

# THE IT CROWD

To coincide with GITEX Technology Week 2011, *Network Middle East* has compiled the definitive list of the most important executives working at the biggest IT vendors in the region

Striking a close relationship with your IT vendor in the Middle East is vital. Whether this be through the provider directly, or via a channel partner, it is crucial that each vendor is aware of the unique requirements of each client, and what is expected of them over the course of a project.

Some may argue that in the Middle East, where many

vendors' presence is restricted to a sales outpost, it is more achievable than anywhere else to strike that relationship with the individual who is truly running the show.

To this end, *Network Middle East's* experts have compiled the definitive list of who we think are the key people at some of the most conspicuous networking providers in the region. Remember, it is not what you know, but who you know.



**NAME: ZAKIR LOKARE**  
**ROLE: REGIONAL SALES DIRECTOR**  
**COMPANY: MERU NETWORKS**

US-based Meru Networks is a company that has achieved a lot in a short space of time. Since its founding in 2002, the wireless LAN specialist has exploded into more than 54 national markets, signing up around 4,500 or so customers along the way.

During Lokare's reign at the company, he has excelled at developing both customer and channel partner relationships, as well as expanding Meru's footprint in the Middle East.

Lokare's success in running Meru Networks' regional operation was recognised at 2011's Network Middle East Innovation Awards, where his company collected the accolade of Best Wireless Networking Range of the Year.



**NAME: VIPIN SHARMA**  
**ROLE: VP SALES, MEA AND CIS**  
**COMPANY: TRIPP LITE**

Prior to joining power management specialist Tripp Lite 15 years ago, sales VP Vipin Sharma accumulated a wealth of experience at companies including Wipro and Seven Seas Computers.

During his tenure with Tripp Lite, Sharma has established a robust sales and service network across the region, as well as a logistics and operations hub capable of supporting business over three continents.

Some of Tripp Lite's most notable clients in the region are EMAAR Properties, Air Arabia, Abu Dhabi Police, Al Jazeera and Qatar Foundation.



**NAME: SHAHNAWAZ SHEIKH**  
**ROLE: REGIONAL DIRECTOR, MEA**  
**COMPANY: SONICWALL**

In 13 years of technology sales and channels, SonicWall's Shahnawaz Sheikh has notched up considerable experience in fields including networking, messaging, data centre and information security.

Before Shiekh joined SonicWall, he was instrumental in the successful launch of digital KVM vendor Avocent in Saudi Arabia.

In the two years following his arrival at SonicWall in 2004, Sheikh accrued increasingly responsibility including marketing, sales, promotion and channel development. Some of the key partnerships he has established in the region include Saudi Arabian Airlines, Gulf Air, Qatar Gas and Jacky's Electronics.

12

**NAME: WAEL EL KABBANY**  
**ROLE: MENA MD**  
**COMPANY: BT GLOBAL SERVICES**

Some of Wael El Kabbany's biggest achievements since taking the helm at BT Global Services' regional operation include the successful launch of a major supplier cost optimisation programme, in addition to negotiating deals with major new clients.

In his time, El Kabbany has also significantly grown revenue year-over-year.

Among BT's key customers in the region are Etisalat, Saudi telco STC, UAE airline Emirates, HSBC and NASDAQ Dubai.



11

**NAME: JOHNNY KARAM**  
**ROLE: REGIONAL DIRECTOR, MEA**  
**COMPANY: SYMANTEC**

Symantec regional director Johnny Karam has arguably been the key player behind the security and storage vendor's fast growth in recent years. While Karam has been at the wheel, the US firm has successfully increased its revenue, staff count and brand reach.

During his time at Symantec, Karam has also established himself as a thought leader across the Middle East's print and broadcast media, and helped articulate the vendor's range of security, storage and systems management solutions.

Symantec's more prestigious customer in MEA include Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi and Etisalat Misr.



# 10

**NAME: RICHARD JONKER**  
**ROLE: MANAGING DIRECTOR, EMERGING MARKETS**  
**COMPANY: NETGEAR**

Richard Jonker joined SMB networking specialist Netgear in 2007, originally handling sales in Belgium and the Netherlands. Prior to this, Jonker gained key experience in roles at well-known brands including Apple and Acer.

In his current position, he is responsible for sales activity across a host of emerging markets territories including Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe, South-East Asia, India and Russia.



Some of Jonker's key skills are business development, relationship building and channel marketing strategies, as well as identifying key trends and demands in regional IT markets.

# 9

**NAME: LIONEL REINA**  
**ROLE: VP, EEMEA**  
**COMPANY: ORANGE BUSINESS SERVICES**

Under VP Lionel Reina's stewardship, managed services provider Orange Business Services has launched regional offerings including IPTV and signed up blockbuster customers like Orbit Showtime Network.

Reina's other notable achievements include leading the re-branding of Orange

from its previous guise of France Telecom in the Middle East, and building the vendor's regional presence to its current size of 2,500 employees across territories such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Egypt.

He has also intensified the company's focus on Smart City projects around the region, and signed up other high profile customers like Turkish multinational OYAK, Lebanese realtor Solidere, as well as supermarket brand Carrefour and United Arab Shipping.



# 8

**NAME: YASSER ZEINELDIN**  
**ROLE: CEO**  
**COMPANY: EHOSTING DATAFORT**

Under the leadership of Zeineldin, TECOM Investments-owned eHosting DataFort has grown into one of the region's most prominent managed hosting providers, while improving value and reducing total cost of ownership for its customers.

Since taking over the reins at eHDF, the company has achieved milestones such as industry standard certifications like ISO and ITIL.

Some of the customers Zeineldin works with include Dubai e-Government, the UAE Ministry of Public Works, Forbes Middle East and du.

At this year's Network Middle East Innovation Awards, eHDF was given the accolade for Best Managed Service Provider.



# 7

**NAME: MARK LEWIS**  
**ROLE: SENIOR DIRECTOR, MARKETING AND ALLIANCES, EMEA**  
**COMPANY: RIVERBED TECHNOLOGY**

WAN optimisation has been one of the hottest trends in enterprise IT in recent years, with US vendor Riverbed Technology one of its biggest proponents.

One of the figures behind this success is Mark Lewis, who since joining the company in 2005 has helped transform it from a venture capital-backed start-up to a publically-listed networking heavyweight. In EMEA alone, Riverbed now rakes in around \$147 million per year, or 29% of its total revenues.

Before joining Riverbed, Lewis spent a number of years in marketing and systems engineering roles for well-known enterprise brands like EMC, Sun Microsystems and BT.

