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Strong Data Center Opportunities

By Sonal Desai & Ramdas S, CRN, May 15, 2013

Despite the slowdown in overall IT spends, the data center market continues to be strong thanks to technology refresh, virtualization and private cloud deployments

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A rapid revolution has been taking place in the data center (DC) market that spells newer opportunities for partners. DC customers are seeking more efficiency in running their DCs, and are trying to optimize usage and deploy newer technology.

“Energy-efficient DCs will be a major focus for companies in the future. With IT costs spiraling down, most companies look for solutions that can help them fulfill their IT needs with minimum budgets,” says Amit Luthra, National Manager, Storage & Networking, Dell India.

Technology refresh

Some of the biggest partner opportunities are the technology refresh cycles emerging inside DCs which were set up around 3-5 years back. Also, many customers who skipped investing in technology refresh over the past few years because of the slowdown see that technology refresh is imperative over the next 12 months.

“We are going after several of our existing customers who have an old DC infrastructure. For a customer who is running a DC based on equipment purchased in 2008, upgrading to the latest hardware would result in RoI within a year in operational cost savings,” explains KV Jagannath, CEO, Choice Solutions.

Upgrading power and cooling equipment has a direct impact on the running cost of a DC. According to a report by US environmental protection agency Energy Star, the average loss of energy efficiency for power systems is between 11 and 35 percent every year.

This has prompted vendors such as Emerson, Schneider, Numeric, IBM and Eaton to set up teams and even practices around DC efficiency. Jayabalan Velayudhan, Director, IT Business India, APC by Schneider Electric, explains, “Some of our partners have been trained to consult specifically on energy and cooling efficiencies. Their teams can provide customers specific reports that would give customers a bird’s-eye view of energy utilization, and also advise on strategies for reducing energy waste.”



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“We had recently proved to a customer that he would get a RoI within a year if he upgraded his five-year-old batteries and UPS systems. In the DC business to stay relevant you need to keep upgrading, and this presents the biggest opportunity for a partner,” says AS Rajgopal, MD, NxtGen Datacenter & Cloud Services.

Technology refresh is not only limited to power and cooling. “Upgrading older racks to newer blades saves real estate and power consumption; besides, newer processors are able to virtualize better, spawning more virtual machines per blade,” explains Luthra.

Many partners lost out in grabbing large DCs especially from the government deals earlier. However, since customers are improving DC efficiency through a series of smaller projects, smaller partners are benefiting. “Existing DC customers are looking at smarter partners like us when it comes to upgrading infrastructure,” says Jeyalakshmi Venkatanarayanan, CEO, Universe Power Systems, Bengaluru. “They are also talking to us for implementing alternate energy solutions in alternative energy sources such as solar.”

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