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Welcome to the very first issue of Asian Channels, MediaBUZZ Pte Ltd's very own e-InfoSource, a guide for innovative technology channels.

As channels become increasingly more and more important to businesses and channel relationships shift and change, there is an increasing need to cover the various channels through relevant news, information and features. Asian Channels will strive to grow with the channel and be its constant companion.

We want to serve you better and provide you with what you need and want.

If you have any suggestions or comments, please do email me at [shanti@mediabuzz.com.sg](mailto:shanti@mediabuzz.com.sg).



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## Mobileway establishes its global hub in Singapore

Mobileway has set up its global hub operations in Singapore, with a total investment of S\$15 million within the next three years. The hub will serve as the nerve centre for developing and deploying next generation mobile application platforms and campaigns, reaching out to over 90% of global mobile users and creating opportunities for Singapore-based companies to launch their innovative applications globally.

Mr. Ko Kheng Hwa, managing director, Economic Development Board notes, "Mobileway's move to locate its global hub in Singapore is a big boost to our rapidly growing mobile Internet industry. It will bring both mobile Internet applications and content from all over the world to Singapore and from Singapore to the world. It will also help local and foreign mobile content providers and application developers export their products and services to the global market."



Photo: Russ Shaw

Russ Shaw, CEO of Mobileway explained that Singapore was chosen as the company's global hub because of its excellent communications infrastructure, highly skilled workforce and the government's proactive support to the infocomms industry. To drive the company further forward, Mobileway has streamlined its business into two key focus areas:

### Global Network Services

Operating globally out of Singapore with smaller regional hubs located in Paris and the US, its emphasis is on expanding SMS and MMS interconnect opportunities with network operators across the world as well as settlement

services over the company's global infrastructure.

### Full Services

Focusing on driving value-added services with an emphasis on revenue-share/premium business in mobile marketing for the FMCG; it provides mobile interactive solutions for TV networks and production companies; and mobile entertainment delivery for record labels, movie studios, mobile game providers and many more.

Mobileway achieved over US\$55 million revenues in its financial year ending March 2004, of which the Asia Pacific contributed 25%. With its new Singapore global hub, the company's Asia Pacific revenue contribution is expected to increase to 50%.

Some of its key customers locally and regionally include the National Kidney Foundation Singapore, CNN Asia, MSN Mobile Asia, StarHub, Celador International and Sony Pictures.

By Shanti Anne Morais

## HDS signs on new platinum partner

Acer has joined Hitachi Data Systems' TrueNorth Channel Partner Program's elite tier as a Regional Platinum Solutions Partner. The three-year agreement will see Acer marketing, selling and supporting the Hitachi Thunder 9500 V Series modular storage systems in addition to third party products in Asia Pacific markets including Australia, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and Taiwan.

Acer will promote the Hitachi Thunder family of storage

systems through its local channel partners. The agreement sees Acer also becoming a Partner Authorized Service Provider in each of the participating countries. All Acer partners who complete the training process will be certified to provide installation and configuration of HDS' solutions. According to Acer officials, the new partnership will enable Acer to deliver a "truly complete and open SAN solution for Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs)." Adds Martin Darling, senior director of channels in Asia Pacific and Latin America, HDS, "We see tremendous opportunity for growth within the SME

marketplace as more and more enterprise applications become available on the Windows operating system, including e-mail which is as ubiquitous as office stationery."

HDS is heating up its channel development in the Asia Pacific, with plans to invest US\$10 million in its channels in the region, bolstering and strengthening its reseller network here. Presently, HDS has a total of 200 partners worldwide, with around 75% in the Asia-Pacific.

By Shanti Anne Morais

## IBM leads in the new era of supercomputing

An independent study has named IBM the world's leading provider of both installed supercomputing systems, with 224 systems on the list and total aggregate supercomputing power with a record total of 407 teraflops of power (trillions of calculations per second).

According to analysis from the TOP500 List of Supercomputers, IBM is the leader in global supercomputing with 50% of the total processing power in the world – two and a half times more processing power than its closest rival, runner up Hewlett Packard, who holds 19%.

Two IBM Blue Gene/L prototype systems have appeared on the Top 10 list of supercomputers, for the very first time. The Blue Gene/L prototype represents a radical new design for

supercomputing. At 1/20<sup>th</sup> the physical size of existing machines of comparable power, the Blue Gene/L enables reductions in power consumption, cost and space requires for businesses that require immense computing power.

"By giving users access to innovative, affordable and flexible supercomputing power like Blue Gene and the Deep Computing Capacity on Demand Center, they will have new resources to drive breakthroughs in business, science and industry," says Dave Turek, vice president, Deep Computing, IBM. He adds, "Whether we are talking about improving the accuracy of weather forecasts, designing better automobiles or improving disease research, we are seeing the advent of a new super-computing age."



*Photo: Blue Gene/L DDI prototype supercomputer with Curt Mathiowetz, Blue Gene/L project manager*

The "Top500 List of Supercomputing Sites" is compiled and published by supercomputing experts Jack Dongarra from the University of Tennessee, Erich Strohmaier and Horst Simon of NERSC/Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and Hans Meur of the University of Mannheim, Germany.

*By Shanti Anne Morais*

## Trends and Statistics

Asian Channels – July 2004

### Australian backlash on offshore outsourcing surprising

Australia should not expect to become a mass supplier in offshore outsourcing and compete against low-cost and high-skilled nations like India, says Gartner analyst Partha Iyengar.

Elaborating, he says, "Australia needs a different approach to meet the challenges of global competition in the software development sector and should concentrate on winning offshore work for higher-end, creative projects from other Western economies."

Some points he suggest that Australia consider include:

- Building business continuity and secure facilities

- Exploiting secure software development status with the United States
- Developing vertical and niche software solutions
- Building partnerships with global software and service leaders
- Deliver consulting and services to growing Asian economies

The value of software development going offshore will more than double from its present US\$19 billion to US\$50 billion in the next three years, predicts Iyengar. He adds, "Offshore outsourcing is here to stay in India. I do not believe this type of work will be wound back in Australia, the United States and Western Europe."

Gartner market estimates refute arguments that offshore outsourcing has reached epidemic proportions. In fact, its analysts estimate that currently, only

1.6% of the global US\$580 billion outsourcing market goes offshore.

Gartner slices outsourcing models into four segments:

**On-site:** Keeping application development and testing in-house;

**On-shore:** Sending work to an outside agency in the same country

**Near-shore:** Using lower-cost operators in countries of close proximity, such as American firms using Canadian or Mexican developers, and

**Offshore:** Employing any company in the world that can produce the desired quality at the right price. Amongst the prime destinations for this type of engagement are countries like India, the Philippines, China and South America.

## Web Usage survey reveals 75% accidentally see porn at work

A joint survey conducted by Cerberian, a provider of Web filtering solutions and SonicWALL, a provider of integrated security, has revealed that 75% of people have accidentally visited a pornographic website at work, and 15% have visited such sites more than 10 times.

The survey also reported that 50% of respondents spent more than 10% of their time at work surfing the Web for personal reasons, which is roughly equal to four hours per week.

Held in April, the survey drew more than 2,400 respondents, and covered everything from Internet access policies, to personal surfing habits at work and feelings about co-workers surfing habits. The results reveal that the Internet is still a relatively unmonitored medium with 60% of the respondents indicating that their organizations do not have rules against personal Web surfing at work. Also, more than 50% of organizations have not implemented any type of Internet filtering technology.

According to the survey, the most common ways people have accidentally reached pornographic content on the Web are:

- a) Pop up windows (55%)
- b) Misrepresented links (52%)
- c) Misspelled URLs (48%), and
- d) Auto links within emails (23%)

The following was also reported:

- 16% of people have knowingly surfed pornography sites at work at least once
- 40% have seen co-workers surfing porn sites
- 32% of people have seen co-workers surf gambling sites
- 91% have seen people shopping online; and
- 85% have seen co-workers surfing sports-related web sites.

The survey also asked how people felt after seeing co-workers surf these websites – 68% were bothered by pornography surfing, with 47% bothered enough to confront the offender or mention it to management/human resources, while 59% were offended by gambling surfing, 35% by shopping online and 29% by sports surfing.

Both Cerberian and SonicWALL warn that besides the obvious loss of productivity and security issues, unmonitored Internet access raises potential liability issues for organizations especially when it comes to employees being exposed to pornography at the office and employees using corporate resources to download, store and exchange copyrighted material.

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## More Singapore companies embracing Web Services

Web Services in Singapore is on a definite upward swing, generating infocomm revenue, creating jobs and developing manpower. The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore's (IDA's) latest survey on Infocomm usage in businesses reveals that 12% of enterprises surveyed are now deploying Web Services, compared to 8% last year.

As testimony to this, since the launch of IDA's Web Services Add Value to Enterprises (WEAVE) program last year, 45 companies have embarked on a total of 26 Web Services projects, in diverse industries

such as lifestyle and entertainment, banking and insurance, high-tech manufacturing, logistics, retail and distribution as well as healthcare.

These 45 companies expect to commercialize their solutions to generate S\$125 million in infocomm revenue over the next two years. A total of S\$32.9 million has been jointly invested by the industry (S\$23.9 million) and IDA (S\$9 million) in these 26 projects. The joint investment is part of the overall S\$120 million committed in 2003 by the industry (S\$80 million) and IDA (S\$40 million) for the three-year WEAVE effort.

Local companies who have taken part in this initiative include Gridnode, an enterprise businessware provider and software companies Ecquaria and Synergix. According to the IDA, companies here that are embracing Web Services are looking beyond company-centric to more industry-wide deployment which optimizes the potential of the technology. So far, some 269 professionals have been certified through formal CITREP-endorsed courses.

WEAVE's target is to certify 600 by 2006. Currently, 130 new jobs, mainly in the area of system developers, business analysts and project management have been created under the program.

*By Shanti Anne Morais*

### The art of establishing indirect channels

The benefits of indirect selling are obvious. An additional route to new markets, low additional costs, breaking through language barriers more easily, not having to deal with customers, are just the tip of the iceberg. The important question as more and more companies take the route of indirect selling is how one ensures that channel partnerships are a driver of growth instead of a drain of resources?

#### Plan to achieve success instead of just hoping for it.

Nothing can substitute a well-thought strategy. Always work hard to understand who, how, when, where and the whys of working with channel partners and their different marketplaces.

#### Ensure you know and understand your target audience.

Very often, we tend to overlook the obvious but how else do you make the right decision about which partners you should invest time and money in unless you know your target audience? Be forewarned, unless a business understands this fundamental point, it will always be dependent on other companies making the decisions for it. The bottom-line is to be in control of your own destiny.

#### Understand your target audience's behavior.

Understanding customers' behavior is always vital. Some basic points to take note of are their buying patterns, who they trust and who and where they tend to buy similar or complimentary products from.

#### Create value for your customers

Very often, many companies have the mistaken idea that working through channel partners can substitute understanding the end-customers. Always remember that a genuine customer understanding should be at the heart of an effective channel strategy, not an alternative to it." Without properly understanding how your product or service creates value for the end-customer, for example by saving them money, making them more productive, increasing their sales and so on, you make it harder to construct an effective channel strategy.

#### Understand what solution you are becoming a part of.

Companies that operate in B2B markets usually only provide a part of a complete solution, even those who claim to be total solution providers. Inevitably, these 'total solutions' need to interact and integrate with other solutions in order to be useful to a customer. Therefore, understanding which 'value system' you are becoming a part of and who the other players in it are, can help identify potential partners that one can build profitable relationships with.

#### Know what the customer stands to gain.

New channel initiatives are often driven by an internal focus which is basically how a company can sell more and become more profitable. However, if there is no benefit for the customer, then it is highly unlikely to deliver successful results. A key question that one should always remember – How does my product/services make my customer's life easier/better/less expensive? If a channel partner does not in some way

make your solution more compelling or easier to buy, then how will this partner make your company more successful?

#### Always bear in mind what your company stands for.

In order for any business partnership to be successful, the organizations involved need to be compatible both on an internal as well as external level. Internal refers to the organizations' values and culture, while external refers to competitive strategy, market positioning and brand values. For example, if a company positions itself in the market as a premium-quality player, then it makes no sense at all to partner and sell through a company whose key focus is on being the lowest-cost provider.

#### Know what drives your channel partners' business.

Once you know which partners you want to work with, you need to persuade them not only to work with you, but more importantly, to put real effort and resources behind supporting your product and service. Signing up partners is always the easiest part. It is getting them to deliver real business that is a lot more difficult. Always think of your channel partners in the same way you view your key customers. The key to motivate them is to properly understand what drives their business and then articulate how you will make them more successful. In this way, your company becomes strategically important to them.

There is absolutely nothing new or extraordinary in these points but taking time to consider them will pay dividends when it comes to achieving a successful indirect channel strategy.

*Condensed from an article by Phil Brown, founder of Primesense Ltd*

### BMW concentrates on effective collaborative strategies

Managing of partner networks is a very “hot and highly debated topic” nowadays. However, despite its compelling benefits, it is a fact that many companies still do not view their suppliers as a source of competitive advantage. The BMW Group has a different approach. It has discovered that SRM tools can be implemented to reduce the total costs of ownership (TCO) for procured goods, while creating competitive advantage for the organization through deeper relationships with its suppliers. It understands that this assures both growth as well as competitiveness. Working together with their suppliers at an early stage and in a coordinated manner, BMW’s approach of “mutual success from innovations all the way to spare parts”, shows the extent the Group goes in order to implement its partner networks and collaborative strategies.

#### Development and Management of Partner Networks

The success of the BMW Group is a reflection of not only its successful ability of having attractive and highly saleable products coupled with good internal sales and production performance, but very importantly, the company’s good relationship and collaboration with its suppliers. BMW is aware that their goals can only be achieved by means of a consequent management of partner networks meeting the respective requirements regarding products, costs, and quality.

From the 1980s, BMW had begun transferring a large spectrum of activities to the suppliers. The company aims to give their suppliers even greater freedom of action as well as responsibilities in the future. Through this shift of responsibilities, the development depth has been reduced from 70% to 45% in the last 15 years, while the production depth has been reduced from 40% to 30%. One reason for this is due to the growing expertise of the supplier market as many of them offer development and the production of complete modules as system partners. BMW on the other hand focuses on the development in the areas of its core competences.

From a development point of view, the BMW Group prepares a portfolio of product attributes, in which they define which areas they would like to be different from their competitors. Based on this, suppliers then also make a portfolio concerning their core competencies of the development area, helping BMW to keep the right things in-house. From a production point of view, pressure is increased on the in-house production through external competitors in order to drive internal investment costs into profitable as well as innovative production systems. The decreasing amount of in-house development and production depth is the result not only of an increase in collaboration, but also in dependencies between suppliers and OEMs. The size, structure and diversity of BMW suppliers lead to novel business

connections which have become more multifaceted and linked.

#### From Hierarchy to Networks

BMW realized that a proper SRM is inevitable for smooth procurement operations, and thus developed partner networks together with their suppliers. Its industry is maturing from a hierarchical power-orientation via a bigger project-orientation, to a clear partner system orientation.

“Advanced Purchasing” takes an even further step as purchasers mature from a bilateral relation-manager to a network-manager, thereby controlling all temporal and content-based aspects regarding the development, management, design and closure of networks. What is absolutely necessary here is to simultaneously establish or maintain the balancing act between “cooperation” and “competition”. Additional drivers for the network approach were added pressure of competition and the ever growing range of products, the creation and industrialization of innovations focusing on core competencies, and the efficient implementation of resources, the orientation on consumer benefits, efficiency and acceleration of processes, internationalization, taking advantage of scale effects, and the reduction of fixed and variable costs. The advantages of partner networks are flexibility, agility, fast-reaction time, and the ability to grasp innovations early.

*Based on a Presentation by Roger Stadler, Director Purchasing SEA & Australia, BMW Group Asia at the Auto Logistics & SCM World Asia 2004, Bangkok, 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> of June 2004*

## Profile

### Playing the globalization game

Infosys Technologies Ltd has certainly proven itself to be a global player. The company was ranked number one in the 3Q03 Professional Services Business Quarterly (PSBQ) Benchmark by Technology Business Research Inc. (TBR) and its business model has also found a place in marketing research group, META's METASpectrum Report for the TOP IT Outsourcing Vendors in North America.



A world leader in consulting and information technology services, the company partners with Global 200 companies, providing them with business consulting, systems integration, application development and product engineering services.

In an exclusive interview with Asian Channels, Mr. S. Gopalakrishnan, chief operating officer, Infosys, spoke at length about the Indian software industry and the business model and strategy the company is adopting.

**Q: How do you view the Indian software industry this year and how does Infosys fit in?**

A: Last year's trends clearly reveal that outsourcing has become a global habit and India, the global outsourcing destination.

2004 is and will be a very competitive year as Indian companies become more active and competitive, and global companies open their centers in India. These are clearly exciting times for the Indian software industry.

Infosys went through a major restructuring exercise towards the end of 2003, which included creating vertical business units, empowering our managers, putting in place a high performance work ethic, and undergoing our maiden acquisition. We are definitely aware of increased competition flooding the Indian market. However, the fundamental strength of our business model, coupled with the key strategic decisions we have taken, will enable us to not only handle the competition, but also continue to lead the market.

**Q: What is Infosys strategy for this year?**

A: At the beginning of this year, we held many internal strategy sessions where we communicated our strategy and got our teams involved in planning for the future. Everyone here is now looking forward to actually putting these thoughts into practice. We will focus on bolstering our market reputation, and ensure that we continue to be at the bleeding edge of technology and solution offerings for our clients.

Our vision is to build a global corporation providing best in class solutions by best-in class people. As we move towards becoming a billion dollar corporation, we are developing the capability to offer end-to-end solutions from consulting to implementation. To ensure that we achieve this, we have introduced new services such as

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IT Consulting, Package Implementation, Systems Integration (SI) and Business Process Outsourcing. We have teams working to extend the power of the Global Delivery Model (GDM) to these new services.

We will continue to redefine our position as a global partner to all our clients and provide them with best-of-breed solutions. We will also focus on providing our employees with additional opportunities, thereby increasing the number of options open to individuals to progress within the company. With our solutions-driven strategy mandate, the new Infosys will create an environment conducive for vertical specialization and cross-functional expertise. We are also increasing our focus on local recruitment in all the markets we operate in, so our workforce will truly be a global and multicultural group.

**Q: Do you see a major shift in terms of pricing and focusing on new segments?**

A: We have seen pricing and margins stabilizing over the last few quarters. Our new business structure sees the setting up of seven verticals or Integrated Business Units. These include:

- 1) Communication Service Providers
- 2) Insurance, Healthcare and Life Sciences
- 3) Energy, Resources and Utilities
- 4) Transportation and Services
- 5) Banking and Capital Markets
- 6) High Tech and Discrete Manufacturing
- 7) Retail, Distribution and CPG (Pilot IBU complemented by the above six)

The above units will integrate the best intellectual assets from the previous structure into decentralized units allowing it to

be more responsive to market needs.

We also recently announced our initiatives in the field of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), enabling customers to harness the supply chain optimization that this technology provides, including advanced product tracking and greater inventory control. We will continue to identify segments based on customer feedback and trends that we see in the marketplace.

**Q:** Experts are pointing out that major growth will now come from Products rather than Services. Will Infosys put greater emphasis on product building and marketing in the coming years?

**A:** Infosys is a services company and will continue to focus on building our strengths in this business. We see significant opportunity in this sector and will continue moving up the value chain by offering new services that will help our clients better their business. The IT product business is a different game altogether. It is a high margin, high risk business and requires a completely different business model and set of skills altogether.

Infosys does have a division called the Banking Business Unit that has developed and marketed a highly successful suite of banking products called Finacle.

**Q: Many software companies are in the acquisition and merger mode. Do you see Infosys following suit?**

**A:** At Infosys, we have always believed that growth needs to be both organic as well as

inorganic. We believe that the right kind of acquisitions can help us build our business and achieve growth in a strategic manner. We look at acquisitions that can complement our business as well as function as a "face" to the customer in different geographies.

In December 2003, we announced the acquisition of Expert Information Services Pty Limited, Australia. While we saw a commonality in the service offerings of the two companies, we also shared similar value propositions in quality, value and speed to market, common market interests and a joint commitment to a business model that supports a strong, local presence with global backing.

The strength of our newly combined talent pool and dedication to delivering innovative business solutions will greatly benefit the Australian market and provide offshore opportunities for the Australian business and its employees.

**Q: What kind of competition do you envisage from domestic and international players in the coming months?**

**A:** We expect competition to be intense. We foresee more global companies choosing to come to India, others expanding in Bangalore or in other parts of India. However, we do not see any adverse impact on our business. I believe that Infosys' resilient business model combined with its ability to forecast and stay ahead of trends will help strengthen our

position. One possible impact could be on employee salaries and compensation. Infosys has converted part of its compensation into variable pay and we expect this will help us manage compensation increases better.

**Q: What are your expansion plans?**

**A:** We will continue to look for ways to catapult us beyond the billion dollar mark.

Our recent acquisition of Expert reaffirms our commitment to this market. Our Global Delivery Model combined with the service capabilities of Expert will enable us to be a premier player in the growing Australian market.

Infosys has also incorporated its wholly owned subsidiary in the People's Republic of China. The setting up of the software development center for 200 professionals in Shanghai is progressing well. The China subsidiary will be offering end-to-end software services to domestic as well as multinational companies operating in China. It will also serve as a hub for software services in the Asia Pacific region.

On top of this, Infosys has diversified its focus in the global marketplace and has identified Europe and the Asia-Pacific as areas for further growth. The company has opened Proximity Development Centers (PDCs) in the United States and the UK, and Global Development Centers (GDCs) in Canada and Australia. We have also recently opened a Disaster Recovery Center in Mauritius.

*By Priya Darshini*

## Appointments

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- **TruSecure**, a provider of intelligent risk management products and services has named **Chy Chuawiwat** as business development director, Asia Pacific. Based in Sydney, Chy's primary responsibilities include managing TruSecure's channel partners and developing business in Australia, New Zealand, South East Asia and North Asia.
- Software company **MapInfo Corporation**, has made two recent appointments aimed at strengthening its regional marketing team in the Asia Pacific. **Geraldine Yeo** is the company's new channel marketing manager, South East Asia and **Vivien Zhang** is marketing specialist, North Asia. Both Yeo and Zhang will offer increased marketing support to MapInfo's partners in the region.
- **Kristian Tear**, previously head of Ericsson Germany, Austria and Switzerland, will be heading **Ericsson's South East Asian operations** from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2004. Assuming the role of president of Ericsson South East Asia and country manager for Ericsson Malaysia, Tear takes over the position from Mats H Olsson, who is moving on to the role of president of Ericsson China. Tear's appointment is timely especially since South East Asian countries are beginning their roll-out of 3G networks this year, starting with Singapore and Malaysia, followed by Indonesia. According to Olsson, Tear's 3G experience in Europe will be invaluable for Ericsson's customers in South East Asia. Tear notes that South East Asia presents a new set of challenges for him because of the mix of advanced and emerging markets in the region, unlike the mature markets of the three European markets previously under his helm. He recognizes that while his experience will benefit Ericsson's 3G customers in South East Asia, a key focus of his will be on helping customers tap into new and potentially high-growth markets in the region, in the most cost-effective way.
- **Andrew Tay** has joined **Symbol Technologies**, an Enterprise Mobility company, as its regional director for South Asia. Tay is responsible for developing and growing Symbol's business in Korea, India and the South East Asia region. Prior to joining Symbol, Tay spent six years as regional director of Linksys Asia, where he was instrumental in helping position the company as a Top 5 Wireless Networking brand.

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