

interConnect

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ISODA

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Amarnath Shetty
Chairman, ISODA



Dear Friends,

It was my pleasure and privilege to lead this wonderful Association as Chairman in the last one year. It has been a great year with a friendly Management Committee, lot of new initiatives, fortnightly Committee concalls, quarterly regional meetings, a successful and biggest ever TechSummit at Baku and many more.

As one of the first 12 members to enroll into ISODA way back in 2008, it gives me great satisfaction to see ISODA growing to 200 plus members pan India, including 10 or more distributor members. We have seen increased collaboration with principal vendors and distributor members have a big hand in this; this has helped address issues facing the community. The mindshare the Vendors, Media and other Associations have about ISODA is pretty much of one of awe; they are aware that ISODA will stand up for members and will take up all issues pertaining to partner community with OEMs and Government and solve their areas of pain.

Kudos to TechSummit Chairman Jiten Mehta, who has done an exemplary job in organizing the TS X at Baku, Azerbaijan. This is the biggest TechSummit yet, bringing many new sponsors to the ISODA fold. Also, kudos to Management Committee colleagues who have given their full-fledged support in making TSX a great success.

As the outgoing Chairman, it gives me immense pleasure to highlight some of initiatives taken by us in the last one year.

- Crossed a new milestone of 200 members
- Launched ISODA ASAP (As skilled as possible) and conducted series of webinars on different topics
- Webinars from our Legal Advisor Adv. Pradeep on following topics to benefit the community:
 - Collections of dues from customers
 - Employment contract issues
 - Questions and answers on any other pressing legal issues of Members
- Webinar conducted on GST and other GST related matters by our Tax advisor Dhruv Dua
- Re-designing and restructuring of ISODA Website
- New ISODA membership Certificates issued to all members
- All members details added in the website in a structured way and phase 2 will start soon with a search functionality to push collaboration amongst partners
- Formed a Tax Committee which Consists of Prashant Jain, Capt Shiroor, Pares Shah and our tax consultant Dhruv Dua.
- Announced a Grievance Cell with 4 Senior Members of the Association in December 2019
- Launched Jaipur Chapter

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- Unique ISODA interconnect every month which helped us to keep abreast about partner community and vendor related news. I am sure Interconnect serves all of us as a relevant source of information to learn about the partner business, pain points, vendor news and other vital details.
- One of the best TechSummit hosted in Baku in February 2020, with record number of 120 plus members attending the TSX. Representatives from Azerbaijan government attending the TSX and inviting ISODA members to set up business in Azerbaijan was the highlight.
- Virtual Regional Meetings conducted during Pandemic time.
- When pandemic hit India, ISODA wrote to various Distributors and OEMs requesting them to help in license cancellations, deferred payments, accepting orders by mail from customers, extension of renewal subscriptions etc.
- Representation to government and mails to Finance Ministry during Pandemic times to consider sops to MSMEs and in the interest of Members requesting for Fiscal and tax sops to MSMEs, Reduction in GST, fast track payments from Govt departments to MSMEs, waiver of EMD and Bank guarantee to MSMEs etc
- Donation of 5 lakhs to PMs COVID relief fund as part of our CSR activity
- Members' Directory, in the interest of members which will be available to all the members in the website going forward, which will help in following ways:
 - a. Know the fellow members business better.
 - b. Collaborate with members on specific technology in Pan India level.
 - c. Know member's area of Operation/Geo.
 - d. Better collaboration.
- TSX India edition in September 2020 to provide value to TSX sponsors which was appreciated by sponsors and media.

I conclude with a deep sense of satisfaction and pride that I was allowed to hold one of the most privileged positions for this Association. I convey my heartfelt gratitude to all my fellow management committee members for their support in last two years (as Vice Chairman and Chairman) and to all you members, for always listening and supporting our work. I am also happy to see people now coming forward to take up positions in ISODA management committee, a testimonial that the organization is bound for greater and bigger achievements in the years to come.

I would like to sign off with the very best wishes from me and the entire current management committee to the new Committee taking over after the AGM and I am sure they will do a wonderful job and keep the ISODA flag flying high.

Once again thank you all for your support and friendship; those have made my one year as Chairman so enjoyable.

Manasi Saha
President, ISODA



Dear Fellow Isodians,

It is perhaps a paradox of nature that when everything is running smoothly life abruptly changes course. When we ushered in 2020 amidst joyous greetings of a Happy New Year little did we know what was in store just three short months away. We then believed it was just a nightmare that would fade in 21 days and life and business would return on track as before. Six months down the line we know better.....the scars for some would be deep. Acknowledge it or not it has altered the lifestyle of all of us and the “new normal” may not have any significant bearing to the old.

Be as it may, like all crisis this too has had its silver linings. We are now compelled to spend more time at home.....spend more time with our spouse, children and pets. With no external help we learnt to be self-reliant. We initially stepped on each other's toes but eventually created our own spaces. We learnt to face truth like never before, saw through the masks, dusted out long forgotten skills and hobbies and now finally are beginning to have a better understanding of our own self. In short, we have devised cathartic ways of dealing with the unwelcome pandemic. Out of this debris emerged the “work from home” culture which in many sectors is likely to become the future norm.

We adapted to this new technology through emerging platforms like Video Conferencing, Digital Marketing, Cloud services robust, Cyber Security, RPA which are all going to peak in the coming days. On-site business naturally has taken a hit but out-of-the-box strategies and newer technologies will come forth to deal with traditional business work culture. Like the phoenix we will and must arise!

It has been a wonderful six years serving all of you in various capacities in the Managing Committee. If I have contributed even a tiny bit in the building of a fledgling ISODA into a robust, dynamic and meaningful organisation I will feel truly blessed. Of all the various responsibilities that I have gladly shouldered, the ISODA Interconnect has been the closest to my heart. Together with Rajeev Mamidanna we have endeavoured our best to bring to you knowledge based articles that would hopefully enrich your business.

Let me confess that I have enjoyed writing and interacting with the media thoroughly to showcase our activities at every opportunity and every conceivable platform. Heartfelt gratitude to all my Isodian friends for your immense support and for your contributions in ISODA Interconnect. It gives me deep satisfaction that we have personally tried to cover not only members from the metros but also the developing cities so that every voice from every corner may be heard.

Our 11th AGM on 10th October 2020 is upon us. And for the first time it is going to be online digital AGM as per the dictat of the current situation. L Ashok is the Returning Officer and this time the election will be held for the following positions:

1. Vice Chairman
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

The current Vice Chairman Rajeev Mamidanna will move up as Chairman and the current Vice President Dnyanesh Kulkarni will replace me as the President. My best wishes to the new Committee in advance and may they blossom ISODA into a more spirited institution. I will fondly cherish the years interacting with all of you on a regular basis and hope I will be remembered for having left some mark behind.

Signing off as your President for the last time with a quote from Richard Bach: “Don’t be dismayed by good-byes. A farewell is necessary before we can meet again and meeting again, after moments or a lifetime, is certain for those who are friends.”

Au revoir!

Member Speak

Gunasegharan Krishnan
*Director - ECAPS COMPUTERS
INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED*



We changed. For Good.

Go-wild!

Enterprises across the globe have to go with the flow to overcome the challenges that are thrown to them on a daily basis to increase their business. Right from aligning their employees to work from home, meetings via online platforms and getting feel of the customers through cameras rather than one on one, everyone is expected to work with the NEW NORMAL.

Our company was no exception to the above and we were and are travelling in the same boat. We saw our share of downs ourselves when lockdown was announced. There was huge drop in our Network Infrastructure business all of a sudden and it felt gloomy initially. But the adage “when the going gets tough, the tough get going” is so close to us, the we BELIEVED we could overcome the challenge. We were FLEXIBLE and thought over what solutions were relevant to customers in these times. And we were able to capitalize because we were NIMBLE.

TOW as one such solution where customers could work on Tally from home at the same speed as their local network. This was an instant hit for us when the product started reaching to lot of customers. Thanks again to the ISODA community, we were able to take the solution deep and wide. For Zero Trust Policy solutions for our customers, we decided to bring in Privilege Access Management Solutions which gave our partners a lot of leverage for their customers who were working from home. Cloud-based Cyber Security solutions are becoming the order of the day; we have GEARED ourselves up by putting in place a structured TRAINING to all our partners in deploying and supporting their customers. We have not let go of the opportunity to UPSELL.

To summarize, we decided to take on the challenges in a POSITIVE way and started designing solutions and services that would enable our partners to sell to their customers PROFITABLY. While we did this on business front, we cannot forget our team of employees who VOLUNTEERED to take pay cuts and OEMs who came all out supporting us with EXTENDED credits.

We CHANGED; for GOOD. Everyone should.

Till we meet in person, keep your masks on and stay safe!

Member Speak

Punit Thakkar,
Director – Shivaami Cloud Services



Why MSMEs should adopt to Cloud Business

The last two decades have seen businesses (large, medium, small, micro) being disrupted by advances in technologies, social & economic upheavals, policies & regulations, etc. The recent onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has taken this disruption to the next level and is forcing companies to re-think their businesses and business models. Cloud will play a key role in this journey. In the current pandemic scenario, cloud will enable business continuity for SMBs, help expand customer segments across geographies and verticals, lead to cost optimization and help them innovate/customize their products/services as per customer needs.

Willingness to adopt cloud computing is a function of following 12 key enablers:

1. Low cost
2. Low time
3. Improves Company Image
4. Low risk of failure
5. Improves Information availability
6. Improves overall quality of information
7. Low resources requirement
8. Improves customer satisfaction & sales
9. Keep up with competition
10. Low Complexities
11. Enterprise-Grade Applications
12. The opportunity Available today IT channel

We are very instrumental in many ISODA partners starting their cloud practices within their organizations to upsell to their existing customer base. A lot of ISODA partners work with us closely every day.

Member Speak

Ashok Kumar,
RAH Infotech



How a Value Added Distributor is making a positive change

How did/why did you start the business?

I had a dream to create something that is big and offers me freedom to innovate while solving the existing problems that our industry faces. I also had the vision to add value to the society by creating employment and contribute to the country's economy.

When we started RAH Infotech, the VAD space was very nascent and many good networking and cyber security vendors were struggling to find a committed and true value add partner for India. This got us thinking and we decided to become that partner and plug the gaps that were existing in the Indian IT space. We wanted to offer new, innovative, and the best-in-class competitive networking, cyber security and infrastructure solutions to our customers – Government, enterprises and SMEs – to help them improve productivity and enhance their service offerings.

Why distribution?

We realized that though the new OEMs had great technology they lacked in country solutioning and support teams. Similarly, the reseller community except few established players didn't have technical competence on new and emerging technologies. We decided to be that bridge. We also realized that a robust distribution network with required technical know-how is of strategic importance to make this happen.

Transformation to VAD?

From the Day 1, we were very clear. We were not here to add another number to already existing distribution houses. We are a value added distributor – value being the key differentiator for us. Though we distribute solutions like many other distributors, our technology experts, sales and pre-sales people build and nurture a very stronger and mutually beneficial relationship with our channel partners and customers that's based on multiple pillars like, regular technical training programs, soft-skill sessions, promotional campaigns, sales, pre sales and post-sales support.

As far as customers are concerned, we study their challenge areas, make proper assessments of solutions required and help them understand how various solutions can improve their productivity and enhance user experience. We help them deployment of solutions and offer round-the-clock technology support too.

Relationship with OEMs?

OEMs are our biggest strength and we act as extended arm of our technology partners. We make sure the OEMs' vision is replicated when our team takes their solution value proposition to the market. Taking a deviation from the traditional way of distribution, we scout for new customers for our OEMs, conduct PoCs, deploy the solutions and offer end-to-end tech support to our customers on behalf of our OEMs.

Besides, we jointly participate in industry meets, events and seminars, conduct technical trainings for our partners to keep them updated about the new solutions and offerings from the OEMs. We maintain the highest standard of professional association with our OEMs which has resulted in most of them sticking with us for a quite long period.

Choice of products?

Since inception we were serious about the digital infrastructure of the country and, though we did not coin the term, we always knew 'data is the new oil'. Our focus has always been on cyber security, complete data management solutions, digital infrastructure and cloud, and networking solutions. We partner with the best-in-class global OEMs in these domains.

Obstruction, Payment in b2b?

It's a tricky business and like every business, distribution too has its share of challenges. However, we strive to follow a process where cash flow and payments are well organized.

Overall success story?

When we look back at our successful journey of 15 years, few things stand out. Clarity and commitment to vision, bridging the crucial gaps in a big and untapped market, making value our No.1 key contributor to the ecosystem, supporting the community to the best of our capabilities during the tough times, a committed and passionate team and close and long term relationships with our OEMs and partners.

From the organization point of view, our success mantra has been based three guiding principles.

1. Right team - Finding the right talent, trusting and empowering them with right skill sets, and guiding them towards the common goal
2. Right goal - Setting a futuristic vision and achieving that by identifying the right business opportunities and put whatever it takes to achieve that goal
3. Right Partners : Creating a niche for oneself in the crowded IT market by selecting right technology partners, delivering right solutions and nurturing the partner ecosystem the best possible way

Your advice to ISODA members.

ISODA has been doing a fantastic job for the IT distribution ecosystem. However, there is always a scope to broaden the horizon and to put more efforts in boosting synergies among distributors and channel partners. The association could also expand its reach to other geographies to build a mutually beneficial association among distributors and channel partners of these countries.

These are tough times and many of us may be fighting a survival battle. If we all can come and ride out this Pandemic by supporting each other, that would be great.

What the media has to say about ISODA

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Team ISODA for their immense cooperation and support. In particular, ISODA interconnect has always kept us abreast about the Partner community and Vendor related news. The InterConnect team is doing a commendable job in creating write-ups that are well presented. The handbook, in many ways, has served as a relevant source of information for journalists like us, who are always keen to learn more about the partner business, pain points, vendor offerings, and other such vital details. Please keep up the good work, and we look forward to receiving many more editions and compilations of Interconnect.



**Puja and Anjali -
Digitaltech Media Team**

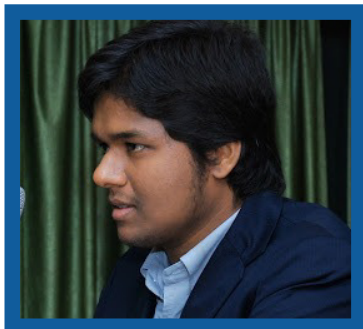


**Deepak Sahu,
Kalinga Digital (VAR India)**

Technology sector in India has seen massive transformation happening from last couple of years, the growth has been driven by rapid technology adoption led by the increasing use of devices such as smartphones and tablets, and access to the internet through broadband, increasing cyber security concerns and coupled with the Governments support to bring digital transformation through various flagship programmes.

At the same time, OEMs continue to improve the processes with increased simplicity, showing commitment in revenue growth through the channel. The channel is ever evolving as the OEMs introduce newer technologies. The channel has been playing a key role in this situation by supporting and managing customers. The role of Industry associations plays the key role in the business transformation. India's leading Industry association ISODA is definitely bringing a huge transformation in the industry.

ISODA interconnect brings knowledge based inputs from the partner eco-system in the country. The INTERCONNECT truly interconnects the partner community and brings the market insights, to understand the demand supply gap in the industry. Working with the team members of ISODA is always a unique experience.



Swaminathan,
Independent Journalist

While we tech media outlets provide information to the community, ISODA interconnect has always been a key source of information to us. Our Journalism teachers taught the term 'Slant' which means a piece of information that influences a reader's thinking. Despite being prepared by Rajeev and Manasi, who did not have formal journalism education, interconnect perfectly fits in that category. Looking forward to knowing more about your fraternity through your 'Interconnect'.

ISODA interconnect has always been an additional source of information to us from Partner business and vendors positioning is concerned. The efforts of the InterConnect team in putting all information together to bring out the piece is commendable. I believe InterConnect should be circulated beyond the ISODA community as today organizations are buying more software products than the hardware. The handbook clears the differentiation of the vendors' offerings, which other partners can take advantage of and include into their product lines. I am happy that a community of limited IT partners has taken up the responsibility to disseminate information, which otherwise is not possible. I am really looking forward to grabbing copies of this - even in digital format. All the best!



Sanjay Mohapatra,
Editor, SME Channels



Yogesh Gupta,
Executive Editor, IDG India

ISODA Interconnect is an excellent engagement vehicle for its association members and India's IT community in the emergent digital-native content world. While the monthly newsletter captures success stories and growth agenda of channel partner companies' owners across India, it would be more appealing if featured articles capture future trends, analysts findings and revenue opportunities in India market for next couple of years. Enterprise IT Channel Business has drastically moved to What CIOs want in their IT infrastructure for the next three years beyond the current requirements. The 'OEM-Channel-CIO' tech ecosystem needs to be nurtured and developed more in Interconnect in multiple ways for IT entrepreneurs viz ISODA members to stay profitable and attain the next level of growth. All my best to ISODA team and Interconnect for today and the future!

Work from Home. Certain Legal Implications.

As we have become increasingly in need for work from home culture due to the prevailing pandemic and the ensuing social distancing requirements, we are yet to fully comprehend the advantages and disadvantages of such a culture viz., 'work from home.' In the absence of any immediate incentive, employers have not considered investing in pandemic preparation procedures in India. However, the Covid-19 crisis has made the employment industry consciously realize the long-term benefits of investing in pandemic preparation procedures. Specifically, technology in terms of infrastructure has become a sine-qua-non feature of pandemic preparation procedure and the employers who have made an investment in technology have not only continued to manage their operations but have also been able to perform exceedingly well.

However, the advancement of technology comes with its own vice. The onset of a virtual workplace has given the employers an unfettered discretion to formulate policies on storing data of employees. The exercise of this discretion in the absence of any guideline can be fatal to the employees, as the Covid-19 crisis may be taken as an avenue wherein the employers breach the privacy of their employees. Additionally, the work from home culture has increased the vulnerability of the private data of the employees to cyber-attacks. It is very pertinent to note that the Government of India has not released any notification or directive for the employers to protect the privacy concerns of the employees. However, the Puttaswamy judgement clearly recognises that an individual is to have control over the dissemination of material that is personal to him and unauthorised use of such data shall lead to infringement of his fundamental right to privacy, thus making consent a sine-qua-non for any state action.

While collecting the data, the employers must ensure that any sensitive data collected during the pandemic is secured and kept separately from the general file of the employees. The confidentiality of this data should be protected by all means. Especially, when the work from home culture is in force the employees must ensure that they operate under a protected firewall and virtual private network. Post Covid-19 crisis, the employer must also establish an erasure mechanism for the data of the employees. The right to erasure is an implementing mechanism for the principle right i.e. right to be forgotten. The erasure mechanism will ensure that the employees can exercise their right to be forgotten which has already been recognized by the Delhi High Court. Therefore, as a measure of pandemic preparation procedure, the employees must ensure that the procedure concerning data collection and dissemination is in accordance with the law.

Both discipline and devotion are necessary for efficiency. To ensure, the service conditions of those who work for them must be encouraging, certain and secured, and not vague and whimsical. With capricious service conditions, both discipline and devotion are endangered, and efficiency is impaired. Axiomatically, in light of the extenuating circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis, the employers may not have a specific letter of law to follow, but they must follow the spirit of law

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