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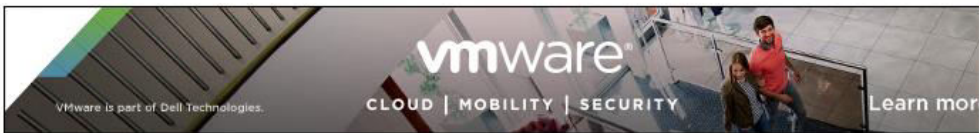
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ARE WE WITNESSING A NEW LOW IN VENDOR-PARTNER RELATIONS?

The market has changed, business models are changing and emerging technology means a constant re-evaluation of product and services offerings. Definitely, these changes are impacting the vendor-partner relationship. At a time when several thorny issues are stoking partner ire, we probe the health of vendor-partner relations in its current phase

By Amit Singh

After their marriage, a channel partner's relationships with their technology vendors are probably the most important, and long-standing relationships in their lives. And not unlike a marriage, a strong vendor/channel relationship requires nurturing, give-and-take and mutual respect.

Given the strategic nature of these partnerships, there are a host of requirements to ensure there is a 'win-win' approach to the business. While businesses are undergoing a transformation, the relationship between crucial components of the IT ecosystem – vendors and partners – are also up for transformation.

Where is it heading towards?

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"The cloud has changed the mindset of customers consuming and paying for things up front. They want to be able to scale up and scale down, which further strains partner revenues. Hence predictability is also missing in this model," highlights Gupta of Cache.

However, many of the partners opine that a solutions-focused approach can tackle the challenge from changing business models. "Partners who build SaaS offerings and some innovative solutions on the cloud by being vendor agnostic are hugely benefiting. This approach will offer high margins," reveals Mital of Acme.

The company has developed a portal for UP RERA and various city authorities on the cloud to manage workflow including complaints and grievance management. "We are offering solution built on the cloud in an opex model wherein we get Rs 1-3 lakh per month from each of the portals."

With newer technologies coming in, newer applications and skills have to be embraced. "For channel partners to be relevant, they have to act fast and develop skills in newer technologies like AI, analytics, and blockchain. But it doesn't mean that traditional channel partners will disappear. They will get business, but if they transform themselves they will gain additional business with higher profitability," advises **Sanjiv Krishen**, Managing Director, **Iris Global Solutions**.



Sanjiv Krishen, Managing Director, Iris Global Solutions

Growing league of defiant partners

The ever-increasing channel conflicts have led many partners to be defiant and shun dominating and partial vendors. "We have witnessed growing trend of partners defying vendors due to their troubled relations. Favoritism and vendors going direct are the most prevalent reasons for partners to disassociate from the vendors," reveals Gupta of Cache.



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