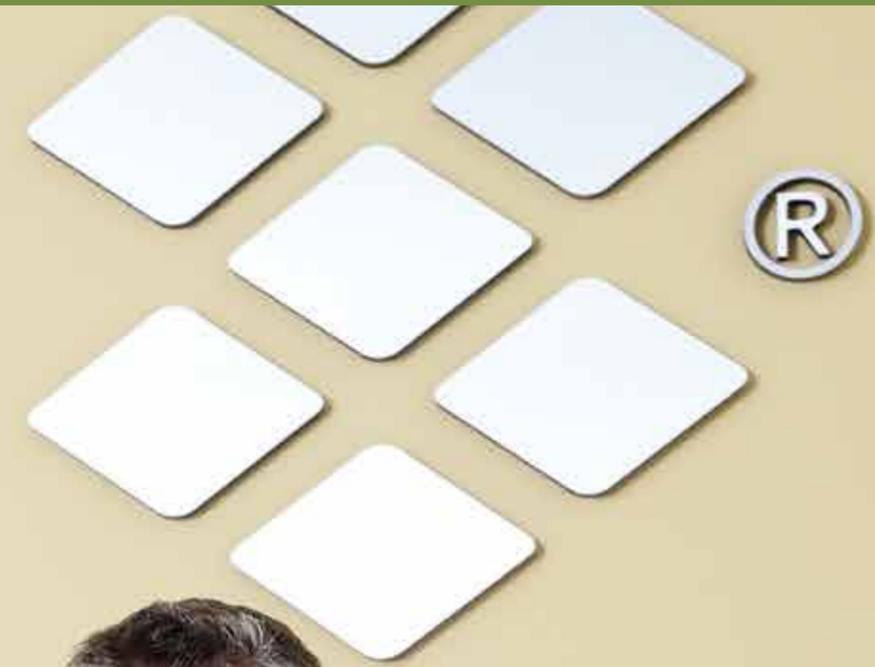


Infoblox



THE SAFETY NET

AT THE NEW VANGUARD OF DIGITAL SECURITY, **INFOBLOX** IS THE MARKET LEADER IN THE GROWING DEMAND FOR TOP-TIER NETWORK SECURITY. **JESPER ANDERSEN**, PRESIDENT AND CEO, TALKS ABOUT NEXT-LEVEL NETWORKING

BY RAMIA FARRAGE

1 **N THE MIDDLE EAST, PRETTY MUCH** every large organisation, including here in the UAE, is an Infoblox customer,” reveals Jesper Andersen, President and CEO of Infoblox. “We don’t really have competitors in the Middle East and Africa.”

The computer and network security company has built its mammoth market share through its broad reach into Fortune 500 companies as well as into thousands of medium-sized businesses. These enterprises are running sophisticated private networks that require the DDI services (shorthand for DNS, DHCP, and IPAM all packaged together), which Infoblox offers. DNS servers facilitate the link between host names and IP addresses that keep web traffic flowing, DHCP dynamically assigns an IP address to each

device on a network, and IPAM tracks and manages the IP addresses within a network: all crucial to present-day security requirements.

“Every company at some level in the modern world has often grown up with much smaller non-enterprise grade solutions from Microsoft or others and then as they realise the



↓ **Game-changers.** The Infoblox visionaries redefining online security.



criticality and maybe they continue driving into their own digital transformation they realise that DNS and DHCP services like ours are effectively like electricity and running water," asserts Andersen. "If it isn't available, the company effectively stops."

The latest official numbers from the International Data Corporation for worldwide DDI revenue reveal Infoblox held 53.9 per cent market share in 2017, with revenue of US\$351.4 million. Not only is it 14.2 per cent growth from the year previous, it's also miles ahead of its nearest competitor BlueCat, which held 16.8 per cent market share in the same period. The next strongest is BT Diamond with 8.3 per cent, Nokia VitalQIP with 5.4 per cent, EfficientIP with 4.1 per cent and Fusion-Layer (Nixu) with 1.5 percent.

"We are clearly the market leader," boasts Andersen. "There are niche small competitors who are not really present in this region. One of them is present in the North American market and another in the traditional European market."

The high-profile security events of recent years, namely data breaches, theft of regulated data, personally indefinable information and intellectual property, have been a key influence driving Infoblox's success.

Hackers exploit DNS that aren't sufficiently protected by common security products by establishing a communication channel between a device on the network and an outlaw server on the Internet. Alternatively, they can plant malware that encrypts sensitive information and sends it to a hacker's server. Andersen warns that often employees aren't sufficiently educated about these threats and don't understand that cyber security protection actually starts with the individual.

"We have to be careful about what we do," cautions Andersen. "Most

of the time when the cybercriminals get into an organisation, it's by some smart person climbing through the firewall or it's by someone who works at the organisation clicking on the wrong thing."

This has prompted enterprises of all sizes to explore the ways in which DDI platforms can help secure their networks. Andersen says the types of attacks that can potentially hit businesses are manifold.

"You see a lot of malware and ransomware attacks just like elsewhere in the world," says Andersen. "We can really help prevent that. You see the same level of phishing type of attacks where people are spoofing emails and getting users to click on the wrong things."

Since Infoblox has a hand to play

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in IP addresses across devices, it is very quickly becoming part of the very fabric of cyber security. Andersen compares it to fingerprinting DNA at a crime scene.

"If people in cyber security are suspicious that something has gone wrong or is going wrong, it's almost always involving tracking down IP addresses: who had this IP address? What happened from that IP address?"

Andersen says the answers to these questions can be found in Infoblox systems. The tech company has developed critical integrations with other cyber security vendors to allow enterprises to identify threats through its Active Trust platform.

The ActiveTrust Cloud was launched in 2017 as an all-encompassing subscription-based service. It includes Threat Insight, which uses behavioral analytics, traffic reputation, and signatures to prevent the unauthorized transfer of data from a computer. It also includes a DNS Firewall to block and redirect traffic based on company policy. The service can be applied across industries, including those that are traditional, conservative, and regulated, such as banking.

"The banking sector used to lead in cyber security and back then the idea was to prevent the cyber-terrorists



← **Operations hub.** Infoblox runs its operations from the headquarters in Santa Clara.

more than 100 per cent in the UAE and reaching similar highs regionally. Andersen says consumers want to keep up with the rapid pace of innovation in the digital space.

"If you think about how the digital economy is evolving and the digitalisation of organizations in general, it is driven by the consumer," asserts Andersen. "We're all running around with these smart phones and we want to do banking on smartphones, we want entertainment on smart phones. That drives network demand."

To meet this demand, Infoblox is also growing offerings in the datacenter and cloud provider markets, both in physical and virtual form. Not only is it offering on-premise services, it's also working with cloud through partnerships with Amazon Web Services and Microsoft Azure, and through certifications with VMware and OpenStack.

"There's a lot of cloud expansion to facilitate that demand from the consumer and every time that happens we also benefit from that cause we're part of that critical infrastructure."

Looking to the future, while Infoblox has a strong presence in several Middle Eastern countries and continues to expand its footprint regionally, Andersen says he sees great opportunity in Africa.

"The situation in Africa is a lot of currency deregulation and fluctuation which has really slowed down the African economy, so we're there but we're keeping an eye out for a chance during a time of stability," Andersen explains. "We're also keeping an eye on Turkey and waiting for things to stabilize."

In the meanwhile Infoblox will continue to develop its business through opportunities that emerge from the new hyperconnected world, where the prospects for growth in intelligent apps, IoT, machine learning, blockchain and more, seem limitless. **CEO**



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from coming into that infrastructure," says Andersen. "Today, most modern organisations still do a lot to prevent people from getting in, but because the perimeter from an IT perspective changes with cloud and with people working on mobile phones and tablets, they have moved more to a detect and mitigate type of philosophy and I see evidence that that is happening here as well."

Indeed it is. As regional businesses and governments embark on their digital transformations, there is a growing understanding of the importance of network security, which in turn presents Infoblox

with opportunities for exponential gains.

"The reason I'm excited about being here is this is really a part of the world that's embracing digitalisation," reveals Andersen. "You see it with the electronic government here and with that kind of digitalisation effort and smart cities. That requires a lot of digitalisation initiative and that for us is natural growth. When the number of IP addresses grows, when the number of applications grow, we grow with those."

Throughout the Middle East, consumers are driving digital adoption with smartphone penetration at