

## “The role of partners in the cloud cannot be undermined”

EMC is bullish on cloud computing and the role partners can play in India. **Manoj Chugh**, President, EMC India & Saarc, spoke to **Dhaval Valia** on the new trends and opportunities in cloud computing, unified storage and big data

### What is the cloud adoption curve among Indian enterprises?

Earlier this year, an IDC study commissioned by EMC revealed that about 53 percent of organizations in the Asia Pacific are currently using some form of cloud or actively researching and testing cloud services, while the remaining 47 percent have plans to adopt private and/or public cloud services at some point in the next 12 months.

In India, of the 100 CIOs interviewed, 14 percent said they are currently using cloud computing while 76 percent plan to use cloud computing at least after six months. Indian organizations surveyed showed a very strong inclination toward the private cloud, with an extremely low response for the public cloud in both 2010 and 2013.

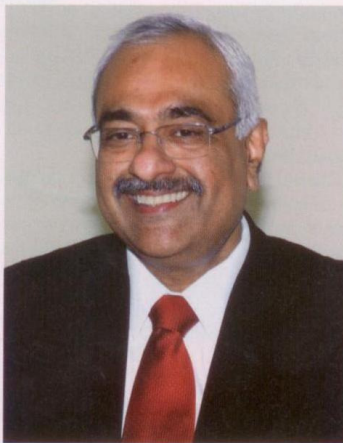
### One of the indications of cloud adoption in India can be gauged from customers who have deployed the VCE offering. Could you share details of VCE deployments in India?

We have seen increased interest for the VCE proposition in the Indian market from service providers and enterprises alike.

Currently, we have six deployments in the country and a healthy pipeline of prospects. In addition to some of the large IT giants in India, our customers include EXL Service and KPIT Cummins. Customers of all sizes who want an integrated data center infrastructure package to implement pervasive virtualization on the road to private cloud computing will find VCE ideal.

A clear differentiator for VCE is the seamless support through a single company where all the resources are cross-trained on VMware, Cisco and EMC (VCE) technologies, resulting in faster resolution for the customer.

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### How important is the channel's role in accelerating the adoption of private clouds. How many of your tier-2 partners have deployed VCE till date?

The 'cloud dividend' in terms of cost-savings, better IT utilization and ultimate business agility is now exceedingly difficult to deny. Exceptions do exist, but they are harder to find these days.

As per the APAC survey by EMC and IDC, about 56 percent of CIOs in India (the highest among the six selected countries) believe that the private cloud can change the IT funding model. There is significant scope for the private cloud as it offers businesses increased agility and

responsiveness to changing priorities, better use of data center real estate, and consolidation and simplification of IT budgets.

Such transformations are bound to be met with skepticism, apprehension and low confidence by customers initially. It is here that channel partners have to be fully committed to build the knowledge and skill base around cloud computing technologies and the prevalent market, speak the vendor's language accurately, and pass on the confidence to the customer. The role of the channel partner in the cloud computing era cannot be undermined. The channel also has to realize that in addition to selling cloud computing products there will be ample opportunities to offer services as well.

Channel partners are a key pillar of our VCE strategy and we are committed to train and enable our partners to sell the latest solutions. A testimony to our commitment to our channel partners is that VDA Infosolutions, one of our tier-2 partners, has already sold VCE.

### What are your focus areas this year and what strategies have you put in place for the same?

Broadly, there are three focus areas where EMC will have a lot going on—cloud computing, unified storage and big data. In April this year, we announced multiple new storage systems and software features with more than 40 new technologies and products—including VNX, a new family of unified storage systems for SMBs. We see this segment as one of the hottest in the storage industry, and

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are enabling our channel footprint to pursue it.

Big data refers to datasets whose size is beyond the ability of traditional enterprise technology to capture, store, manage and analyze. The premise behind big data is simple: many of the newer IT-based value propositions are being built around gathering and leveraging vast amounts of information. More data, more value. It's not a problem, it's an opportunity.

Our focus will be to educate the market and partners on the key role that our recent acquisitions, Greenplum and Isilon, can play in harnessing big data.

**What is the big data opportunity you foresee in India?**

There are many big data opportunities in India and many are emerging. Imagine what would happen when the National Intelligence Grid becomes operational in India. It will integrate the existing 21 databases with the central and state governments, and other organizations in the public and private sectors such as banks, insurance companies, stock exchanges, airlines, railways, telecom service providers and chemical vendors.

Look at the government agencies. Regardless of their mission you will find a critical function that involves ingesting massive amounts of information, storing it, analyzing it all, and then doing something with it. Health care delivery needs to move toward harnessing enormous amounts of patient records, and providing evidence-driven recommendations. Before long, health care will undoubtedly be a cloud+big data industry. All these are possible with the availability of next-generation technologies that can manage and analyze gigantic amounts of data.

**What new channel initiatives can EMC partners look forward to in the next 12 months?**

Our SMB, and thus our new VNX portfolio, is going to be a big focus area for us, and for this we are implementing a channel program to tackle this fast growing, new market opportunity. We will recruit partners to support the SMB market, align our incentives program to promote more VAR recruitment, and make training simpler (through online modules, for example). A key to this is also to improve partner policies, processes and systems. We will also invest in demand generation for partners. For our focus to offer the One EMC value propositions in storage; backup; de-duplication; case management automation; governance, risk and compliance; and security; we will work with partners to enable customers on their journey to the cloud.

We are also seeing traction from our enhanced EMC Velocity Solution Provider program in India. ■