

Rust Report

News and views of the action in Australasia's IT sector this week

September 17, 2010

THE RUST BUCKET

Big guns shopping

THE MEGA VENDORS are out buying; IBM, Oracle, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Dell, SAP, and EMC have all set their sights on acquisitions. IBM recently announced its plans to spend \$US20 billion on acquisitions over the next five years, projecting that its software business will represent almost half of its profits by 2015.

Rumours are flowing thick and fast about the stronger companies acquiring weaker ones. The race to be #1 or #2 is on. The often stated reason for mergers and acquisitions is that the larger companies have more pricing power and economies of scale and are therefore more likely to bring a higher return than their smaller rivals.

A pickup in overseas mergers and acquisitions is also already visible. The pressure is on packaged application providers, specifically from onshore/offshore hosted solutions providers on the one hand and offshore bespoke solutions providers on the other.

The time has come to ask how long — or indeed whether — buyers will continue to pay big dollars for packaged software when much of the same functionality can be obtained via hosted services, or even from offshore providers that specialise in creating customised software for clients at lower prices.

Vendors want to make sure they keep moving to better positions in order to fully capitalise on and compete in emerging sectors. Customers do become concerned about the underlying rationale behind some takeovers, especially the provision of local support services. The vendors on buying sprees claim that the takeovers will provide customers with more options, improved service, and better prices, and boast that a broader range of products makes it easier for customers to do one-stop-shopping.

Technology companies have spent more than \$US350 billion buying other companies worldwide over the past three years, according to Standard and Poors. The acquisitions categories have mainly involved business intelligence and analytics, integration, services, storage, security, on-demand services, and vendors oriented towards specific industries or business processes.

Some vendors are shifting from a sale focus on product to increasingly offering services. Dell buying Perot and HP buying EDS are typical examples of this trend. On the BI front powerhouses Business Objects, Hyperion, and Cognos were snapped up by SAP, Oracle, and IBM. Security and storage vendors are recent areas of activity and cloud providers are now on the M&A radar.

A question arises about whether all this activity, with the megas acquiring the small innovative players, will stifle innovation. Will the acquisitions make the vendor more or less valuable to, and valued by, its customers?

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Aussie app opens up Mid East health data

Australian software house Space-Time Research has provided its SuperStar analysis and dissemination software to the King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre in Saudi Arabia, which will use the application to provide access to health care data. The system, along with associated applications from Space-Time Research, will allow researchers and the public to use data about diseases such as congenital heart defects, enabling researchers to gain insights from analysis of trends from microdata records, explained John Ellenberger, vice president of statistical solutions at Space-Time Research.

Researchers expect analysis of data held by the Registries Core Facility Group within the department of biostatistics, epidemiology, and scientific computing at the facility to lead to better understanding of the causes and effects of diseases like diabetes, which is a growing concern within the kingdom and elsewhere worldwide, Ellenberger added. "It will not only provide self-service public access to health data, but will also reduce the cost of internal KFSH&RC resources. Users will have confidentialised access to the data they need without requiring manual efforts to provide it." www.spacetime-research.com

Integeo sets sights on Poland

Integeo, the Sydney-based developer of the Map Intelligence spatial hub has appointed a recently formed company — Integeo Polska — its distributor in Poland. The Polish operation will distribute and support Map Intelligence, which is a rapid development platform that enables organisations to build intelligent location-based applications.

"We see Poland as a major market for our product and are very pleased to be taking this strategic step into the region," said Peter Rossiter, CEO of Integeo. <http://www.integeo.com>

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INSIDER EDITION

UK agency signs for Aussie service

Provident Capital Transfers, a British money transfer organisation, has connected to the HomeSend international remittance hub that was set up by Australian company eServGlobal in partnership with Belgian group BICS. "The HomeSend partnership between eServGlobal and BICS delivers the only mobile-centric international hub endorsed by the GSM Association," noted Craig Halliday, COO of eServGlobal. "With transfer fees significantly lower than those of traditional international remittance avenues, HomeSend allows subscribers to transfer funds from anywhere, using only their mobile phone and any type of funds, such as airtime and cash.

Halliday claimed that by 2012 some 1.7 billion people in emerging markets are expected to have a mobile phone but no access to banking services. "HomeSend offers these subscribers a secure, convenient, and inexpensive way to send and receive money and airtime." <http://www.eservglobal.com/>

PicNet services maritime operator

Australia's largest maritime services provider, DMS Maritime, has awarded Sydney-based company PicNet a four-year contract covering a range of services. The deal includes the provision of IT infrastructure and network support, software development, IT project management, and strategic consulting. PicNet will undertake projects for disaster recovery, network consolidation, and WAN optimisation.

PicNet has been providing strategic IT guidance and technical support to DMS Maritime since 2003. www.picnet.com.au

RUST BUCKET

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Will they accelerate or slow down the pace of adoption of new technologies, especially in some of the hottest market areas such as those being driven by broadband services?

The vendor rush to acquire other vendors will continue unabated, but rather than megadeals the deals taking place in the next 12 months will be typically small and mid-size acquisitions. Some vendors will spend most of the year struggling to keep their names out of the headlines and become the target for just about everyone.

— Len Rust RustOz@bigpond.com

Blink has the answers for congress

Blink Mobile Technologies, a mobilisation platform provider from the Central Coast of NSW, has agreed to provide its services for use by delegates at next week's World Computer Congress in Brisbane (<http://www.wcc2010.org/>). The service will allow anyone who has a mobile phone with a browser to engage in a number of WCC activities, including voting, instant tallying, and surveys, explained Alan Williams, director of Blink. "Blink's myAnswers service will also provide the conference organisers with the capability to mobilise any of the event's Web-based information in real time, thereby enabling attendees to enjoy a fully up-to-date, engaging, and compelling conference experience," Williams added.

"You don't need specialist devices to provide rich, two-way interactions with conference delegates. The device that every delegate has in their pocket can do the job very well." www.blinkmobile.com.au

NewSat picked for gas field comms

Satellite communications services provider NewSat has entered an agreement with Amstar Communications (<http://www.amstarsat.com.au>) covering the provision of services to the Gorgon natural gas project off the north-west coast of Australia. NewSat will provide communications via satellite to Amstar, which will deliver services to more than 600 staff on site.

"NewSat is an obvious choice for a greenfields project like this that requires multiple communications solutions," explained Daniel Garnsey, Amstar's commercial manager. This is the fourth contract the two companies have entered this year. www.newsat.com

Internode opens new WiMAX net

Adelaide-based broadband services provider Internode has launched a WiMAX wireless network in the Riverland-Murraylands region of South Australia. The network was designed and built by Agile Communications (www.agile.com.au), a subsidiary of Internode, and will be used to deliver wireless DSL services, explained Kym Cleggett, Agile's communications operations and infrastructure manager. "The real beauty is that people in this region will not pay any more than if they were located right in the middle of Adelaide," Cleggett claimed. www.internode.on.net

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Engin offers comms to medicos

VoIP telephony specialist Engin has worked a deal that will allow it to offer complete telephony packages to members of the Australian Association of Practice Managers. Jack McKeon, head of business markets at Engin, said the services offered to the association's 1700 members are based on Engin's Hosted PBX phone systems and are designed to reduce telephony expenditure by up to 50 per cent.

"An ePBX is self-managed via a user-friendly Web portal which is connected to Engin's broadband phone service," McKeon said. "All that users require are a broadband modem/router, an Ethernet switch, and IP phones, which can be provided by Engin. The solution then uses the customer's broadband connection for voice calling." www.engin.com.au

Melbourne trains adopt Mincom

Victorian rail operator Metro Trains Melbourne has awarded Mincom a new contract for the provision of the Ellipse suite of enterprise asset management and ERP applications. The software will be used to streamline mission-critical preventive maintenance and management of the company's 150 trains, 211 stations, and 830 kilometres of track, explained John Moran, Mincom's regional vice president of public infrastructure for Asia/Pacific. www.mincom.com

Orders and Implementations

- Qantas has implemented the OnTouch retail technology from Canadian company GuestLogix to expedite sales of duty-free goods on its flights. The deal, GuestLogix's first in the Asia/Pacific region, was negotiated by Alpha Flight Services Australia. www.guestlogix.com
- An Apple a day is the new plan for the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Sciences, which will provide all first-year undergraduate students in 2011 with a free iPad. Professor Bob Hill, executive dean of the faculty, said the move will make teaching material more accessible, more relevant, and more frequently updated. <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/>
- Ericsson has entered a contract covering the provision of video compression technology to the ABC for use in digital free-to-air TV via satellite. Deployment of the technology is scheduled to start in December. www.ericsson.com

Aussies worth watching

A roundup of companies making waves at home and abroad

- VIX TECHNOLOGY is a provider of payment, billing, and communication products and services to the public and private sectors. The parent company acquires, manages, and builds industry-specific businesses and its portfolio of companies currently services customers in more than 20 countries worldwide. www.vixtechnology.com
- QDOS TECHNOLOGY offers an integrated portfolio of software-as-a-service products that manage customer interactions across all business contact points, in real time. Qdos services a range of industries including distribution, wholesale, and retail, and its software provides clients with an alternative to investment in disparate systems and processes. www.qdos.com.au
- MYGUESTLIST.com.au provides guest list management and hospitality CRM solutions that enable venue managers and promoters to manage guest lists, review late changes, and analyse attendance patterns in real time. MyGuestList.com.au is available online and via mobile devices, and the company recently launched an iPad app. www.myguestlist.com.au
- INSTINCT SYSTEMS delivers tools that help businesses with job costing; timesheet management; and time management for design, project management, project profitability, and business management. Instinct's Job Bag software tracks the productivity of staff, cost-effectiveness of individual projects, and profitability of the business as a whole. Job Bag is used by marketing firms, communication companies, public relations agencies, and media companies. www.instinctsystems.com.au
- iOMNISCIENT has developed a range of software-based video detection and identification systems that can operate on the same camera and can detect activity in crowded scenes. The company's products have drawn wide interest from security organisations, and have been implemented by commercial and government users around the world. www.iomniscient.com
- GEOIMAGE is a satellite imagery and geospatial solutions provider that offers professional advice on the supply and application of commercially available satellite imagery and spatial datasets and services. The company offers targeted solutions by integrating, analysing, modelling, and visualising spatial information to suit specific applications. www.geoimage.com.au

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DEALMAKERS

Altium buys cloud tools developer

Australian company Altium, which develops electronics design systems, has agreed to buy Morfik Technology, a Sydney-based developer of products used by software engineers to create and deploy cloud-based applications. Nick Martin, CEO of Altium, explained that the company's objective is to help electronics designers expand their roles from designing the electronics in devices to the larger role of designing and engineering Web-based device ecosystems. "These ecosystems will consist of the actual electronic devices connected via the Internet, along with cloud-based software applications that run on this platform," Martin said.

The deal will be financed through an exchange of shares, and all members of Morfik's staff are expected to join Altium. Aram Mirkazemi, CEO of Morfik, will become Altium's chief of engineering. <http://www.altium.com/>

Webfirm sells advertising system

Webfirm has moved a step closer to its stated goal of focusing more tightly on the growth of its Adslot business by selling the AdFeedEngine — a search advertising and syndication system that was developed by Webfirm's former subsidiary Searchworld — to US company PV Media Group. The deal is worth \$US1 million, which will consist of a down payment and earn-out payments over two years.

Webfirm intends to retain the Searchworld brand name, using it to focus on the continued expansion of search engine optimisation, paid search, and social marketing. www.webfirmgroup.com

Revolution sweeps up testing firm

Revolution IT, an Australian company that specialises in application quality management, has agreed to buy Adelaide-based software testing company Independent Test Services. The deal is Revolution IT's third acquisition in three years, explained Jamie Duffield, director of Revolution IT.

"Acquiring Independent Test Services allows us to further expand our offering into South Australia and complements our existing products and services," Duffield claimed. When the deal is completed the Independent Test Services brand will be "gradually retired". <http://www.revolutionit.com.au/>

QED returns to ASX after takeover

Trading in the shares of QED Occtech has resumed following the company's acquisition of all outstanding shares of Transaction Solutions International. TSI operates in India, managing networks of ATMs for banks and providing automated bill payment solutions for major utility companies. QED previously held 15.45 per cent of the shares in TSI.

In the wake of the deal's completion QED Occtech intends to change its name to Transaction Solutions International, trading on the ASX under the code TSN.

"TSI represents an exciting venture for the company given its firm foothold in the rapidly escalating ATM market in India," said Paul Boyatzis, chairman of QED Occtech. <http://www.qedlimited.com.au/>

Aussie iPad accessories US bound

Raaj Menon, CEO of Adelaide-based distributor PCRange, is about to launch his PADACS range of iPad accessories in the US just three months after the products launched in Australia. Menon said he was taking the products direct to the US because of the strong demand from North America on his Web site.

"The devices that have attracted the most interest are the UltraCharge multi-device portable power supply and the Toccata Bluetooth keyboard case. However, we're getting demand throughout our product range," Menon claimed. "Extending our PADACS operations to the US with direct delivery of stock to our Michigan-based fulfilment service and a freight-free offer for US customers will take it to a whole new level. www.padacs.com

Nuix forges deal with US developer

Nuix, a Sydney-based developer of electronic discovery and investigation technology, has appointed US company kCura an independent software vendor. kCura, which has developed the Relativity e-discovery platform, will use Nuix technology to enable users to collect, process, investigate, cull, and transfer selected data into a Relativity database without compatibility issues, explained Nuix CEO Eddie Sheehy.

Relativity enables data processed in Nuix to be quickly reviewed and analysed using advanced search and visualisation tools. "The Nuix and Relativity integration will enable users to utilise more simply a fully audited workflow, from collection through to final review, production, and presentation," Sheehy said. www.nuix.com

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DEAL MAKERS

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Services providers join forces

DNS IT, an Australian systems integrator that specialises in cloud computing services, has joined forces with Sydney-based software services provider IIT Solutions (www.iirsolutions.com) to create comprehensive service offerings for "the lower enterprise market".

Jonathan Salmon, managing director of DNS IT said the partnership will enable his company to enhance and expand its services. "With this new relationship we are now able to offer a single point of contact and take accountability for all IT-related services with one turnkey solution," he explained. "This partnership is a natural evolution as we expand the managed services that we provide to our customers throughout the Asia/Pacific region." www.dnsit.com.au

Debate on public funds for R&D

At next week's WCC 2010 conference in Brisbane, six prominent research leaders will give their visions for the future directions of Australia's publicly funded ICT R&D programs. The session, organised by the Pearcey Foundation (www.pearcey.org.au) will promote awareness of the significance of ICT to the Australian economy. Speakers will include Dr Simon Kaplan (QUT), Dr David Skellern (NICTA) and Dr Alex Zelinsky (CSIRO). www.wcc2010.org

Business Briefs

- Brisbane-based mobile telco Indigo Telecom Australia will resell Telstra's GSM network as part of a hybrid, dual-mode (GSM/satellite) mobile voice and data service for regional and remote locations. <http://www.indigotelecom.com.au/>
- Alphawest, a subsidiary of Optus, has launched the Optus Cloud Solutions suite of enterprise cloud computing services. The inaugural service is a virtual private data centre solution that is accessed on demand via a secure network connection. www.optus.com/business/cloud
- Vocus Communications has launched its PacificIX peering service connecting Sydney and Auckland. The multilateral Internet peering exchange will allow participants to connect and exchange traffic between the two cities. www.vocus.com.au

A VIP TOLD ME

Greg BrownBusiness consulting director,
WindowLogic

RUST: Please start with a brief overview of the company.

BROWN: WindowLogic is a specialist solution integrator in the enterprise content management (ECM) space. With offices in most major Australian capital cities, and now also in Wellington, we have been able to help organisations in Australia and New Zealand design, deploy, and support their ECM solutions.

RUST: What are some of your recent achievements?

BROWN: WindowLogic was able to beat out Accenture, IBM, and Deloitte on various strategic projects at Chevron Australia in 2009. This year we have also made significant inroads into the market in New Zealand and strengthened relationships with new customers. We are also now in a strong position where we have robust momentum to expand our footprint on the Australian eastern seaboard.

RUST: What are your top three priorities for the next 12 months?

BROWN: Our top three priorities are to establish a strong offering in the professional services and financial services sectors; to manage vendor roadmap issues for our existing and new clients; and to establish a smooth transition program for clients into Microsoft Sharepoint 2010.

RUST: Who are your major customers?

BROWN: Being an organisation headquartered in Perth our client base has traditionally been skewed towards the energy and natural resources sectors. Long-standing relationships with Woodside, BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, and Chevron have underpinned our business. Each of these clients has been engaging with us for more than five years. We strive to maintain long-term relationships by continuing to innovate and by focusing on value-for-money services.

RUST: Where do you expect to see the company five years from now?

BROWN: I would like WindowLogic to become a regional player but without losing our Anzac heritage. We aim for technical excellence but don't like to big-note ourselves in the process. We are proud that we are able to hold our own outside of our weight division but are always keen to peg back the egos. Very antipodean!

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RUST e-RESEARCH

Mobile WiMAX slow to take off

The number of subscribers to mobile WiMAX services will approach 59 million in 2015, according to ABI Research. That represents a positive forecast in light of recent economic conditions, although research analyst Xavier Ortiz noted that WiMAX's growth has not been as early or as strong as many would have hoped several years ago.

The factors impeding WiMAX's growth haven't been technological, but economic and psychological, Ortiz claimed. "The recession certainly played a role, making investors wary and delaying some deployments. On top of that, delays in the formation of the new Clearwire have constrained the rest of the ecosystem to some degree, from subscribers to devices and chipsets."

Subscriber growth and base station shipments go hand in hand, and despite uncertainty among many operators as to which mobile 4G platform — WiMAX or TD-LTE — to choose, ABI's forecasts show WiMAX base station shipments continuing to grow (albeit at a slowing pace) throughout the 2015 forecast period.

"Depending on the particular vendor, much of the hardware in a WiMAX base station may be re-usable for TD-LTE," Ortiz added. "Service providers adopting WiMAX but interested in upgrading their networks have been choosing those infrastructure vendors that can offer the options of staying with WiMAX (moving towards 802.16m) or moving towards TD-LTE. This creates a sense of reassurance for service providers."

The lion's share of the market for WiMAX base stations during 2009 was divided between four major vendors. In terms of market share Alvarion was the leader, followed quite closely by Samsung. NSN (through acquisition of Motorola's wireless networks business) and Huawei held third and fourth places, followed by ZTE and NEC. The remainder of the market is shared among "other" smaller vendors.

Strength in Aussie mobile data use

In 2011 the mobile communications market in Australia, as in other developed economies, will see a further shift in emphasis from voice to more data-orientated services, driven by more new handsets and applications, according to forecasts by Paul Budde of BuddeComm. Penetration has outstripped the size of the market, which indicates that people are increasingly using multiple services and multiple devices.

While voice is still the dominant mobile service in Australia, mobile data has steadily become more popular, spurred on by the advent of smartphones from vendors like Apple and RIM, which facilitate a wide range of data applications and services. However the winner in 2011 will be the handsets based on the Google Android operating system, Budde predicted.

Competition is set to intensify between mobile operators, resulting in lower mobile call charges for customers. Telstra has indicated that the gloves are off and that it will vigorously defend its position in the market. This will most likely produce a continued decrease in mobile prices. Furthermore, more customers will reduce their use of fixed-line voice and data services in favour of mobile services.

However over the next five years competition and commoditisation will lead to lower ARPUs.

"Operators are now seeking to provide more services in what has become a saturated market in an effort to increase revenues. The introduction of new hardware and apps such as wireless broadband has become increasingly popular," Budde noted. The three major operators in this area are Telstra, Optus, and VHA which has a relatively small portion of the market.

The arrival of the iPhone has forced the industry to change: rather than controlling the apps market, it has become a broadband infrastructure facilitator, Budde explained. This has created a new growth area in the industry which is based more on infrastructure than on apps or services. Further changes are expected with the industry moving forward into mobile broadband territory.

There are significantly more mobile services than people in Australia. Despite subscriber penetration rates being between 110 per cent and 115 per cent of the population, growth is likely to continue for the foreseeable future although the overall rate of growth may slow slightly. Growth is being driven by population increases and a rise in the number of people using two mobile subscriptions — one for personal and one for business use.

Australian operators are likely to have more than 25 million mobile subscribers in 2011 as migration and business adoption continue to drive growth. Growth in the number of services has also been boosted in Australia in 2009 by the effective use of economic stimulus. Telstra continues to dominate the market with more than 10 million subscribers, Optus has around eight million, and VHA has roughly seven million subscribers, Budde said.

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RUST eRESEARCH

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Total mobile services revenue earned by the major mobile operators in the financial year to 2010 continued to grow, but at a slower rate than the growth seen in 2008/09. This may reflect price competition from the merged Vodafone/Hutchison business.

"Between 2010 and 2012 revenue growth is expected to be influenced by the following three major factors. The broader economic environment is perhaps the largest influence and economic growth in 2011 and 2012 could well be subdued in Australia. Revenue growth will also be impacted because of price competition, especially in light of the merger between Vodafone and Hutchison (3) in Australia to form VHA. The extent to which new telephony services are developed will influence the pace of revenue growth," Budde said.

However, it is also possible that strong adoption of new smartphones and data devices (Apple's iPhone, which has sparked device competition in the smartphone market, and the iPad device) could drive continued growth, particularly in data services, which may offset other factors.

The mobile retail market is rapidly becoming more significant as the use of mobile devices extends well and truly beyond traditional voice and SMS. Retailers are becoming the focus point for interaction with customers, many of whom have individual needs that require a higher level of customer service.

The handset market in Australia has seen a shift towards other vendors such as HTC and Apple as the smart phone sector takes off. This sector has previously been dominated by Nokia with its total market share of around 40 per cent, but it still dominates in the low end of the market.

The charge in mobile broadband usage is being led by smart phones as telcos drop data charges and more users access the internet using a mobile, many for the first time. The initial release of iPhone started the trend, and with competition from the Android operating system the smart phone market will continue to build.

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BY ASSOCIATION

WCC2010 brings ICT leaders to Brisbane

By Anthony Wong*

ICT thought leaders, practitioners, researchers and policy-makers from across Australia and around the globe will gather in Brisbane next week for the World Computer Congress (WCC2010).

Hosted by the ACS on behalf of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP), the Congress is expected to attract around 1000 speakers and delegates to explore all aspects of technology and its various applications to improve business performance and enhance our quality of life.

The event features 19 different conferences grouped together in eight key streams: Deliver IT, Treat IT, Govern IT, Trust IT, Learn IT, Value IT, Play IT and Sustain IT.

A highlight of the Treat IT stream will be a presentation by Royal Flying Doctor Service CEO, Nino Di Marco. With services covering all eight Australian states and territories, the Royal Flying Doctor Service operates scores of temporary medical clinics in isolated regions like the Aboriginal community of Aurakun on Cape York Peninsula.

With a vision to provide equity of access to health services for all rural and remote Australians, the RFDS is working towards a system where people can be treated locally with specialist or post-operative services provided remotely.

He says the big issues are broadband access and having the ability to connect across all areas of the health portfolio to allow appropriate sharing of patient records amongst service providers.

Di Marco is calling for an e-health strategy that not only addresses the infrastructure issues of broadband connectivity, but which also includes a change management process to help practitioners transition from an autonomous silo approach to patient management to a collaborative, team-based approach.

"E-health allows us to start to think into the future," he said. "It's starting to happen now and once we address the privacy concerns and overcome the technical and change management issues, we can really improve services for rural Australians."

Using research to create tangible outcomes for the health system will be the focus of a Treat IT presentation by Phil Gurney, CEO of the Australian eHealth Research Centre.

Gurney will discuss several research initiatives that are now delivering benefits, such as one to develop an inexpensive, easy-to-use camera which allows nurses in WA's Pilbara region to detect and treat eye diseases. The retinal images are sent via the Internet to an ophthalmologist in Perth for diagnosis.

"We have a very high potential to export our innovations overseas. In fact, one program involving a surgical simulation for a colonoscopy has already been adopted and commercialised globally by a Swedish company with a requirement that they provide some of the benefit back to Australia," he said.

TreatIT is one of 19 streams being staged as part of WCC2010. For more information see www.wcc2010.com

*Anthony Wong is president of the ACS (www.acs.org.au) and chief executive of AGW Consulting P/L



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REVOLVING DOORS

StorageCraft promotes A/NZ execs

StorageCraft has promoted two of its Sydney-based executives — Greg Wyman and Richard Giddey — to vice president level as the company enjoys rapid growth in Australia and New Zealand. Wyman was previously regional director for Asia/Pacific and Giddey was sales director Asia/Pacific. Each is now vice president Asia/Pacific, and each is still based in Sydney.

Wyman noted that StorageCraft's customer base in Australia and New Zealand has grown from about 500 three years ago to more than 27,000 now. "We form a close-knit team focused on driving the adoption of disk-to-disk for backup/recovery and disaster recovery across the region," he explained.

De Candia takes international role

Juliana De Candia has joined NetComm as general manager of international sales to accelerate the company's export push, which has increased due to expansions in the Middle East and Canada and agreements being negotiated in North America.

De Candia was previously national sales director of Motorola Mobile Devices in Singapore.

Simultaneously, NetComm has appointed Paul Hanton vice president of wireless devices for the US and Canada. He was formerly a senior manager at Kyocera.

Citrix appoints NetScaler head

Citrix has appointed Phil Caleno to the newly-created position of senior manager for the company's NetScaler product in Australia and New Zealand. He will be based in Sydney and will report to Bede Hackney, Citrix's director of product sales for Australia and New Zealand.

Caleno was previously systems engineering manager for BlueCoat Systems, and has also worked for F5 Networks and at IBM/PricewaterhouseCoopers as a management consultant.

Staples handles Mytel channel

Jason Staples has been appointed national partner manager of Australian VoIP service provider Mytel Voice & Data. He was previously with Pacific Internet (now Pacnet).

Craig Lawrence, CEO of Mytel, said the company is stepping up its commitment to the channel model in several important areas. "This appointment provides us with the capacity to train and support our partners through the knowledge and customer acquisition stages," he explained.

Turnbull takes comms for the Libs

In the fallout from the extremely protracted federal election Senator Stephen Conroy has retained his portfolio (Communications, Broadband and the Digital Economy), plus the additional role of Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Digital Productivity.

His former adversary Tony Smith did not retain his position in the shadow cabinet but was replaced as Shadow Communications Minister by Malcolm Turnbull.

It is understood that Turnbull's leader expects him to turn his forensic accounting skills onto the roll-out of the national broadband network in a effort to cast doubts — or worse — on its effectiveness. However, he has already raised some hackles with his claim that the regulatory regime introduced in the 1990s is still working well. According to the Competitive Carriers' Coalition this statement is wide of the mark and "demonstrates that he urgently needs to spend time listening to the industry to be brought up to speed with the state of play from a competition and access perspective," a CCC statement claimed.

3 Dimension names Vic sales head

The 3 Dimension Interactive advertising sales network has appointed James Spinks head of sales for Victoria. Spinks has spent the past seven years working in the digital industry in the UK, most recently as business development director for Ad Pepper Media.

Around the Traps

- Verb IT, the data centre operation that was recently launched on the Central Coast of NSW, has appointed Chris Clifford CEO. He has spent the past five years as a consultant, prior to which he worked for a number of ICT user organisations, including NAB, Roche Pharmaceuticals, Hamersley Iron, and Adventis Health.

- Internode has opened an office in Brisbane staffed by Nicholas Wilson, as presales engineer, and Sasha Petroff, as business development manager. Wilson was previously with Siemens Enterprise Communications, and has also worked for Integrated Communications Solutions and Samsung, while Petroff has previously worked for Hemisphere GPS, Allied Telesis International, and Powertel.

- Chris Morris has relinquished his executive role at Computershare, although he will remain on the board as chairman.