



beyond cybersecurity

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CLOUD SECURITY POWER LIST

SHOWCASING THE POWERHOUSES IN CYBERSECURITY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We have always felt there is nothing greater than a good story. This edition of Power List is an initiative from CISO MAG where we are all ears to the stories of companies that have been striving to reach the pinnacle of cloud security. All the companies featured in the issue have a great story to tell and many have a legacy the rest of the world will follow. This issue addresses several critical areas of cloud security and highlights the best practices that need to be established to ensure the security of cloud.

The issue begins with the Knowledge Hub, which details the steps companies must take when embarking on a cloud journey. The article speaks at length about the different models that exist as well as choosing the one that is right for your organization. In our View Point section, we talk about cloud security in the new age era and precautions companies must take in securing their infrastructure, with a focus on the Middle East market. Move to our Insight section where we talk about cloud bursting and hybrid cloud adoption. The article details the challenges around securing hybrid cloud and the zero-trust model many companies are adopting to ensure cloud security.

We have also published a research report where we track the cloud security challenges organizations are facing, including how vulnerabilities in cloud security have hindered cloud adoption and how these challenges have been overcome. We have also dive deeper into the cloud space to understand the prominent trends of cloud security.

For this issue, we have interviewed Rasheed Alodah, Managing Director, Trend Micro, Saudi Arabia, where he talks in detail about his journey, the ever-evolving landscape of cloud security, the market strategy Trend Micro has adopted to stay on top of the game, and the threats in the cloud security space.

Through the ensuing articles on the Power List, we have listed the powerhouses in the space of cloud security that have, through the years, been at the forefront of innovation and technology. These include companies like Symantec, Akamai, Fortinet, and Cisco. We have also told the stories of companies like Trend Micro, Safe T, Oblique Drive, and Dark Trace and outlined their commitment toward better cloud security. This issue is dedicated to the stories surrounding these companies that have been on the frontlines of cloud generally, and cloud security specifically.

Tell us what you think of this issue. If you have any suggestions, comments or queries, please reach us at editorial@cisomag.com.

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Embarking on a Cloud Journey: Understanding the Strategy and Expectations

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Aspate of digital technologies such as Big Data, Internet of Things, Cloud, Artificial Intelligence, and Blockchain have energized enterprises to set audacious goals for their businesses and catapult them from the brick-and-mortar age into the digital age. Driven by business compulsions such as handling disruption of existing models, pressure for more growth and improved margins, and need to engage more intimately with the customer, enterprises have embraced the digital wave.

Digital transformation will help a business to discover new ways of engaging with customers, create a smarter enterprise, and define new business models. Significantly, the nature of digital technologies allows it to deliver different outcomes for different business functions. For example, the CIO gains from increased speed and agility of the IT environment, the CMO can orchestrate campaigns better and acquire more customers, the CSO can now have a scalable and predictive engine and forecast more accurately, the CFO benefits from reduced costs, increased revenues and profits, while the CHRO enjoys improved employee experience and engagement. Undoubtedly, digital technologies

will have an irreversible and long-lasting impact on the way business is conducted.

Cloud computing is a crucial enabler for digital transformation. It has rightfully received significant attention in recent years as many enterprises embarked on the journey to take advantage of the opportunities it offers and stay competitive. Cloud adoption has been on the rise continuously, and industry analyst Gartner states that investments in cloud computing infrastructure and applications (over \$200 billion) will account for most of the enterprise software spends in 2019.

Cloud computing is an inevitable and integral part of the IT modernization agenda, which enterprises, both large and small, must undergo to launch their digital journey. The cloud offers a plethora of benefits over the traditional on-premise model such as increased business agility and growth, better customer experience, decreased overall IT costs, standardized IT environment, improved scalability, and availability of systems. Further, another key benefit it offers is its ability to harmoniously exist with other digital technologies, including the provision of better defense against cybersecurity threats.

However, many enterprises struggle to derive the full value from a cloud

transformation undertaking. Often, they confuse the transition with a simple lift-and-shift of applications, data, or processes to the cloud and end up with modest outcomes.

An appropriate strategy makes a difference

The cloud transformation involves crafting a strategy that aligns with business objectives combined with careful planning and execution. Enterprises need to clearly state their goals, identify who will drive the transformation internally, and articulate expected behaviors. Procuring management buy-ins and preparing for change are the other factors to consider. Often the change management involves not just transforming IT assets but also refactoring human capital.

Having a well-thought cloud strategy that is aligned with the overall digital transformation path will make the difference between success and failure. With enterprises viewing cloud as a must-have catalyst to establish a next generational IT platform, an effective transformation implies a better chance of much higher levels of business performance.

What differentiates the enterprises that have expertly navigated the cloud journey and are enjoying the transformational benefits from the ones that are still grappling with

the what, why, and how of cloud transformation?

Successful firms are the ones that have a clear vision of the cloud journey and can map their drivers, concerns, and expected outcomes with the right course of action. They understand which cloud approach to adopt based on the advantages it provides and are ready to shoulder significant internal changes to gear up for the cloud transition. In short, they invest efforts in getting a comprehensive picture of the cloud journey and are, hence, better prepared to handle the bumps along the way.

Organizations can approach the cloud in many ways

Today, many firms look for predictability, efficiency, and performance and emphasize tactical outcomes such as standardized technology environment, better collaboration, and faster response to the market. Enterprises who look at the cloud through the operational lens are more likely to adopt a lift-and-shift approach by migrating assets to the cloud in an opportunistic manner inclining to opt for quick wins.

Recognizing the objectives early is critical as it influences the behavior of the organization profoundly. Those focused on lowering costs will look at initiatives such as optimizing the IT footprint and improving license

management. Success here starts with a better understanding and transforming applications and enhancing user experience (UX). As enterprises start take different actions based on the objective.

When aiming for a total cloud transformation, enterprises must be prepared to embark on a large-scale initiative that requires a variety of existing systems, processes, and infrastructure. Such efforts demand persistence and diligence in addition to a comprehensive strategic and cultural initiative, but the outcomes provide exponential benefits to the company.

The enterprises that are serious in moving on the cloud with a long-term view, strongly prioritizing business growth and customer retention over operational goals. While operational goals are critical, however, they must not be the prime focus.

No initiative is free from concerns

Enterprises have a set of implementation-related concerns such as the ability of the team and availability of skills, individual support, aligning with business goals, managing operational aspects, and organizational readiness for such a move.

Determining the right cloud model (public, private, hybrid) is also an important decision for the enterprise. Despite a vast amount of information available to help select the appropriate cloud model, enterprises are introduced by the decision about the consequences of choosing the wrong model, namely, financial, such a high-fidelity initiative needs the support of executive leaders through the journey. For this to happen, the cloud program must demonstrate success at regular intervals. Getting the stamp of approval from the leaders while running the already complex initiative will demand massive efforts. Thus, the availability of the right talent to see the program through is a big concern given the inadequate levels of required skills and resources.

In conclusion, companies have a host of factors that must be moved into the strategy when considering cloud transformation. Underpinning such a complicated endeavor requires concerted efforts followed by solid understanding and a skilled team. However, a successful cloud journey can be the catalyst to create an advanced IT environment and take on digital transformation to be able to support business goals fully. ■

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