eChannelLine — Daily Channel News

December 13, 2012

published by mar.com

Software-defined networking's moment has arrived

13 December, 2012
By Mark Cox

Software-defined networking (SDN) has passed the inflection point from concept to marketable opportunity, and channel partners who are still waiting for the market to firm up risk falling behind the curve. That's the view of ADARA Networks, one of the players in this space, which has a 100% channel go to market strategy.

"SDN is not new, but it is new in the corporate market," said Alex Buonincontri, Director of Channel Programs at San Jose-based ADARA. 'But we have deployments in production across a number of different verticals, and we have active deployments from SMB types to Fortune 100s. We scale across all sizes."

Buonincontri said that VMware's recent purchase of SDN vendor Nicira for $1.2 billion dollars has given a powerful boost to the whole SDN industry, becoming the proverbial rising tide that lifts all boats.

"Interest is snowballing with this kind of high profile announcement, and all the talk about SDN has brought it from a theory to reality," Buonincontri said. "When someone spends more than a billion dollars on a competitor, it creates a lot of interest. It means that I don't have to reach out. Today, people are calling me. I'm not pounding on the doors like I was six months ago."

ADARA began its business with a focus on the public sector, specifically the Department of Defense, and has rapidly broadened out in the last year to include a wide range of commercial clients across the transportation, biotech, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, technology, legal and consumer products sectors. Their biggest coup has been landing large telco Verizon as a client

The channel is critical to this broadening-out strategy. Buonincontri said their main problem there is that the company is not well known by many prospective partners.

"Since we are a new name in the commercial channel, and to the channel as a whole, we have been doing all the heavy lifting," he said.

While the company officially launched its partner program, the ADARA Advantage Partner Program, a year ago, it recently expanded the program. It overhauled its online partner portal, which provides tools and resources as well as online training and certification courses for both engineers and sales

well as online training and certification courses for both engineers and sales staff, to make it more user-friendly for its partners. In addition, data center and networking solution providers are now able to present live ADARA product demonstrations to their customers in real time. The company has also expanded its channel team for increased geographic-specific support.

"We offer some of the highest margins in the industry -- potentially between 30 and 45% -- and there is no investment required to become trained with us," Buonincontri said. "We do support and joint marketing with partners and we offer a 'Try and Buy' program for end users. That Try and Buy really has provided partners with a differentiator, and gets them over a major hurdle."

ADARA has several dozen partners at this point in time, including ones in Canada, and are looking to cap out at about a hundred partners tops. Their exclusive distribution partner is Tech Data.

"We want key partners who are well versed in networking and the data center," Buonincontri said.