

SOLUTIONS SELLING

Yasser Eldawy, general manager, GCC, Levant and North Africa (LENA) at TechAccess talks about the company's plans for 2013 and how it is aiding partners to jump onto the solutions-selling bandwagon.

CHANNEL: Talk us through what TechAccess' focus is for this year?

YASSER ELDAWY: TechAccess has been in the Middle East and North Africa region for more than 12 years focusing on the enterprise market segment and supplying the channel with end-to-end enterprise solutions. Our charter hasn't changed much in the last 12 years as it basically focuses on developing a sustainable and profitable business for both our resellers and vendor partners. A key focus for 2013 will be to develop our partners, adding more focus to growth markets such as Qatar and Kuwait and to further enhancing our existing channel base. We hope to take value addition to the next level by educating our partners about the latest technological trends and identifying their solutions need.

CHANNEL: How is the company helping SIs, VARs and solution provider partners to grow their expertise in the value segment?

YASSER ELDAWY: We work very closely with our partners to understand their operational difficulties and then align ourselves to meet their business requirements. We also try and understand their focus areas and position them with our solution centre, technical support and services team with a view to helping them develop competencies in selling

solutions. Another aspect we look at is training and making sure that our partners have the right certifications to enable them to sell and implement solutions.

CHANNEL: What channel programmes are you rolling out this year in the Middle East region?

YASSER ELDAWY: TechAccess launched its Partner Loyalty Program in 2011. The programme is the first of its kind in the partner community designed to empower our partners to choose how they wish to be rewarded from a breadth of unique reward offerings on both business and leisure options. The Partner Loyalty Program winners for 2012 were recently announced and rewarded with prize options ranging from conferences in Oxford and Cambridge University to a complete holiday package in Maldives. Due to the tremendous response to the loyalty initiative, we have decided to continue with the TechAccess Partner Loyalty Program in 2013 and beyond. We want our partners to "Prepare themselves to be rewarded the TechAccess Way!"

CHANNEL: Which technology areas are top of TechAccess' agenda in 2013?

YASSER ELDAWY: The integrated hardware and software stack is a key selling point for us

and we are currently pushing it in the market. We are also focusing on storage solutions and cloud computing as they are gaining rapid momentum in the market. We conduct trainings and workshops to highlight the integrated stack and various other solutions in our state of the art solution centre. Our in-house Technology Centre is equipped with the latest demo equipment and applications supported by our vendors. It offers customers an overview of technology and industry-specific solutions as well as custom demonstrations to understand how technology fits with their strategic business planning.

CHANNEL: With more businesses in the Middle East region focusing on cloud services and other managed offerings, how is TechAccess helping its channel partners to stay relevant in a rapidly changing marketplace?

YASSER ELDAWY: The key challenge here is not only to help our partners acquire the relevant technologies, but to also "educate them continuously" about the newer technologies in the marketplace. This is part and parcel of the value addition that we offer to our partners and an integral part of our sales story is training resellers so that they can identify their customers' IT requirements intelligently.

CHANNEL: What are your channel partners finding challenging in the Middle East region at the moment?

YASSER ELDAWY: Credit is the most important issue as it directly impacts on the ability of our partners to get new business. Partners with strong financials are able to address more business and grow faster. We work together with our partners and provide them with flexible terms so that they are able to win and grow their business in the market.

CHANNEL: Has the regional distribution segment recovered from the economic challenges that the market experience four years ago?

YASSER ELDAWY: The transition during the tight market climate had been the same for most players. Tech Access has worked hard to maintain the momentum, especially in KSA where business remained stable. GCC and LENA are now towards the growth trend and we are now concentrating on capitalising on the opportunities that the current economic conditions bring forward.

CHANNEL: What will be the key revenue growth areas and driver for TechAccess in 2013?

YASSER ELDAWY: We see tremendous growth in highlighting the integrated hardware and software solution stack and storage solutions to our channel. We plan on extending our channel base and focus on SIs and capture more SMBs. Our focus is to achieve success as a VAD in the region by adding services and solutions to our channel. We believe this will bring a sustainable level of growth not only to our business but to our vendors and partners as well.

CHANNEL: How should solution providers capitalise on the opportunities emerging in the market especially in the cloud and security segment?

YASSER ELDAWY: Cloud computing is a transformational technology phenomenon that will change the way IT services are provisioned and consumed by businesses. It is still a very new concept in the region and we are working closely with our partners on exploring the opportunities that this area will bring forward. We are continuously educating them regarding public and private cloud

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computing along with the benefits that it can add to their businesses. They will only be able to capitalise on the opportunities once they have good understanding of the different dynamics in the cloud space. ■

