Q&A

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ThinkAgile
ThinkSystem

Lenovo's great leap forward

Newsflash talks exclusively to Guy England, General Manager Lenovo Technology Group for the UK and Ireland, about the new ThinkSystem and ThinkAgile announcements

Azlan will be running a series of Lenovo Technical Sales Certification Workshops at Heathrow and Warrington in September. For more information, visit **www.techdata.co.uk/lenovo/workshops**

For further information on the Lenovo programme and the company's new products, please get in touch with Adam Wilcox, Lenovo Enterprise Business Manager for Tech Data Advanced Solutions – email **adam.wilcox@techdata.com**

Why are these new announcements so significant for Lenovo?

All the stars are aligning in this announcement, so it's an excellent opportunity for us and our partners. With ThinkSystem we are bringing together the IBM x86 and ThinkServer product lines, combining the best of both those architectures. This is the first truly Lenovo design and it is arriving at the same time as Intel's Purley and Skylake platforms, so we can take full advantage of those new technologies and we've already seen the results of that highlighted through 42 world-record industry benchmarks. As if that was not enough, as well as the 14 new ThinkSystem servers we've announced, there are seven new types of storage, including an all-Flash array, and new networking devices, so it's a whole new infrastructure.

Where do the ThinkAgile solutions fit in?

The software-defined data centre has really come of age and customers are now willing to embrace that and take it on board. It's quite a big change to the environment and neither the customer nor the partner wants to worry about exactly how the software-defined element integrates with the underlying environment. With the ThinkAgile integrated systems, appliances and engineered solutions for software-defined storage and hypercoverged infrastructures, we take care of that integration, so the partner can focus on the delivery of the software layer where they can add most value, so they can perform implementations in a faster time and deliver business benefit sooner for the customer. That's a real leap forward for us.

What plans do you have for partner enablement on these new solutions?

There is a lot of new technology here of course, but we are building on our pedigree and history and all of that is embedded into these new solutions. We have education programmes going on right now and Azlan is very involved with that. We have also simplified a lot of the tools, so that customers can get benefit from our new technologies a lot quicker; xClarity, which is the underpinning systems management software, has been

totally reengineered, so even though there is a lot of new technology and a lot of new products to take in, our resellers should be able to get to grips with all of it fairly quickly.

Will it be mainly existing partners you work with or are you looking to attract new partners for ThinkSystem and ThinkAgile?

We always want to encourage new partners to look at portfolios we have and Azlan has done a lot of work and been very successful in recruiting new partners for us in the past. Our new solutions have industry-leading availability and industry-leading performance, and so there is no reason partners should not be selling them. We will be doing a lot of work with Azlan to recruit partners to sell ThinkSystem solutions.

In terms of ThinkAgile, partners who are today selling the software layer of integration such as VMware or Nutanix for example, ThinkAgile is a natural platform for them and something they should be looking at.

Who are you targeting with these new systems?

With the breadth of our portfolio there is something in it for everybody. There are systems suited to MSPs and cloud service providers, for systems integrators delivering software-defined data centres, for large corporates and for SMBs. We have a target list of 30,000 customers and we'll be running advertising and promotions across all industries. That's already happening. We're working with Azlan running their people through the education programme, so they can support their customers.

Do you see this as something of a landmark launch for Lenovo?

As we said earlier, the stars are very much aligned now. We have always had good engineering and a strong pedigree there. Customers are going to want to adopt the new Intel architectures and get those benefits and, they are embracing software-defined. We are bringing it all together now we are a very serious player.