

A man in a black suit and white shirt, seen from behind, stands on a dark asphalt path that stretches from the foreground into the distance. He is holding a black briefcase in his right hand. The path is flanked by blue water. In the background, a city skyline with various skyscrapers is visible. Above the city, a large, glowing globe is superimposed on the sky, with white lines representing a network or data connections. The overall scene is set against a bright, slightly hazy sky.

*All Roads
Lead to
Cloud*

According to MarketsandMarkets, the cloud computing technology in the Middle East is expected to grow to \$2404.5 million by 2020. It is also predicted to be the highest growth areas within the IT segment. Today, enterprises are aware of the advantages of utilizing IaaS, PaaS, SaaS in a hybrid IT strategy as opposed to building their own on premise solutions. Organizations are keen to shed off the CAPEX models and shift to OPEX.

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When we sit down to write an article on the Cloud market and trends in the Middle East region, it is quite apprehensive a fact that BYOD, emails, cloud hosting etc have been present for more than a decade or two now, what changes the course of cloud solutions is the complexity of the networks that pushes the cloud service providers to do more with less and provide more for less.

While analysts have been predicting a cloud roar in the Middle East, the region has only recently shown signs that it is really ready to embrace the technology. According to reports, by 2019, Middle East and Africa will have the world's highest cloud traffic growth rate at 41%.

SERVICE ALL THE WAY

While the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is poised to be the biggest investor in the cloud infrastructure in terms of regional standings, the BFSI sector is all set for a big leap in this domain when it comes to sector breakdown. Hybrid cloud infrastructure is already a common pattern at several large enterprises and IDC predicts that 80% of IT organizations will be committed to hybrid architectures by 2018. Clearly, a significant part of this growth is being spurred by the rising number of data centers being built locally. "Infrastructure-as-a-Service helps organizations re-allocate their time and resources, by making their IT infrastructure smarter and more flexible. Cloud adoption in the Middle East is growing significantly as enterprises are seeing tremendous value in having a scalable and flexible pool of resources at their fingertips" said Yasser Zeineldin, CEO, eHosting DataFort.

WALKING ON THIRD PLATFORM

Cloud services are at the heart of the third



"eHosting DataFort is the first company in the Middle East to achieve the CSA STAR Certification and we were awarded the Gold rating"

-YASSER ZEINELDIN,
CEO, EHOSTING DATAFORT



"Cloud service providers should ensure proper data isolation and logical storage segregation to mitigate risks"

-AYMAN ALBAYAA
CEO, STME

platform. IDC believes that by 2020, 40 % of the \$5 trillion IT spending will be driven by third-platform technologies. "Leveraging dense ecosystems of network, cloud and IT service providers can help with cloud integration by enabling more direct interconnection to a rich choice of cloud migration services and providers" said Jeroen Schlosser, managing director, Equinix MENA.

PRIVATE IT IS!

Comparatively, the growing software, systems and processes, narrow budgets and a cultural resistance to change have set the government sector years behind its private sector counterparts in cloud adoption. "Slowly, but surely, a technology revolution is taking place within the government sector. Greater standardization, improved SLAs,

and a clearer procurement guideline are the demands from government agencies for cloud adoption." said Arun Sridhar, Regional Service Delivery Manager, Emitac.IaaS has given government agencies access to network, hardware, data center resources and operating systems which is helping them to build their own web platform, manage it, and run it.

ALL BOILS DOWN TO SECURITY

Experts believe that as the cloud manifestation and the services at disposal reaches new heights in the region, the consistency of security policies and data security capability will be more critical for cloud operators and cloud users alike. The concern around security still exists persistently in the Government, Banking and Hospital



“We have developed our offering around speed, simplicity, reliability, and customization and have three cloud contact center solutions”

-MOHAMED AFIFI,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, GENESYS
MIDDLE EAST



“Focus’ suite of solutions is cloud enabled and mobility compliant”

-SUNIL MATHEW,
COO, FOCUS SOFTNET



“Organizations need to understand the challenges and the solution offered before migrating to the cloud”

-STEPHEN FERNANDES,
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,
TRANSYS SOLUTIONS

ADVICE

CIO's



- Convert CAPEX to OPEX; reduce costs
- Migrate from licensing & maintenance of traditional IT software to the 'Cloud'
- Train resources for digital transformation and cloud migration
- Move from a private cloud deployment to a hybrid cloud deployment

PARTNERS



- Must look to position themselves as 'enablers' to cloud migration
- Partners & vendors must also look to establish the right mix of strategic relationships
- Need to position themselves as trusted advisors
- Cloud offerings are all about partnership between multiple channels and service providers

sectors which stores high personal information. Cloud providers are now running weekly or monthly vulnerability scans for their government customers that show any attacks or indicators of potential attacks against information systems,

plus other key metrics. “Cloud service providers should ensure proper data isolation and logical storage segregation to mitigate risks” said Ayman Albayaa, CEO, STME. “Organizations need to understand the challenges

and the solution offered before migrating to the cloud.” said Stephen Fernandes, Executive Vice President, Transys Solutions. “We have a team of Security Analysts who monitor the environment on a 24/7 basis for log collection, real-time threat monitoring & management, vulnerability and device management” said Yasser Zeineldin.

LET THERE BE NO BORDERS

Through the adoption of cloud technology, organizations have become virtual and less reliant on asset ownership in order to focus on their key strengths. “With cloud adoption, the usage of applications across borders and getting services from far remote place has become a reality. This ensures more robust integrated systems and faster service response than ever” said Sunil Mathew, COO, Focus Softnet. Enterprises of all sizes are seizing opportunities to reduce supply costs, invest into new resource pools and access new markets internationally. “As we move forward and evolve, we see many more technologies becoming cloud based, IoT is a prime example of this” said Fahad Al Hajeri, CEO, Yvolv.

While earlier they needed to have a physical data centre presence, today, they can leverage the cloud in new markets, deploy applications and workloads and deliver or consume services without being physically present. This enables



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-ARUN SRIDHAR,
REGIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGER, EMITAC.



“Hybrid and multi-cloud integration and management are often considered hurdles in initial cloud deployment”

-JEROEN SCHLOSSER,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, EQUINIX MENA



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COMPANY	SOLUTIONS
EHDF	Hosted private cloud - Flexibility to choose between Managed and Unmanaged Private Cloud Hosting Services Public cloud - Online store allows users to customize and purchase Public Cloud servers in less than 15 minutes
EMITAC	Offers IaaS, PaaS and SaaS at the base level. Also offers IoT, Analytics, cloud consulting, cloud migration services.
EQUINIX	Performance Hub - ensures network optimization besides cloud connectivity and security - all in a single rack Data Hub - large storage repository to enable secure storage of content in adherence to compliance & regulatory requirements Cloud Exchange - virtual port that enables you to realize hybrid / multi cloud architectures and connect to multiple cloud providers at the click of a button.
TRANSYS	Is an Oracle Platinum Cloud Select Partner. Offers SaaS, PaaS and IaaS across ERP, HCM, CxM, SCM, EPM and BI by leveraging best of breed solutions from Oracle Cloud
GENESYS	PureCloud: features include Omni-channel routing, speech-enabled interactive voice response, recording and quality management, outbound campaigns, CRM integrations, graphical scripting, and unified communications and collaboration capabilities. PureConnect: enables monitoring and end-to-end reporting to ensure quality across all channels PureEngage: - provides real-time contextual journeys, world-class intelligent routing, and digital transformation at any scale.
FOCUSOFTNET	Offers our customers enterprise applications such as our ERP, healthcare applications. ERP has 2 main features covered; Accessibility on Android/Blackberry/iPhone interface and cloud based subscription model.
YVOLV	Cloud, Managed Services, Digital transformation, System Integration and Consultancy.

them to sell or consume more across boundaries without dependencies ensuring the realization of a borderless enterprise.

SHAKING HAND WITH THE RIGHT PARTNERS

Cloud partners have concerns around account management, marketing support and cloud performance when working with cloud vendors. As channel partners transition to offering cloud services, many discover that this shift comes with a set of uniquely different vendor-partner dynamics. These dynamics change the way partners manage business relationships with their vendors, as well as with their customers. “Cloud offerings are all about partnership between multiple channels and service providers to ensure that the best options are offered to the end-user. The cloud business would grow and enhance channel business” said Sunil Mathew.

FINALLY

Many organizations have not only availed expected benefits from the adoption of cloud but have had those expectations exceeded which shows how valuable a proposition cloud computing is to enterprises. As a result of successful cloud adoption so far, many respondents say that their organization is looking to implement cloud computing more extensively over the next few years. 