Driving the transformation focus

Inaugural Smart SMB Summit & Awards promotes digital transformation awareness with DED support

HOW ADOPTING AND CHOOSING THE RIGHT CLOUD SOLUTIONS ARE ESSENTIAL TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The panel discussion on cloud addressed some of the issues such as if a customer needs to move to cloud in a phased approach, the co-relation of being cloud enabled to digital transformation and so on.

The panelists for the discussion on cloud solutions included Deepak Verma, CEO, Wannago, Ali Shabdar, Evangelist, ZOHO, Yasser Zeineldin, CEO, eHosting DataFort, Mohamed Gamal, IT Director, Al Zahra Hospital and Ali Kassab, CEO – Centurion & Co

According to Ali Kassab, CEO – Centurion & Co, cloud is key to embracing Blockchain, which can fix a lot of challenges and improve processes, certify and authenticate data to make it immutable and available for the right users, everywhere, anywhere.

Giving his perspective on how cloud solutions are quite relevant to the SMB market, Deeak Verma mentioned how the cloud solutions enable an affordable consumption based experience to SME & commercial mid-market segments. These SMB companies which make up as much as 95% of all companies operating in GCC are seeing a growing awareness of OPEX vs CAPEX spends in IT consumption and that is helping fast track adoption of cloud in the segment.

According to him, the risk is less with cloud vis-a-vis the CAPEX model; the cloud's OPEX model of pay as you consume model is quite attractive for the mid-market segment and the customer can conserve its budgetary spend on IT hardware investments and instead focus on priority business growth avenues. Deepak also mentioned that the outlook for cloud solution providers is quite upbeat and validates their company's decision to adopt the cloud model.

According to Yasser Zeineldin, CEO from eHosting DataFort, SMBs are looking at cloud as a route to enabling digital transformation. Adopting the cloud is definitely the basis for successful digital transformation as it makes available the underlying platform to successfully build new business models. This can also bring in mobile-ready customers. He believes that Managed service providers have a good opportunity in the cloud computing space as the demand rises.

However, there would be challenges that need to be addressed. These concerns could include over data migration to the cloud, deciding which application to move first to the cloud and which needs to stay on premise; whether they need to have a hybrid cloud approach etc. He believes that Managed Service Providers must ready with answers and well tested services to address the demand for cloud services.

Ali Shabdar, Evangelist, ZOHO reiterated the value of moving to the cloud to enable digital transformation. The flexibility and scalability of the cloud is unmatched by on premise solutions.

Mohamed Gamal, IT Director, Al Zahra Hospital mentioned that for the healthcare segment, it is not easy to move to the cloud as most data is critical. However, he said they have some of their systems to the cloud. He also added cloud solution providers need to break down the issues and provide value on that basis to customers that can help accelerate cloud adoption. He said that while three years ago, not many in the healthcare industry was willing to consider the cloud to move critical systems. But that is no longer the case.