

## My moment of reckoning

**DHAVAL VALIA**



Last fortnight, I was invited to attend the annual day of Mumbai-based VDA Infosolutions. My first such experience attending the *Annual Company Day* of a partner organization.

There were over 300 employees of VDA, and nearly 25 of its prime customer CIOs and several of its key vendor managers at the annual day.

As a journalist my interaction is largely with the heads of partner organizations—this was different as I got an interesting 360 degree view of what makes up the organization—people, culture, vendors and customers.

I sensed that the average age of the 300-odd employees present at the event was less than 30 years, and most of them were technical people who worked onsite to support customers' IT infrastructure—many could not make it to the event as they were at customer site doing night shift.

I happened to speak to one of the under-25 year employee who told me that he spends most of this working time at the customer site and visits his company's office mostly for weekly and fortnightly training.

"While I work for VDA, I am an integral part of the customer team, and the IT team there considers me as one of their members," he said, of course in Hindi.

Interestingly I met up with a couple of customer CIOs of India's leading companies who came to the event wearing VDA shirt. When I asked them if their company would not object to it, one of the CIO said, "VDA is part of us as they are integral to our IT infrastructure and management, and thus to our business. Everyone in our team including the CEO and CFO acknowledge this fact and I am just expressing my gratitude to the contribution made by VDA to our organizational growth over the years."

It was truly my moment of reckoning. I have been covering the IT channel for over 10 years, but never had the opportunity to get a 360-degree view of the IT channel's overall contribution in growing the customer business.

Had it not been for the IT partner ecosystem, many customers would have hesitated to deploy IT. The critical role that IT plays in businesses today would never have been realized by thousands of companies, and what would have happened to the IT vendors—many would have never grown to the size they are today.

So each of the IT channel partner should take pride in what they have achieved not just for themselves or their companies or their customers but for the IT industry as a whole.

As for me, I am looking forward to attend more annual day of a partner organization. ■

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