by stacking several testers in a R&S CMPflexx setup. **■**

Mid-East Zero Trust Access network market tipped for double digit growth as cybercrime threats surge

GISEC Global 2023 to shine spotlight on 'never trust, always verify' IT infrastructure model dubbed by experts as the security framework of the future



Middle East governments and corporates are expected to invest heavily in Zero Trust Access (ZTA) IT systems over the coming years to ward off the omnipresent threat of cyber-attacks, providing a major boost to the region's cybersecurity market that's predicted to more than double in value over the next five years.

Exhibitors at next month's GISEC Global cybersecurity exhibition in Dubai, said ZTA security – an approach to designing IT infrastructure with a 'never trust, always verify' model – will be highly sort after in 2023 and beyond, as organizations seek to protect their data and systems against constantly evolving and increasingly sophisticated cyber threats.

In the Middle East, the pervasive 'work from anywhere' culture is convincing companies to

double down on their efforts to protect digital assets, fuelling the region's cybersecurity market that, according to analysts Markets and Markets, will grow from US\$20 billion in 2022 to US\$44.7 billion in 2027, clocking 17 percent annual growth.

Rising IoT traffic, increasing technological advancements and modernisation of enterprises are also fuelling demand for zero trust security solutions, with MarkNtel Advisors, a research company, expecting the Middle East ZTA market to grow by 16 percent annually over the next five years.

The core cybercrime methods haven't changed, but the sophistication of them has increased. The good news is IT security professionals and C-level decision makers will have no shortage of solutions to investigate

at the 11th edition of GISEC Global 2023, which returns to the Dubai World Trade Centre from 14-16 March, featuring more than 400 exhibitors from 42 countries.

Household names such as tech titans Huawei and Microsoft will be out in full force at the annual three-day event, alongside headline ground-breaking infosec companies including Spire Solutions, CPX, Mandiant, Pentera, Cloudflare, CrowdStrike, Edgio, Secureworks, Synack, Threatlocker, and Votiro.

"In our increasingly digital world, security is a key concern and area of focus," said Waseem Hashem, Business Group Director for Modern Work & Security at Microsoft UAE. "At Microsoft, we have a long-standing commitment to securing our platforms and providing solutions, and our answer to

safeguarding the digital space in the face of evolving threats is the Zero Trust network and architecture.

"Businesses worldwide are prioritising secure and efficient network access, making the adoption of Zero Trust non-negotiable. In the Middle East, in particular, where cyber threats are becoming more persistent and sophisticated, the implementation of this approach is a critical step for organizations to protect their sensitive data."

CPX, a home-grown cybersecurity entity based in the UAE, will this year showcase its complete suite of end-to-end cybersecurity capabilities covering all industries from energy & utilities to government and defence, healthcare, finance and transportation. Commenting on the Zero-Trust networks, Paul Lawson, Executive Director at CPX, said: "The fast-paced growth of emerging technologies like AI/ML, Cloud and IoT has put a strain on an organization's ability to secure, protect and mitigate looming cyber threats.

"We expect these shifts to significantly contribute to a rise in the adoption of Zero Trust models. A Zero Trust approach distrusts all entities by default, requiring all users inside and outside a network to be continuously authenticated and authorised.

Added Lawson: "In the Middle East, many organizations still depend on a traditional firewall-based perimeter architecture. As organizations embrace new advanced technologies and frequently migrate to Cloud, they should align and enhance their cybersecurity posture by deploying Zero Trust 'aware' technologies."

Zero Trust to replace VPN by 2025 – Gartner

Another key factor behind the growth of ZTA is the increasing adoption of cloud technologies, leaving organizations migrating workloads to the cloud increasingly vulnerable to wily attackers, posing major challenges and causing significant losses.

Tech research firm Gartner predicts that zero trust network access will even replace virtual private networks (VPNs) by 2025, with the rise

in remote work and the continuing threat of cyber-attacks urging companies to scout for more robust security frameworks.

As a result, says Anil Bhandari, Chief Mentor at ARCON – a cybersecurity provider with sales headquarters in Houston, Texas – organizations are gearing their investments towards a system that, among several characteristics, uses multi-factor authentication to verify the identity of users and devices.

"According to our research, adopting zero trust networks and architecture will be a top priority for IT security executives in the Middle East and around the world this year," said Bhandari, who will be at GISEC Global 2023 with ARCON's Converged Identity Management platform – a Software as a Service identity and access management platform.

"In the Middle East, in particular, for a typical large-scale enterprise or mid-size company, the IT perimeter is no longer confined to on-premises data centres. As modern-day IT infrastructure is large and distributed in hybrid and multi-cloud setups, Middle East IT security leaders will look to build micro-segmentation and micro-perimeters for controlling and securing digital identities."

'Think Zero Trust' at GISEC Global 2023

CyberKnight, a UAE-based cybersecurity value-added-distributor will meanwhile have a dedicated 'Think Zero Trust' theme at GISEC Global 2023, with CMO Olesya Pavlova, stating that attackers are continuously expanding their capabilities and taking advantage of an ever-growing number of attack vectors.

"In 2022, we saw that cybercriminals targeted Middle East critical infrastructure, including information technology, financial services, healthcare, and energy sectors, with headline-grabbing incidents," said Pavlova, whose CyberKnight recently partnered with American zero trust real-world cybersecurity company Xage to accelerate ZTA adoption across the Middle East.

"Currently, we see XDR, data security, threat intelligence and application security with the

highest demand. Our purpose remains the same going forward – to help fight cybercrime using Zero Trust."

Elsewhere, US-based StrikeReady will showcase its award-winning AI-powered Cognitive Security Platform at GISEC Global 2023. AI capabilities such as reinforcement learning, natural language understanding, and proactive conversational AI enable StrikeReady's Cognitive Security Platform to offer innovative features such as a virtual cybersecurity assistant.

Anurag Gurtu, Chief Product Officer at StrikeReady, said, "In order to continue to evolve in the same way that attackers do, thriving organizations must have ZTA as part of their cyber security transformation."

"The Middle East is one of the few regions that adopts cyber security early, so I suspect many businesses there have looked into ZTA," said Gurtu. "Attackers are innovative, and their tactics continue to evolve to defeat existing cyber defences. It is imperative that the industry adapts and evolves in order to stay competitive with attackers."

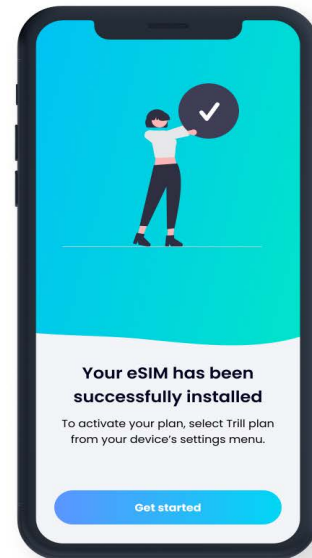
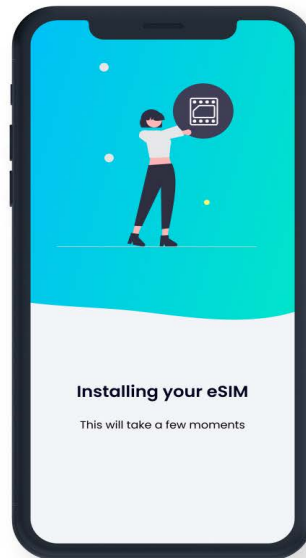
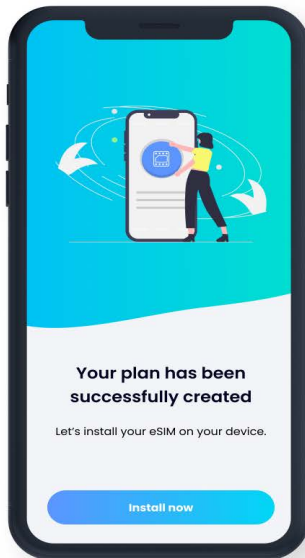
GISEC Global is organised by the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), with the annual three-day event also comprising an extensive conference program under the theme 'Connecting minds, boosting cyber resilience', with 13-tracks tackling the evolving cyber landscape and corresponding threats across multiple industries.

"The Zero Trust model addresses the Middle East's growing concern of cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure, while providing a more comprehensive approach to security by requiring verification of all users and devices, regardless of location, and implementing strict access controls," said Riju George, Group Director for GISEC at DWTC.

"The largest ever edition of GISEC Global in 2023 will deliver an unmatched ecosystem of the world's premier cybersecurity players, helping governments and businesses address unprecedented security risks, while enhancing their opportunities to innovate and thrive in a constantly evolving digital economy." ■

eSIM expert to demonstrate expanded potential at MWC

Mobilise will demonstrate the potential of eSIM at MWC Barcelona 2023



Telecoms SaaS provider Mobilise will be showcasing its knowledge and expertise in delivering seamless eSIM connectivity solutions at the 2023 edition of Mobile World Congress (MWC) Barcelona. Taking place from February 27, 2023 to March 2, 2023 at Fira Gran Via in Barcelona, Spain, the world's largest connectivity event acts as a playground for connectivity leaders within telecoms and beyond to network, learn and inspire one another.

With more than 75,000 visitors and 1,900 exhibitors from 183 countries, MWC Barcelona is the world's largest and most influential connectivity event. This year, it's composed of five core themes — 5G acceleration, Reality+, OpenNet, FinTech and Digital Everything. Each exhibitor is set to demonstrate their expertise under one of these focuses.

As a specialist in supporting service providers (SPs) operating directly within telecoms, as well as from vertical sectors

to digitalise their connectivity services, Mobilise will be exhibiting under the Digital Everything theme and seeks to demonstrate its vision to simplify connectivity for telcos and vertical markets alike.

As an expert in enabling digital customer journeys with frictionless CX through the use of in-app eSIM technology, Mobilise supports telcos to digitalize the final, and most challenging, stage of the onboarding — eliminating the need for plastic SIM cards by replacing them with an eSIM alternative. eSIM recognition in the consumer market catapulted in 2022, catalyzed by Apple's launch of an eSIM-only iPhone 14.

This change marks the need for telcos to launch their own eSIM offering to keep pace with device changes. But as it also simplifies the process of launching connectivity, eSIM also opens up the opportunity for vertical sectors to offer connectivity as part of their service offering. Recognising this shift, Mobilise will be exhibiting its expanded

service range, including its most recent product — eSIM software development kit (SDK).

A fully integrated version of Mobilise's HERO platform the, eSIM SDK can be embedded into existing iOS and Android applications. At MWC Barcelona, Mobilise is looking to demonstrate its knowledge and expertise in deploying eSIM solutions both within traditional telcos while also showcasing the potential of eSIM in vertical sectors like finance, travel and Industry 4.0.

"Every sector is looking to digitalization to provide a more efficient, cost-effective and sustainable offer," explained Hamish White, founder and CEO of Mobilise. "And while digitalization can bring all of these things, it can be challenging to successfully implement. At MWC, we're hoping to generate awareness around how telcos and any other business that wants to offer connectivity can do so, and crucially, how to do it right." **T**

CABSAT returns to DWTC for 2023

on track to reveal the next frontier of content

CABSAT 2023, the flagship event for broadcast, satellite, content creation, production, distribution, and digital media and entertainment industries is set to attract more than 14,000 visitors, 340 exhibitors, and 120 speakers, and have over 120 countries represented when it is held from May 16 to 18, 2023, at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

With the Middle East media and entertainment market expected to grow at a CAGR of 12.79% over the forecast period 2021 – 2026; the region remains one of the most appealing for the filmed content, broadcast, and satellite industries. At present, the region is rapidly transitioning from a content consumption market to a content creation hub. More regional productions are moving into the entertainment and distribution market, which is expected to be worth nearly USD 70 billion by 2026.

CABSAT is working with the most innovative content creators, producers, broadcast technology providers, as well as satellite distribution and content delivery companies to identify common traits of success across all verticals that can serve as the blueprint for future growth. The previous edition's highlights included the presence of representatives from Twitter, Metta, Dubai Media City, Saudi Media Rating Company, and Disney Plus.

CABSAT 2023 and New Additions

CABSAT 2023 will welcome back the Content Congress, which will celebrate and engage with the creator economy, and the SATEXPO Summit, where leading industry experts can discuss how sustainable space exploitation can be spearheaded. Similarly, NextUp, which also returns in 2023, offers a platform for start-up innovators in



the media, entertainment, and satellite industries, while NextGen Content features an exclusive viewing area for the region's biggest content buyers to witness the work of the region's best content creators in innovative new formats.

Another significant feature of the 2023 event is the co-location with Integrate Middle East, which is expected to become

the leading forum and sourcing platform for bringing together technology leaders and integrated solution buyers in the pro-AV industry.

The response to the new event has been extremely positive, and industry leaders such as Epson, Provision AVL, Infiled, and Christie have already committed to exhibiting and demonstrating their



innovative solutions.

Abdunnassir Ali, Regional Sales Manager Visual Instruments and Professional Display, Epson Middle East, said: "The demand for pro display solutions is growing exponentially in the Middle East and Epson is proud to showcase our products, which have been deployed by some of the leading entertainment organizations in the region, during the first-ever edition of Integrate Middle East.

"From education and art galleries to digital signage and corporate events, our projectors are a smart and advanced investment offering high quality, efficiency, and reliability. Moreover, our sustainable solutions can help meet the eco-credentials of your business, without compromising on the powerful and vivid images produced."

Dubai-based AV devices and accessories distributor Provision AVL, will also join the debut edition of the event. Kevin Boujikian, General Manager, said: "The launch of Integrate Middle East creates a unique platform for the AV industry that is much needed in the region, and one that everyone in the sector can benefit from.

During the first-ever edition of Integrate Middle East, Provision AVL will showcase its solutions as one of the leading AV distribution companies in the Middle East.

"Provision AVL not only supplies world-renowned AVL brands such as Chauvet Lighting, Prolite, EXE Technology, Solid State Logic (SSL), and PMC Speakers but uniquely focuses on two verticals, the recording studio market and the trussing/staging sectors, to meet the needs of an ever-growing market.

"With our sales and distribution company based in Dubai, UAE, we are able to provide solutions to various entertainment and integration projects and applications around the GCC and MENA regions, and we look forward to presenting these at the debut of the Integrate Middle East event," Kevin added.

Seeing a consistent increase in demand for exhibition space after a successful CABSAT 2022, the need for positive and meaningful collaborations between integrators, consultants, and technology buyers, has been acknowledged through the co-location of Integrate Middle East.

With market intelligence indicating that the global Pro AV Market is thriving and set to reach USD 518.26 billion by end of 2027, more of these visitor groups are expected to attend the exhibition this year.

Commenting on both events, Riju George, Group Director, Exhibitions, DWTC, said: "We are delighted to see CABSAT continuing to receive such positive feedback from the market. In addition to loyal partners gathered over an almost 30-year legacy, many new companies and startups from around the world will be participating in the upcoming edition of CABSAT.

"The co-location with the new launch Integrate Middle East will increase the number of integrators and consultants attending and eager to meet face-to-face, creating a unique and unmissable synergy between both shows."

Join CABSAT 2023, at the Dubai World Trade Centre from May 16 to 18, and take advantage of the vast business opportunities across the new content-driven ecosystems of the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. **T**

e& enterprise joins Snowflake Partner Network to drive data analytics in the UAE

e& enterprise, part of e& has announced that it has joined the Snowflake Partner Network to support customers in the UAE to get the most out of their data by using Snowflake's Data Cloud.



The Snowflake Partner Network unlocks the potential of the Data Cloud with a broad array of tools and partners. Certified partnerships and integrations enable customers to leverage Snowflake's flexibility, performance, and ease of use to deliver more meaningful data insights.

e& enterprise and Snowflake, the Data Cloud company, will help mobilize the world's data by providing customers with trusted and validated experts and services around implementation, migration, data architecture, and data pipeline design. Additionally, further services can be unlocked, including Business Intelligence (BI) integration, ETL (Extract, Transform and Load) / ELT (Extract, Load and Transform) integration, performance, running Proof of Concept (POCs), performance optimization, and training.

"Our collaboration with Snowflake exemplifies our commitment to guiding our customers through their data transformation journey by providing customer centric solutions. Together, we will empower government entities, large corporations, and enterprises to fully realize the potential of their data with Snowflake's unparalleled scalability, concurrency, and performance. We are eager to simplify the adoption process and empower our customers to become AI-driven organizations through our partnership with Snowflake," said Alberto Araque, CEO of e& enterprise IoT & AI.

In 2022, e& enterprise launched Enterprise AI as a Service (AlaaS) to help customers become AI driven – the Snowflake partnership will further strengthen this

offering by building the data foundations to better scale AI. e& enterprise will also address the challenges and opportunities of multiple industries, including healthcare, finance, retail, government by creating vertical solutions directly on top of its platform, to monetize their data-intensive applications, and deploy them directly on Snowflake's Data Cloud.

"Partners, like e& enterprise, enable our customers to benefit from leading-edge technologies with valuable industry and business experience on Snowflake's single, integrated platform," said Mohamed Zouari, General Manager for the Middle East, Turkey, and Africa, Snowflake. "We look forward to continued collaboration with e& enterprise to ensure our customers get even more value from Snowflake's Data Cloud." **T**

etisalat by e& in UAE provides free calls to Syria and Turkey to support communities affected by the earthquake

e& has announced that it is offering free calls from its UAE network to

Syria and Turkey for a week as part of its humanitarian response to the

recent earthquake that impacted the two countries. This initiative aims to support ongoing efforts to connect communities and keep people updated on developments.

All etisalat by e& mobile (Consumer & Business) customers will be able to stay connected with their families and loved ones in Syria and Turkey by having the possibility to use up to 1000 free minutes.

Customers traveling to Syria and Turkey on roaming can receive free incoming calls and make unlimited outgoing calls to the UAE or within Syria and Turkey. **T**

ITU



Brings the latest in AI and Robotics to Geneva



Doreen Bogdan-Martin
ITU Secretary-General

Artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics innovators—and their high-tech creations—will join humanitarian leaders in Geneva, Switzerland, 6-7 July, for the latest edition of the global summit advancing AI to drive sustainable development.

The two-day AI for Good Global Summit organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) will demonstrate how new technologies can support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in areas such as combatting the climate crisis and bolstering humanitarian response.

"It's in our collective interest that we can shape AI faster than it is shaping us," said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. "This summit, as the UN's primary platform for AI, will bring to the table leading voices representing a diversity of interests to ensure that AI can be a powerful catalyst for progress in our race to rescue the SDGs."

Innovative solutions and world-class speakers

The AI for Good Global Summit will feature

eight humanoid social robots and over 20 specialized robots, being brought together for the first time under the same roof. The robots will showcase capabilities ranging from fighting fires and delivering aid to providing healthcare and farming sustainably.

The event will also feature talks from thought leaders as well as demos of state-of-the-art AI solutions that could achieve global scale with the support of the international AI for Good community.

Two high-level roundtables – featuring government officials, industry executives, academics, and UN partners – will explore the policies, regulations, and standards needed for AI to advance sustainable development.

The event will also host the final round of the AI for Good Innovation Factory where start-ups from around the world will pitch their AI solutions to advance the SDGs.

More than a summit

The AI for Good Global Summit, established in 2017, returns to Geneva in person for

the first time since 2019. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, AI for Good transformed into a year-round online engagement platform bringing together a diverse range of participants from 183 countries.

This year's summit combines the best of the physical and virtual worlds, with the potential to welcome over 2,500 participants in Geneva alongside online participation from the over 15,000 members of ITU's fast-growing AI-powered community platform, the AI for Good Neural Network.

The event will emphasize networking to build new projects, calls to action, and partnerships. AI for Good's dynamic show floor will also include AI-inspired performances and artwork.

ITU connects the world

AI for Good is organized by ITU, the UN specialized agency for information and communication technologies, together with 40 partner UN agencies. The summit is co-convened by the government of Switzerland.

ITU's global membership includes 193 Member States and – uniquely in the UN system – over 900 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations.

Member States at ITU's governing Plenipotentiary Conference in 2022 adopted a resolution supporting the tech agency's work across the UN system to realize the benefits of AI for sustainable development.

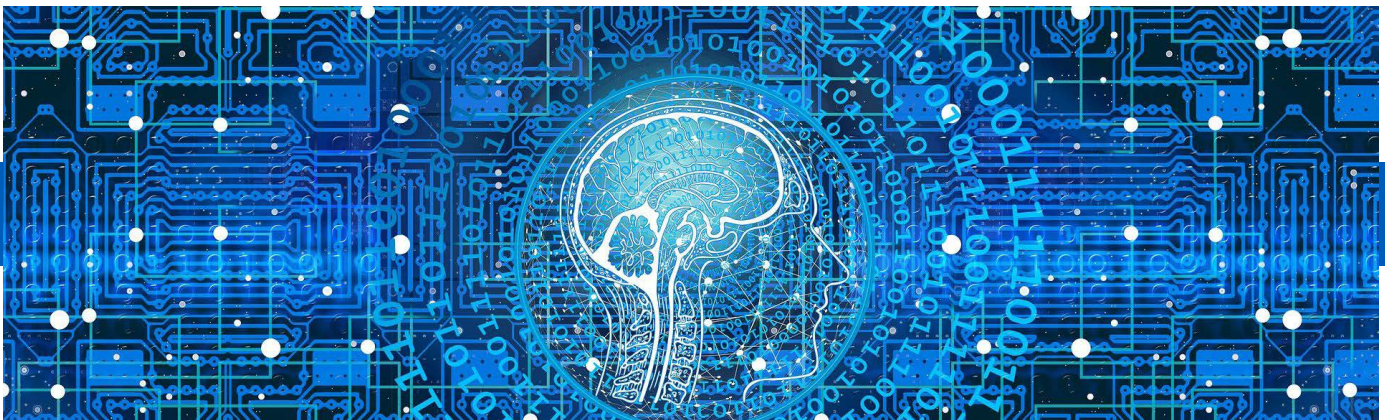
The two-day AI for Good Global Summit at The International Conference Centre Geneva is preceded by machine learning workshops on 5 July led by experts from the AI of Good Discovery series.

(among The Economist's best books of 2022)

- **Stuart Russell** - Professor of Computer Science at University of California, Berkeley, and author of "Human Compatible: Artificial Intelligence and the Problem of Control"
- **Alessandra Sala** – Senior Director of AI & Data Science, Shutterstock, and President, Women in AI
- **Babak Hodjat** – Chief Technology Officer for AI, Cognizant
- **Sophia Kianni** – Iranian-American climate activist, Executive Director of Climate Cardinals and, at 20 years of age, the

The summit will also feature:

- **Beonmi** – The world's first fully functional general-purpose humanoid robot (Beyond Imagination)
- **Nadine** - One of the world's most realistic humanoid social robots (University of Geneva)
- **Sophia** - First robot Innovation Ambassador for the United Nations Development Program (Hanson Robotics)
- **Geminoid** – Ultra-realistic humanoid robot from Japan (Hiroshi Ishiguro)
- **4NE-1** – One of the world's most advanced cognitive humanoid robots designed to



Participation in the AI for Good Global Summit is free of charge and open to everyone.

Where human and robot minds meet

Confirmed summit participants include:

- **Lila Ibrahim** – Chief Operating Officer, DeepMind
- **Yuval Noah Harari** – Historian, philosopher, and bestselling author of "Sapiens" and "Homo Deus" (participating remotely)
- **Orly Lobel** – Warren Distinguished Professor of Law, University of San Diego, and author of "The Equality Machine"

youngest member of the UN Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change

- **Andrew Zolli** – Chief Impact Officer, Planet
- **Ebtessam Almazrouei** – Director of the AI-Cross Center Unit at Abu Dhabi's Technology Innovation Institute
- **Iker Casillas** – Former football goalkeeper, Real Madrid, FC-Porto, and Spanish National team
- **Ali Agha** – Group Leader at the Autonomous and Robotics Systems Division of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Caltech Center for Autonomous Systems and Technologies

collaborate with humans (Neura Robotics)

- **Ai-Da Robot** – First ultra-realistic robot artist (Aidan Meller)
- **Grace** – The world's most advanced humanoid healthcare robot (SingularityNET)
- **Desdemona** – The rockstar robot of the Jam Galaxy Band

The AI for Good Global Summit 2023, co-convened by Switzerland, is supported by Immersion4 (Diamond sponsor), Technology Innovation Institute (Diamond sponsor), Monash University (Gold sponsor), ZTE (Gold sponsor), and Rohde & Schwarz (Networking sponsor).¹



Kacific and ST Engineering iDirect

Extend technology partnership to expand satellite connectivity in Southeast Asia and other regions

Kacific Broadband Satellites Group (Kacific) and ST Engineering iDirect have reaffirmed their long-term technology partnership through deep cooperation on the ground systems infrastructure for Kacific's fleet of satellites. ST Engineering iDirect, whose Dialog hub platform was instrumental to Kacific's highly successful program, will provide a comprehensive next-generation ground infrastructure including systems integration, as part of this strategic partnership.

Riding on the success of Kacific1 which has provided essential satellite internet access to both people and governments across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, Singapore-based broadband satellite operator Kacific is now working to expand its capabilities and coverage, adding capacity manifold with services throughout the region. As a first step, the company's next-generation satellite aims to address the soaring demand for satellite connectivity in its existing Southeast Asian markets, and extend its reach further into Southeast Asia, Central and Western Asia, and Eastern Africa. The International Data Corporation (IDC) suggests that satellite bandwidth sold across the Asia-Pacific would reach 335.6 Gbps by 2026, with an estimated 1 billion unconnected people in Kacific's areas of

interest, representing a total addressable market of US\$8 billion.

The upcoming Kacific next-generation satellites are planned to be reconfigurable, with flexible bandwidth allocation and high spectral efficiency. ST Engineering iDirect will match the space segment with a new generation of fully scalable, distributed ground systems that leverage standards-based, automated resource and service orchestration to enable dynamic allocation of satellite resources. Its next-generation ground system will enable extremely flexible services that align with new applications and changing customer demands, and facilitate the delivery of ultra-high-throughput services that can meet the demands of the most challenging applications, from community access to business networks.

Utilizing ST Engineering iDirect's cutting-edge technology, Kacific will take advantage of the latest advancements in virtualization and cloudification for unprecedented scale and ease of operations. With a fully digitalized ground network, the Kacific satellites will accelerate new services and capabilities to market and meet the growing demand across the region.

These new innovations, combined with

ST Engineering iDirect's next-generation Network Management System (NMS), will allow Kacific to streamline the management and operations of a complex large-scale network, optimizing costs, performance, and quality of the service delivery to ensure exceptional customer experience.

"Through Kacific1, we have successfully broken ground to democratize satellite broadband in the Asia-Pacific region," says Christian Patouraux, Kacific CEO. "New generation software-defined-satellite technologies, supported by a comprehensive ST Engineering iDirect-run ground system, set the stage for successful new broadband satellite programs, meeting unabated demand in our existing markets and opening up new opportunities."

"We are proud to extend our technology partnership with Kacific and enable them to deliver the next generation of broadband satellite connectivity that will continue to empower communities across the Asia-Pacific region," said John Arnold, Regional Vice President, ST Engineering iDirect. "We are looking forward to this next chapter in Kacific's journey, and evolving with their technological requirements to provide the highly efficient, agile and cost-effective connectivity that their customers need." **T**

UAE Space Agency receives delegation from Russian State Space Corporation to discuss fields of collaboration

The UAE Space Agency welcomed the Russian State Space Corporation (ROSCOSMOS) delegation led by Director General, His Excellency Yury Borisov. At the outset of the meeting, welcomed the Russian delegation, saying: "We look forward to strengthening the respective efforts in harnessing space knowledge to serve humanity and achieve comprehensive sustainable development."



The parties held discussions on topics of shared interest, including the significance of preserving a worldwide conversation on the peaceful utilization of outer space. The delegation also discussed the UAE hosting the 28th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), and the space sector's responsibility in displaying various programs and initiatives to address climate change. The conference is scheduled to take place

at Dubai Expo City from November 30th to December 12th, 2023.

The parties also discussed the vital role of the space sector in supporting global initiatives to address climate change studies. Satellites in space provide environmental data that support climate studies, including those of air pollution, temperature change and rising sea levels. Scientists utilize this

data to better understand climate change and how to mitigate its impact on our earth.

At the end of the visit, the delegation praised the role and great efforts of the United Arab Emirates in supporting the continuous endeavors for the sustainability of outer space, and in exploring opportunities for using space technologies to achieve sustainability on Earth. **■**

Satcoms Innovation Group announces plans for Satellite 2023

The Satcoms Innovation Group (SIG) has announced that it will be holding a breakfast session, hosted by Kratos, as well as moderating a panel session at Satellite 2023 in Washington, DC. The Group has also announced that the first half day of its workshop will be free for anyone to attend.

The Satellite 2023 SIG breakfast session will take place on 13th March at 10am and will be a discussion centred around the biggest transformations currently shaping the satellite industry. Refreshments will be provided. This session is open to all but registration is necessary. On the last day of

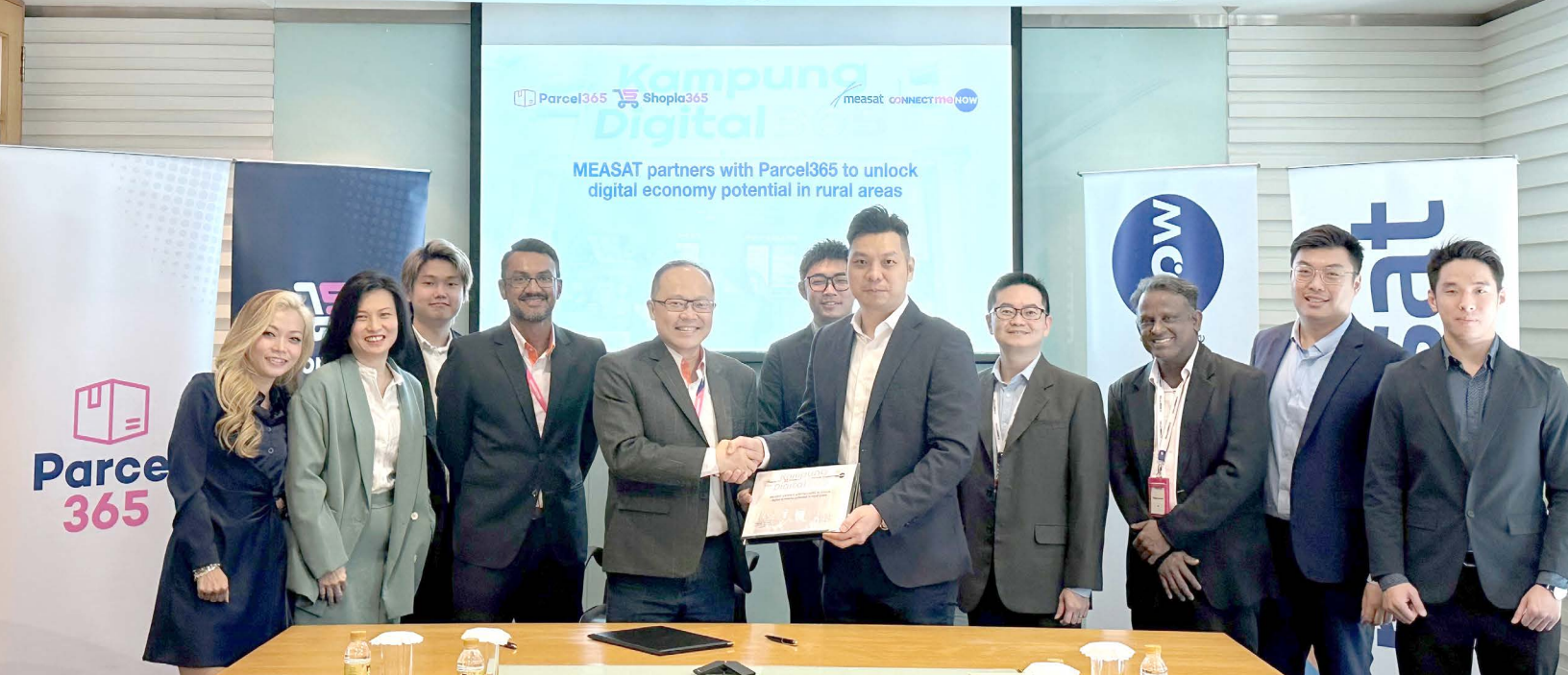
the conference, on 16th March, at 10.15am, Helen Weedon, SIG Managing Director will be moderating a panel discussion that will explore the tools, technologies, and the will needed to combat RF Interference.

Helen Weedon, Managing Director, SIG, commented: "The satcom industry is going through a period of transformation and there are a number of new challenges on the horizon. The need for innovative thinking and collaborative working is greater now than ever before. Technical and panel discussions like those at Satellite 2023 are essential because they stimulate debate around challenges and explore

potential solutions."

Paul Isaac, Director of Products, Kratos, added: "SIG's work benefits the satcom industry by promoting innovation and improving operational efficiency. We value the work that SIG does and as such are pleased to be supporting the group by hosting the breakfast session at Satellite 2023, which is a key event in the satcom industry's calendar."

The first SIG Workshop of 2023 will also be held during the week of Satellite, taking place on 16th in the afternoon and all day on 17th at Intelsat. **■**



MEASAT partners Parcel365 to unlock digital economy potential in rural areas

MEASAT Global Berhad, Malaysia's Rural Broadband Service Provider, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Parcel365 Sdn Bhd and M2B Services Sdn Bhd (collectively "Parcel365") to collaborate on the Digital Village365 initiative that aims to uplift rural communities and stimulate digital economic activities for B40 communities.

In the Digital Village365 initiative, Parcel365 will offer logistics and eCommerce platform services as well as training sessions at suitable CONNECTme NOW locations identified by MEASAT. Through Parcel365's app-based smart locker pick-up and drop-off services, rural residents can overcome

the challenges of lacking a proper address for pick-up and delivery in remote villages, while its sister platform Shopla365 offers eCommerce platform support and business solutions, as well as training to help villages optimise their digital economy potential. These services will be facilitated through MEASAT's CONNECTme NOW WiFi hotspots, powered by its high-speed satellite broadband service, to enable digital applications including transactions, communications, training and other relevant use cases.

"At MEASAT, we firmly believe in the power of the Digital Economy, and its ability to uplift rural communities

by opening up new income streams that optimise the productivity of the residents, such as the sales of unique foods and crafts. By partnering with Parcel365, we hope to introduce their logistics and business solutions to our CONNECTme NOW customers, to enable their eCommerce potential," said Ganendra Selvaraj, Chief Commercial Officer, MEASAT.

Eddie Mok Yew Keong, Co-Founder and Director of Parcel365 added, "We are excited to collaborate with MEASAT to extend the reach of our Digital Village365 initiative. Highspeed broadband is critical for enabling the digital economy and uplifting Malaysians in so many ways, beginning with promoting entrepreneurship, creating income opportunities, and enabling development of the rural supply chain. There are many unique products that can be offered by Malaysia's diverse rural communities – and this partnership with MEASAT will facilitate more of them to reach wider markets by easing internet-based logistics connections and supporting training to elevate branding opportunities with better internet connectivity, ultimately improving living standards across the country." **T**



Secure the present, Secure the future, Secure the power of SKYWAN 5G Release 2.2

Behold the next generation of satellite communication security with ND SATCOM

Ever reliable. Always innovating. Fully adaptive to changing forces. That describes ND SATCOM in a nutshell as its exemplary engineering and superior performance continue to draw new customers and loyalty. ND SATCOM's latest release of SKYWAN 5G, 2.2, is a game changer for VSAT networks through enhanced security and services.

Secure mission critical networks with these new Skywan 5G release 2.2 benefits:

• X.509 Certificate: Authentication Protocol

- Safeguards against malicious network impersonators with every network node authenticated by a Certificate Authority
- Ensures only trusted nodes are able to enter the TDMA network
- Supports operator in effectively managing X.509 certificates for seamless network operation

• Generic Routing Encapsulation (GRE) Service

- Provides Centralised, user-friendly view for tunnel set-up and operation



- Validates parameters instantly for three tunnel configurations

- Validates MTU sizes and routing information to reduce misconfiguration risk

- Monitors tunnel status efficiently based on SNMP traps

• Bandwidth Management: Committed & Maximum Information Rate (CIR/MIR)

- Enforces bandwidth guarantees and MIR as agreed in service plans

- Are configurable per station or a group of stations

- Are either fully dynamic or permanent bandwidth Assignments

In today's highly challenging environments where transmission security (TRANSEC) in sensitive industries requires the latest technology in authentication and encryption, Release 2.2 effectively delivers that protection.

Plus, customers will appreciate the new service-level management of tunnels and bandwidth that will facilitate use and oversight. Such turnkey solutions are a hallmark of ND SATCOM's commitment to shaping the future of satellite communication.

Secure your networks with the full power and protection of SKYWAN 5G Release 2.2.

A New Dimension in Satellite Communication. **■**



Mobily expands Mobily Pay services in partnership with Ericsson

In partnership with Ericsson, Mobily, the leading digital partner of the international technical conference LEAP23, has announced, during LEAP23, the launch of Mobily Pay recently in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Mobily Pay is a mobile financial service that is available to all the users in the Kingdom to conduct personalized financial services like contactless payments, money transfers, international remittance, digital card payments, cash-back, bill payments, mobile top-up, and more, securely and at their convenience.

In accordance with the agreement signed last year between Mobily and Ericsson, Mobily Pay is built on the Ericsson Wallet Platform, a fintech platform that provides secure, simple, functional, and relevant financial management by delivering easy-to-use financial services to Mobily's


customers.

Ayman Abdullah AlEissa, Chief Executive Officer at Mobily Pay says: "Mobily Pay is live and we have already witnessed its fast adoption in the Saudi market. It will improve the lives of Mobily Pay users by making financial services personalized, quick, secure, and easy for everyone. Deploying the Ericsson Wallet Platform solution, Mobily is actively contributing to the Digital Transformation Vision in line with Saudi Vision 2030 by advancing from cash to a cashless digital transactions society."

As part of this partnership, Ericsson will also evolve and enhance the Mobily Pay platform with futuristic roadmap leading to a full-service Digital services and Financial capabilities supported by smooth operations and maintenance with managed

services for the fintech solution.

Ekow Nelson, Vice President at Ericsson Middle East and Africa says: "We are proud to enable the launch of the state-of-the-art mobile and digital financial services in an established and advanced market like Saudi Arabia. This a step-change in the evolution of the Ericsson Wallet Platform that enhances Mobily Pay's contribution to the introduction of innovative financial services for its consumers, anytime, anywhere. The launch of Mobily Pay will enhance the Kingdom's move towards digital transformation."

At present, more than 342 million people worldwide currently use Ericsson Wallet Platform solutions delivered by communications service providers and processes over 2.6 billion transactions every month. 

Pakistan's IT company Systems establishes regional headquarters in KSA



Rao Hamid - GM, Systems Arabia

To expand its global footprint, after successful operations across the Middle East (the UAE, Egypt and Qatar), Systems has recently established Systems Arabia, a subsidiary headquartered in Riyadh. The company has received tremendous traction from large enterprise clients in the telecommunications, banking and government sector providing scalable software solutions and managed services to enhance transformation across different business operations.

With the recent acquisition of NdcTech, an award-winning partner of Temenos, by its parent company Systems; Systems Arabia is uniquely equipped to help digital banks, fintech companies, and payment service providers succeed with their digital needs to deliver a truly omni-channel experience.

In a matter of a few months, Systems Arabia has initiated and executed breakthrough solutions for multiple clients which

have resulted in future-readiness and enhanced performance for its clientele. The company specializes in verticals like Telecommunications, Banking & Finance, and the Government Sector, offering services such as Application Modernization & Development, Customer Experience & Digital Consultancy, Core & Digital Banking, Data & AI, and Enterprise Business solutions. Moreover, the company implements projects from large principal solution providers like SAP, IBM and RedHat, Huawei Cloud, Microsoft and Sprinklr.

Rao Hamid, a senior tech veteran with a strong track record of driving enterprise-wide transformations is positioned at the helm of affairs as General Manager for Systems Arabia and is based out of Riyadh. He has worked across multiple geographies for global market leaders like IBM and Teradata and is accredited for true business impact during his tenure at each company. Prior to moving to KSA, he led operations

for five years at Systems Pakistan as the GM and is now geared to bring the same level of impact and disruption to Saudi Arabia.

Rao commented, "Over the past couple of years, we have kept a keen eye on and closely monitored several key economic indicators, the government's vision, and the Kingdom's growth potential and we have been very encouraged. These are very exciting times to be present in Saudi Arabia as a business, and we are looking forward to Systems Arabia playing an active role for Vision 2030."

Sharing the company's long-term vision, Asif Peer (Group CEO, Systems) said, "As we continue to expand and extend our global footprint, we are committed to delivering solutions to our clients at a break-neck speed and leading the company's growth through innovation, creative thinking, resilience, and value addition. The long-term demand environment is paramount across the world, and we're excited to play a catalytic role in existing and new markets."

The company is all set to make an exciting debut at Leap 2023 taking place at Riyadh Front Expo Centre from 6-9 February 2023, where their team of global experts will exhibit cutting-edge solutions and global success stories. They will be exhibiting at Hall 5, Booth Number, H5.B78 where you can get an exclusive opportunity to interact with industry thought leaders. The Head Office is located at Al Hital Tower on King Fahd Road in Riyadh's Al Sahafah District. **T**

Whale Cloud Technologies

(an Alibaba Company) signs distribution agreement with Relacom



Whale Cloud Technologies (an Alibaba Company) signed a Cloud Solution Distribution Agreement with Relacom in Pakistan. This agreement authorizes Relacom for the distribution of ZStack and Whale Cloud Services throughout Pakistan.

Whale Cloud, founded in 2003, is a global leading data intelligence technology company serving telecom operators, governments, enterprises in more than 80 countries. In 2018, Alibaba signed the strategic investment agreement to become Whale Cloud's largest shareholder. As an Alibaba company and an important partner of Alibaba Cloud's software service ecosystem, Whale Cloud is dedicated to bringing leading digital transformation technologies and data intelligence services to global enterprises.

Relacom entered Pakistan market in 2004 to become one of the leading technology services provider, providing Turn Key IT and Telecom infrastructure solutions such as Data Center solutions, Business Process

Outsourcing, Managed Services, Data Migration & Integration, Cyber Security and Cloud Services.

During the signing ceremony, Managing Director of Whale Cloud in Pakistan, Junaid Shaheen said, "We cannot emphasize enough on the importance of Pakistan Market and its potential for cloud adaptation. We are pleased to have Relacom as our prime distributor having an excellent track record in Pakistan."



CEO Relacom, Abbas Ali Mirza, highlighted, "We are delighted in having the distribution rights of Whale Cloud Technology in Pakistan. Relacom is well geared for Whale Cloud and ZStack's support to achieve effective distribution and exceptional product growth." **T**

stc Group and Telefónica sign Strategic Partnership Agreement for MENA region

stc Group and Telefónica has announced the signing of a Strategic Partnership Agreement to work together and benefit from their joint scale, combined expertise and market presence.

By signing this Strategic Agreement, stc Group becomes a member of Telefónica Partners Program, an initiative launched in 2011, which includes other leading telecom operators covering over 65 markets in Europe, Latin America and the Middle East and Africa.

Through this strategic partnership, stc Group, with its operating companies and affiliates in the Middle East, will work together with Telefónica to explore potential joint business opportunities in areas such as B2B & B2C, Digital Services (including cybersecurity, cloud, IoT and Big Data), Technology, Innovation and Procurement and other strategic areas to promote growth and capture synergies. On the other hand, through this partnership agreement, stc Group will get access to a

comprehensive approach to knowledge sharing & experience on a wide variety of subjects.

Eng. Moaded H. Alsloom, stc Group Chief New Markets Officer, said: "The importance of this agreement comes in alignment with stc Group DARE 2.0 strategy and part of the kingdom vision 2030. This strategic agreement touches many areas in B2B, B2C, AI, HR, Academy, Innovation, Cybersecurity, Investments, Business Efficiency, Procurement, Tech & Ops and Metaverse, which brings many values to stc. Both companies will build for the benefit of the customers and the nation for great experience and knowledge. Moreover, this strategic partnership will serve stc Group's regional, MENA, and global footprint. Ultimately, our vision at stc is to create and build Innovative solutions to keep our Leadership in the Middle East and MENA region".

Mazyed AlMazyed, stc Group Business

Efficiency and New Markets General Manager, commented: "We are delighted to sign this partnership agreement with Telefónica Group benefiting our operations in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait as well as all our Local Affiliates who operate in many areas and technology environments, we will be closely working with Telefónica, all the members and partners for building a solid platform of collaboration touching all the strategic topics that enhance our positioning and leadership within our respective countries."

"We are really excited about joining forces with one of the leading telcos in the MENA region. stc Group is a company fully aligned with our aim to accelerate the digital transformation of our customers and the need of leveraging scale to provide best-in-market technology solutions and digital services. We are confident that this agreement will bring important benefits to both Groups", said Mark Evans, Chief Strategy & Development Officer of Telefónica. 

stc and Ericsson cooperate to reduce e-waste in Saudi Arabia

As part of the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly explore sustainable initiatives, stc and Ericsson partner to manage and dispose of stc's obsolete equipment as part of the Ericsson Product Take-Back Program. The program aims at minimizing the potential environmental impact associated with the disposal of decommissioned end-of-life electrical equipment.


As part of the program, Ericsson will handle stc's dismantled equipment with the highest international industry standards through the collection, decommissioning, transportation, and recycling of materials.

Maha Alnuhait, General Manager of Sustainability Program at stc, says: "As a

leading digital enabler in the region, stc strives to create immense positive impact within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and aligning with Saudi Vision 2030. In line with the sustainable development goals of the country, we are proudly cooperating with Ericsson to dismantle the equipment that have reached end of life in the network and recycle the material with the highest industry standards. We are proud of our latest cooperation and are certain our efforts will bring great benefits to the country."

Håkan Cervell, Vice President and Head of Customer Unit stc, Saudi Arabia and Egypt at Ericsson Middle East and Africa, says: "The Ericsson Product Take-Back Program is a solution to support our customers with their end-of-life equipment. It allows us

to limit the amount of e-waste generated and also contributes to turning e-waste into resources. As part of our signed Memorandum of Understanding with stc on collaborations for different sustainability initiatives, the Product Take-Back Program is a great step towards achieving the sustainable ambitions of the Saudi Vision 2030 and supporting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with its sustainability efforts."

Launched in 2005, the Ericsson Product Take-Back Program is part of Ericsson's extended producer responsibility to retrieve and dispose of Ericsson's obsolete products safely. Available in 180 countries, Ericsson offers the program to all customers globally, which guarantees that e-waste is not discarded in trade-restricted areas or landfills. 

Pakistan data convergence into cloud technology and the role of Cloud-Tribe

Haider Boukhari - Group CEO, Cloud-Tribe



In recent years, Cloud Computing has become an increasingly popular trend in the world of technology. This paradigm shift has been driven by the need for cost-effective, scalable, and flexible IT solutions. In Pakistan, the trend is no different, with many organizations turning to cloud services to meet their growing computing needs. One such company that is leading the charge in the cloud computing space is Cloud-Tribe, a Pakistani-based company that provides public cloud services such as IaaS, DRaaS, BaaS, and SaaS.

The current global landscape has shown that cloud computing is critical to businesses in many ways. From a security point of view, cloud computing offers enhanced security measures compared to traditional IT solutions. This is because cloud providers have the expertise and resources to invest in robust security systems, such as firewalls, intrusion detection and prevention systems, and encryption technologies.

However, there are also concerns about data privacy and sovereignty, especially for countries like Pakistan. It is imperative that each country's data should be kept within the borders of their own country to ensure that sensitive information is protected. This is where Cloud-Tribe comes into play. As a Pakistani-based company, Cloud-Tribe is able to provide cloud services within the borders of Pakistan, ensuring that



sensitive data remains within the country's jurisdiction.

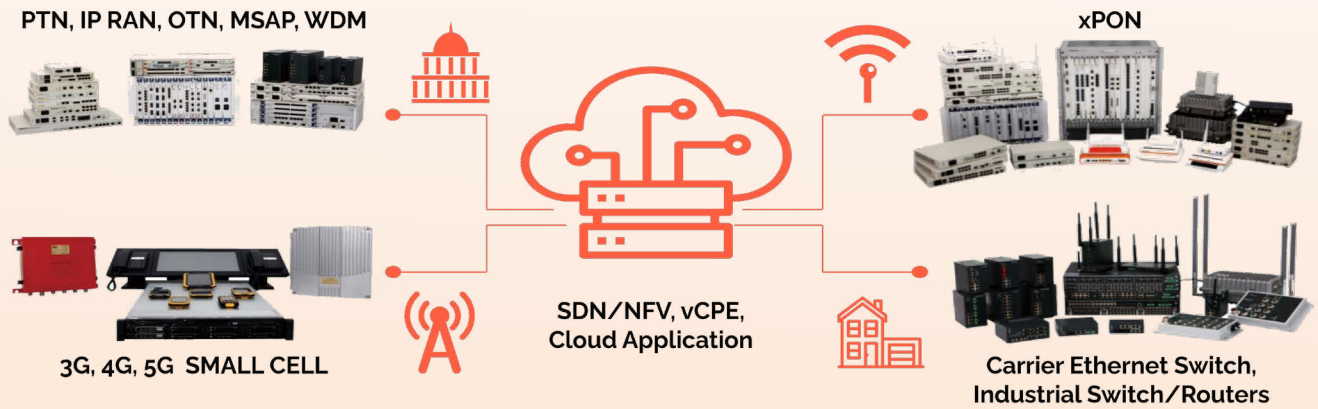
Cloud-Tribe owns three data centres that are strategically located across Pakistan, providing organizations with access to secure and reliable cloud services. The company's services range from basic IaaS offerings, such as virtual machines and storage, to more advanced services like DRaaS and BaaS. This enables organizations to have a single point of contact for all their cloud needs, simplifying the process of cloud adoption and helping organizations to move to the cloud faster.

In addition to its cloud services, Cloud-Tribe also provides SaaS solutions that allow

organizations to access essential business applications, such as email, accounting software, and project management tools, through the cloud. This reduces the need for organizations to invest in expensive hardware and software licenses, and enables them to scale their IT solutions as their business grows.

One of the key benefits of Cloud-Tribe's services is that they are highly scalable and flexible. This means that organizations can easily scale up their cloud services as their business grows, without having to worry about the underlying infrastructure. Additionally, Cloud-Tribe's services are also highly flexible, allowing organizations to choose the services that are most suitable for their needs.

In conclusion, the convergence of data into cloud technology is a critical trend that is changing the way organizations operate. Cloud computing offers numerous benefits, including enhanced security and scalability. In Pakistan, Cloud-Tribe is leading the charge in the cloud computing space, providing organizations with secure and reliable cloud services that are designed to meet their specific needs. By keeping sensitive data within the borders of Pakistan, Cloud-Tribe is helping organizations to protect their data while also enabling them to take advantage of the benefits of cloud computing. ■



Telecommunication & Networking Solutions

1. Open Datacenter Solutions

- Enterprize SoNiC Solutions
- Datacenter Interconnect Solution
- Open Networking Solution for Open Cloud Switches
- Driving Next Generation Datacenters toward 400G

2. Open Networking Path

- Open Optical Transport Network 100G/200G
- Open Packet Transport Network
- Open RAN (ORAN)
- Open WiFi

3. Disaggregated Path

- Disaggregated OPTICAL LINETERMINALS – OLT
- Disaggregated Cell Site Gateway Family for Mobile Backhaul Applications
- Disaggregated & Open BNG & DCSG Network Solution
- Disaggregated Small Cells



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Top 5 data privacy trends that will rule 2023

Astrid Gobardhan, Data Privacy Officer, VFS Global

Economies and businesses are becoming proactively prudent about managing data, but your personal information is still vulnerable. Despite the increased awareness and collective intent to safeguard data, inadequate, ambiguous or poor data security management systems have led to a rise in data breaches recently.

According to a report by IBM and Ponemon Institute, the average cost of a data breach touched a record high of US\$4.35 million in 2022. The researchers arrived at the staggering number based on several cost factors such as legal, regulatory, and technical activities, loss of brand equity, customer turnover, and drain on employee productivity. More than financial losses, data privacy breach or non-compliance could have an irreparable toll on an organization's reputation and erode stakeholder trust.

Given the rise in cybercrimes, organizations need a two-pronged strategy. First, however robust your security systems may be, it is imperative to keep updating them. More essentially, the leadership should focus on strengthening their defenses by looking ahead, predicting the emergence of future cyberthreats, and comprehending the wealth of new defensive capabilities that businesses can use both now and in the future. Here are five industry trends on data privacy this year:

Greater emphasis on privacy by design: In the past, privacy was often an afterthought when it came to the development of new products and services. However, this is beginning to change. More and more companies are realizing that building privacy into their products and services from genesis is not just the right thing to do, but it can be immensely rewarding for business. As



a result, in 2023 we'll see a shift towards a "privacy by design" approach, where companies prioritize user privacy at every stage of the development process.

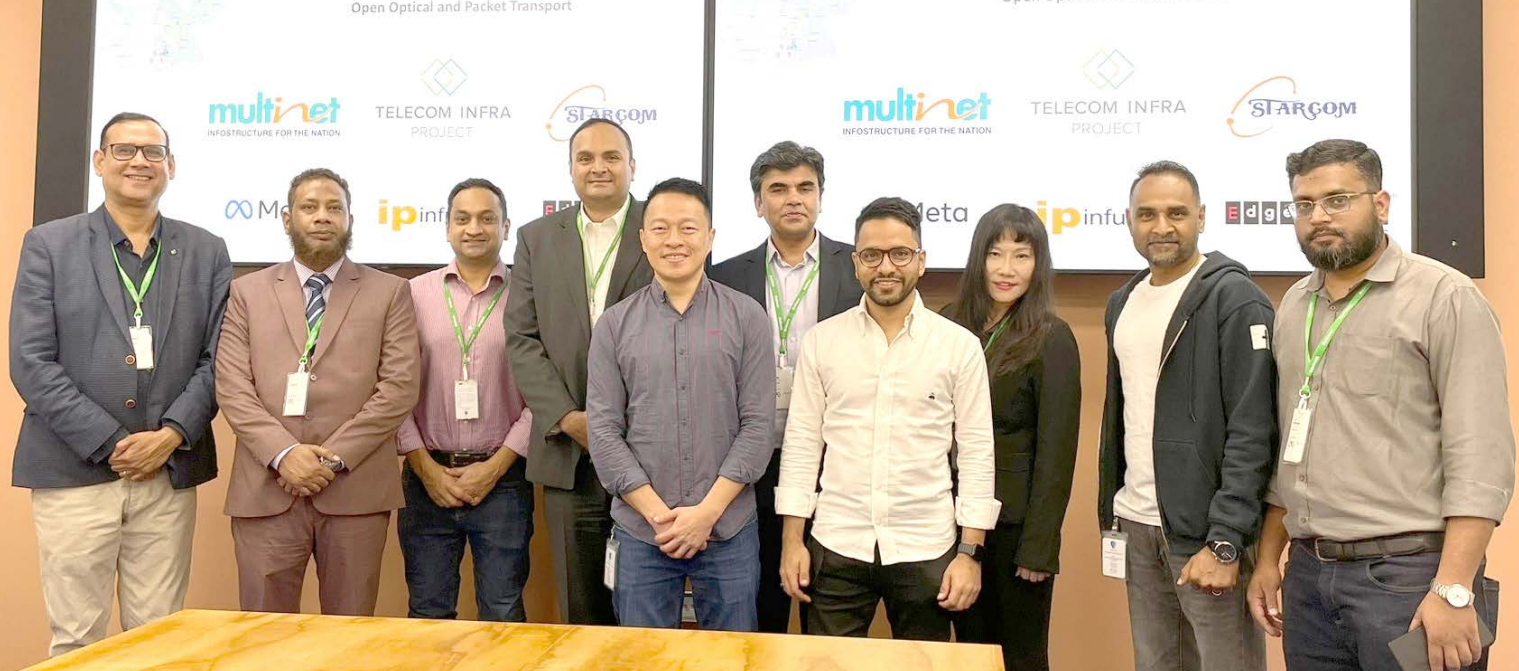
Rise of privacy-focused tech: As consumers become more concerned about their online privacy, there will be a surge in demand for technologies that prioritize privacy. This includes everything from secure messaging apps and browsers to virtual private networks (VPNs) and encrypted email services. It's important to note that while these tools can certainly help to protect your data, they're not a magic bullet. Organizations still need to be vigilant and take steps to secure their information.

Increase in regulations: Governments around the world are taking notice of the growing concern over data privacy and are starting to act. Since the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union went into force in 2018, there has been a steady rise in these restrictions. This trend, of increased restrictions, is likely to continue, as more and more countries look to implement their data protection regulations. The United States,

for example, is currently considering passing a federal data privacy law like the GDPR. Other countries such as Canada, Australia, Japan and India have also introduced or are in the process of introducing new data privacy laws. Thus, now companies must implement stricter data privacy policies and procedures to ensure compliance with these regulations and to protect the personal information of their customers.

Greater transparency: The trend towards greater transparency in data privacy is driven by the increasing awareness of the importance of protecting personal information and the need for organizations to be more accountable for their data collection and use practices. In 2023, organizations will begin to be more transparent about their data practices by providing individuals with more control over their data. This includes giving individuals the ability to access, correct, or delete their personal information, and the ability to opt-out of certain types of data collection. This is a win-win for both consumers and businesses, as it helps to build trust and fosters a sense of transparency and accountability.

Goodbye Cookies: As first-party data becomes more significant and consumers become more conscious of their data, third-party cookies will soon become obsolete. Many companies and organizations are now looking to move towards a cookie less future by implementing new technologies and methods for tracking and targeting users. For example, some companies are exploring the use of browser fingerprints, which are unique identifiers that can be used to track a user without the use of cookies. Other companies are experimenting with the use of privacy-enhancing technologies to provide a more secure and private way of tracking users. ■



STARCOM announces first Open Wi-Fi Project with Multinet for their OPTIFY network for Public Wi-Fi

Multinet Selected STARCOM as Solution Technology Partner/System integrator for Public Wi-Fi Project Across Pakistan. Multinet is deploying TIP's Open WiFi technology to power Wi-Fi networks across the country, providing seamless high-speed connectivity for public, hospitality, sports and entertainment, and retail enterprise customers. STARCOM is the first System Integrator & Solution provider in the region to deploy Open WiFi technology stack to provide seamless, fast, and affordable connectivity. Open WiFi is an open source-based Wi-Fi architecture that enables multi-vendor, interoperable Wi-Fi networks enabling it to easily expand its Wi-Fi footprint with a robust experience. This agreement was signed at META Regional Headquarter in Singapore.

STARCOM is supplying Edgecore Access Points integrated with their ecOpen Cloud Controller technology for their Open Wi-Fi network and hotspots. Optify by Multinet backhauled with high speed optical fiber infrastructure for top of the line user experience, buildout with Technology Partner EdgeCore in region with help of TIP & META Ecosystem. META role in this Public Wi-Fi was support & they helped Starcom to



conceive this project.

"Our singular mission is to deliver superior connectivity solutions for Pakistan" said Adnan Hayat Zaidi, Chief Operating Officer at Multinet. "By using open and disaggregated technology with TIP, we will continue to lead the market with innovation that delivers exceptional service, quality, reliability for the public, our customers and stakeholders. This will greatly scale up our footprint and reach, with superior scalability. Open networks, like this deployment, will streamline operations and accelerate innovation."

"STARCOM's mission is; we Connecting to the Nation with our Broadband Solutions."

said Asghar Ali, Chief Executive Officer at STARCOM. With this Open Wi-Fi initiative taken by Multinet Pakistan Pvt Ltd strengthen Pakistani nations, specially Free Public WiFi initiative Multinet taking for their segment OPTIFY. These will be installed in Publics places, Airports, Stadiums, Hospitals & Business districts. We are continuously working for Low cost & international known brands & Solution for Concavity & Broadband. STARCOM is Committed with Pakistan & regional Telecom Operators, MNO's, Government & Public Services department to bring more new Solutions to market like Open Network Data Center Solution, Open Networking FTTH Solution & 5G Mobile networking Solutions. **T**

Zain completes first cohort of 'WE SUCCEED' succession planning program



Bader Al-Kharafi
Vice-Chairman & Group CEO, Zain

Zain has announced the successful completion of its inaugural WE SUCCEED initiative; a Group-wide middle management succession planning program that saw over 90 talents undertake eight-months of development on Awareness and Perspective, Personal Purpose, Connection, and Psychological Safety.

Under the auspices of Zain's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion department and delivered in collaboration with a leading management consulting firm, the program is built on years of research into "adaptability", enables self-awareness, especially of people's default mindsets under stress. Moreover, it equipped the participants with tools to deepen relationships, including those that they experience as "difficult" and encourage them to create psychologically safe, empowered teams.

Commencing with 360-degree profiling of participating middle managers, the WE SUCCEED program extended over the course of 8 months with workshops, fieldwork assignments, local meetings among managers from the same operation, and cross-operational discussions, as well as coaching for the top performing members in the program.

Starting 2023, the top 50% of WE SUCCEED participants will be assigned to a senior Zain

sponsor, to accelerate their careers in 2023 and beyond, thereby supporting Zain's Gender Diversity WE target to create a more equal leadership team.

Commenting on the completion of the initial WE SUCCEED program, Bader Al-Kharafi, Vice-Chairman and Zain Group CEO said, "I would like to congratulate the talented upcoming leaders who participated in this inspiring new initiative. They will grow to be the executive management of the future, and it is through such programs that we are developing impeccable succession planning, which will make us a sustainable and successful organization now and into the future."

Al-Kharafi added, "This exceptional learning experience solely catered to middle managers and built on years of research into "adaptability" continues to affirm the company's overall objective to build aspirations and confidence while equipping our people with core skills and mindsets to be successful leaders."

Personal assessments of participants upon completion of the program reflected significant personal growth and development in areas including Reframing, Self-Awareness, and Articulating Purpose. This is in-line with Zain's recently uplifted diversity and inclusion

activities to incorporate equity. Programs such as WE SUCCEED affirm the company's overall objective to make employees as skilled and included as possible, without bias or favor.

WE SUCCEED encompassed 97 participants Group-wide, who completed the program, improving all behaviors from pulse 1 to pulse 2 as indicated by self-reflection and colleague feedback. Participants reported on average a 7% improvement across all behaviors, and self-reported the greatest growth in Reframing skills, which they originally self-reported as their lowest scores.

The WE SUCCEED ongoing sponsorship and mentoring program will help high-performing middle management participants to access development opportunities that would otherwise not be available to them, while expanding the mentees' perceptions of what the mentors can deliver. The initiative will also allow participants to make connections with other senior executive leadership members, promoting their visibility in the company, all the while receiving constructive feedback on how best to navigate their careers.

WE SUCCEED is another critical component that will support and ensure the success of Zain's ambitious and profitable growth '4SIGHT' strategy. ■

Telefónica is a Leader in the Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for managed IoT Connectivity Services worldwide for the ninth time



Telefónica has been recognized for the ninth consecutive time as a Leader in the 2023 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Managed IoT (Internet of Things) Connectivity Services, Worldwide, the Gartner report that analyses the execution and vision of global IoT market players.

Telefónica, which provides its IoT and Big Data services through Telefónica Tech, is widely valued for its strategic vision of integrating technology areas such as IoT, Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to offer its customers end-to-end projects in which it combines both its own resources and solutions from its ecosystem of partners. The market also recognizes the company's commitment to technologies such as 5G, private networks for industrial environments and Edge, as well as its growth in these areas through the acquisition of specialized companies.

Gonzalo Martín-Villa, CEO of IoT and Big Data at Telefónica Tech, said: "Once again this year we have the great news of being

recognized by Gartner in the Leaders Quadrant for IoT managed connectivity services. This fills us with pride and shows us that the work we do every day to strengthen our capabilities continues to bear fruit. It also allows us to take on the challenge of continuing to offer our customers, globally, a combination of technology enablers and solutions that enable them to realize their



Gonzalo Martín-Villa
CEO of IoT and Big Data, Telefónica Tech

full potential".

He adds: "Over the past year we have worked on improving our technology in IoT, Big Data and AI environments, as well as enhancing our capabilities to develop specialized solutions for the most demanding environments that our customers may present to us. Our internal strengths, including the creation of a dedicated MVNO for IoT connectivity, coupled with the capabilities of our partners, allow us to support our customers in their digital transformation".

Telefónica has made significant investments in technology, human resources and processes to tackle complex IoT projects with maximum reliability in leading markets such as the UK, Germany, Spain and Brazil. The company continues to see double-digit growth in the number of IoT connections worldwide and is committed to the internal development of platforms such as Kite (IoT connectivity), Smart Steps and Smart Digits (both Big Data) and TrustOS (Blockchain). ■

GLOBAL ICT, TELECOM & SATCOM EVENTS 2023

23-25 February 2023

ITCN ASIA
GATEWAY TO DIGITAL PAKISTAN
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONFERENCES

Islamabad, Pakistan

07-09 May 2023

MEET ICT BAHRAIN **BITEX**
BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGY EXHIBITION

Manama, Bahrain

28-30 June 2023

GSMA MWC
Shanghai • 上海

Shanghai, China

27-02 February - March 2023

GSMA MWC
Barcelona

Barcelona, Spain

15-17 May 2023

BIG 5G EVENT

Austin, Texas

15-18 September 2023

ib

Amsterdam, Netherlands

07-09 March 2023

capacity

Dubai, UAE

16-18 May 2023

CABSAT

Dubai, UAE

16-20 October 2023

GITEX GLOBAL

Dubai, UAE

13-16 March 2023

SATELLITE 2023

Washington, DC

30-31 May 2023

TELECOMSWORLD Middle East
Middle East | North Africa | Central Asia | South Asia

Dubai, UAE

14-16 November 2023

Africa Com Anchor Event of AFRICA TECH FESTIVAL

Cape Town, SA

14-16 March 2023

معرض و مؤتمر الخليج العالمي للأمن المعلومات
GISEC GLOBAL

Dubai, UAE

06 June 2023

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ASIA VIDEO INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Singapore

15-16 November 2023

TELECOMSWORLD Asia

Bangkok, Thailand

15-19 April 2023

NABSHOW

Las Vegas, USA

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