

Acquisition & transition pays off for Genesis



Mark Seemann

Hosted mobile data services will come into their own as the downturn grips the comms industry, according to Mark Seemann, Product Marketing Director of Genesis Communications, which has enjoyed a year of major growth and transition since it acquired SaaS specialist Servalogic in December 2006.

Seemann said the word 'fortuitous' springs to mind in relation to SMEs realising that they can cut IT costs without compromising productivity by taking advantage of hosted converged mobile data services such as CRM. "The economic situation has certainly helped to cut through the inertia when it comes to adopting the SaaS model," he commented. "We can deliver very low cost mobile workflow solutions using our own infrastructure for thousands, not hundreds of thousands, of pounds.

"A year ago, we had a vision that mobile and data would converge and that the combination of the two companies would allow us to deliver an all-in-one data mobile converged solution. It's been a pretty painful process but we've created a converged company, with converged people, that can service a customer for data and mobile, and make sure the two work together.

Because Genesis didn't dip its toe in, rather jumped 'wholeheartedly into the transition', Seemann is confident that the company is a year ahead of the competition. "Look at the mobile players, they're all still focused on mobile email. Go

to our website and you can have ordering, provisioning and billing of services all from the same page, delivered in real time," he said.

Seemann stated that the big picture is the delivery model that has evolved since the acquisition, with its complete focus on automation and self-service. On paper, the merger between Genesis, a pure mobile player, and Servalogic with its lean, totally automated sales strategy, was a marriage of opposites.

Seemann said the cross-fertilisation of skills and concepts, including the introduction of hosting into Genesis' traditional offline business and refocusing its marketing for an online audience, has been a challenging process for the company.

But as a result, skills have been raised across the entire business. "We're an infrastructure partner," said Seemann. "We sit between Microsoft and Vodafone and

provide the wraparound for the complete solution."

Seemann said the Genesis channel model effectively allows each tier of the service to be white-labelled so that distributors and resellers can apply their own brand to the tiers they are responsible for delivering.

"The technology has come of age and is so stable that you can turn a customer's server into a coffee table and give them the same software to their mobile desktops for half the price. And it will work better than before because we are delivering it across a £2 million infrastructure with built-in redundancy that the average SME simply won't have."

Genesis aims to create a self-service environment, as far as possible, for its channel partners, so that they can provision their own accounts, instantaneously, and manage them in real time. From February, distributors and resellers will be able to sign up,

be provisioned, and implement services under their own brand in a seamless process that usually takes several weeks. "This is cutting edge and takes what IBM calls service 'on demand' to a new level," said Seemann. "You might expect a 100-user Exchange system to take three or four weeks to order and set up for a customer. With Genesis, you can do that in three minutes flat. We're now offering hosted Microsoft Dynamics CRM, which is the latest software on the market and very expensive. But we can offer it for £35 per user, per month.

"This is all about making services genuinely scalable and making delivery seamless for our partners. We've made significant investments in our technology infrastructure and we now have a platform capable of supporting more than 100,000 customers. When Genesis acquired Servalogic, we had just 3,000! That's the extent and rate of growth in demand in the SME sector.

"The core message for our resellers is that they can now take mobile and reduce IT costs by delivering a fully encompassing service without the need for any server hardware on site, and wrap it all around one bill," added Seemann. ■

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