UAE's IT Industry Gathers in Dubai for IDC's IT Forum 2019, with Focus on Enabling Innovation for the Digital Age

Dubai – International Data Corporation (IDC) today hosted the 2019 edition of its annual IT Forum in Dubai, with more than 200 senior IT executives gathering at the city's Address Dubai Marina to hear expert advice on developing an effective and agile digital transformation platform that can sustain, advance, and scale business operations in preparation for an era of multiplied innovation.

Running under the theme 'Future Innovation Accelerators', the event brought together IT professionals from across the UAE's diverse vertical spectrum, as respected industry thought leaders outlined their unique insights into the game-changing opportunities that exist for organizations looking to future-proof their enterprises by embracing the very latest digital transformation best practices.

Manish Ranjan, IDC's Program Manager for software & cloud in the Middle East, Turkey, and Africa (META), opened proceedings by delivering the event's keynote on 'Innovation Accelerators: Enabling the Future Enterprise', during which he advised organizations to rethink their approach to digital transformation following a series high-profile failures, elusive ROIs, and innovation being treated as a sideshow.

"Learning from the mistakes of others, organizations across the region are increasingly reshaping their digital visions," said Ranjan. "With greater clarity about what the future enterprise will look like and what it will take to compete in redefined industries, companies are pivoting away from 'digital for the sake of innovation' to 'digital for the sake of the business'. The time has come for a laser focus on applying digital technologies to address the future of work, customer engagement, intelligence, operations, and leadership."

Expanding on this theme, IDC's Krishna Chinta, program manager for telecommunications and IoT in the META region, introduced the day's next session 'The IoT Journey: Where Do You Actually Start?', which included a panel discussion featuring first-hand insights from Jonathan Richards, head of product at Dubicars.com; Rohit Jayakaran, director of digital marketing at Dubai Parks & Resorts; and Manish Sharma, group financial controller at Oasis Investments. To derive concrete value from their IoT investments, the panelists urged organizations to move away from betting on futuristic and hypothetical solutions and focus on pragmatic use cases that can produce immediate results.

Ranjit Rajan, IDC's associate vice president for research and consulting in the META region then hosted a further two panel discussions with some of the region's foremost experts on the issues of automation and cybersecurity. The first of these sessions, 'Next-Generation Automation Using AI and Robotics', explored the ethical and societal implications of increasing automation, showcasing the thoughts of Ali Juma AlAjme, Director of Health information systems at the UAE's Ministry of Health; Binoo Joseph, CIO at Emaar; Mohamed Roushdy, CIO at Dubai Asset Management; Haroun Khwaja, senior associate at Al Tamimi & Co; and Jayakumar Mohanchandran, head of IT at Precision Group.

"As intelligence moves to the edge and AI-enabled experiences become the norm, we need to properly consider the ethical and potentially societal changing ramifications of future AI development," said Rajan as he introduced the session. "How do we create the right levels of oversight that can protect us but not stifle critical innovation? How do we properly consider data in its raw form and build solutions that protect customer values throughout the stack? And finally, what roles do governments, suppliers, researchers, and the public play by working together? Only by understanding the ethical, epistemological, personal, and legal aspects of the data can we hope to empower a future of trusted AI."

The second of the panel discussions chaired by Rajan centered on the need for organizations to reinvent their cybersecurity strategies for the digital age. Featuring insights from Mahmoud Yassin, head of information security at United Arab Bank; Rajendra Nath Srivastava, head of IT at IFFCO Group; and respected UAE government expert Dr. Mahmoud Khaled, organizations were urged to treat the reinforcement of digital trust as a key strategic priority, particularly as the pursuit of all things digital will inevitably multiply the risks and potential entry points for intrusions.

A number of leading technology stakeholders partnered with IDC for the IT Forum 2019 in Dubai, including OutSystems as Platinum Partner; Commvault, CommScope, and Gulf Bridge International as Technology Track Partners; Global Knowledge, Freshworks, ManageEngine, SAS, and ProCons as Exhibit Partners; and Bitdefender as Breakfast Briefing Partner.

To learn more about IT Forum 2019, please visit www.idc.com/mea/events/66405-idc-it-forum-2019. Alternatively, you can join the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag **#IDCITFORUM**.

About IDC

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. With more than 1,100 analysts worldwide, IDC offers global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries. IDC's analysis and insight helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community to make fact-based technology decisions and to achieve their key business objectives. Founded

in 1964, IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company. To learn more about IDC, please visit www.idc.com. Follow IDC on Twitter at @IDC.

IDC in the Middle East, Turkey, and Africa

For the Middle East, Turkey, and Africa region, IDC retains a coordinated network of offices in Riyadh, Nairobi, Lagos, Johannesburg, Cairo, and Istanbul, with a regional center in Dubai. Our coverage couples local insight with an international perspective to provide a comprehensive understanding of markets in these dynamic regions. Our market intelligence services are unparalleled in depth, consistency, scope, and accuracy. IDC Middle East, Africa, and Turkey currently fields over 130 analysts, consultants, and conference associates across the region. To learn more about IDC MEA, please visit www.idc.com/mea. You can follow IDC MEA on Twitter at @IDCMEA.

About IDC

IDC is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology and telecommunications industries. IDC helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based decisions on technology purchases and business strategy. Over 775 IDC analysts in 50 countries provide global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends. For more than 40 years, IDC has provided strategic insights to help our clients achieve their key business objectives. IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company. You can learn more about IDC by visiting http://www.idc.com/.

IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company. Additional information can be found at www.idc.com.

All product and company names may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective holders.

For more information contact:

Sheila Manek
smanek@idc.com
+971 4 446 3154