



Spotlight on Success

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HubOne Achieves Success by Knowing its Niche

HubOne is a pioneering Australian cloud integrator which, since 2008, has helped thousands of organisations make the move to the cloud. A large part of HubOne's success can be attributed to its continued focus on a subset of the market. This means that HubOne knows its customers well and can address their specific problems.

CompTIA: Can you provide an overview of the business?

Nick: HubOne is a pioneering Australian cloud integrator which, since 2008, has helped thousands of organisations make the move to the cloud. HubOne's flagship end-to-end cloud solution, the Modern Practice Architecture, comprises a set of technology components designed to service the unique needs of accounting firms.

HubOne was one of the first integrators in the Asia Pacific region to sell cloud solutions for email. Now, by provisioning a range of products and services via a growing partner channel network, we help all sorts of organisations in the financial services sector move to the cloud.

CompTIA: What sets the company apart from its competitors?

Nick: There are a number of points that differentiate HubOne in the market. First and foremost, we were an early pioneer of cloud integration. Additionally, our vertical specialisation has really helped to carve out a solid market share within the industry.

We're very single-minded in delivering our solutions to accountants first, and financial services second. This means that we know our market and our clients extremely well. HubOne has always made a point of focusing squarely on accounting and financial services. This focus has given us the ability to really understand the sectors and design the best solutions to meet their needs.

CompTIA: Who are your typical customers?

Nick: Typical customers and clients of HubOne tend to be accountants and financial services firms at the small and medium-sized end of town.

CompTIA: What challenges do you see in the local IT channel?

Nick: The rush to cloud computing is one of the biggest challenges the IT channel is facing today. This is no secret. Apart from the technology changes resulting from the race to cloud computing, there is the operational challenge of adapting to new business models that are arising from the cloud trend.



Organisations and individuals are looking to consume cloud-based IT on a subscription basis. The people buying technology are also changing. Channel providers used to primarily deal with IT professionals. Now, IT customers are increasingly C-level business executives and department heads looking for solutions. This means that we all have to speak the same language now, which requires new skills.

CompTIA: What opportunities do you see in the local IT channel?

Nick: Taking people and organisations to the cloud and offering a subscription-based delivery and billing model is an enormous opportunity for channel providers that are embracing cloud. There are opportunities opening up in the more traditional areas as well, with some organisations doubling down on more conventional technology by finding new ways to use and offer it.

Either way being successful requires a re-thinking of old models and systems. Those partner players that are unwilling to make changes will have a hard time. There's little opportunity in continuing to do the same thing you've done for the past 20 years.

CompTIA: What successes have you had over the past year?

Nick: Over the past year, HubOne has doubled its customer-base. We've also launched and started to build up our partner channel. We've now got more than 20 partners. At the same time, we've announced a significant engagement with Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, the peak body representing chartered accountants in the local region.

We've grown our business and won new engagements over the past 12 months. This is partly because of the changes we've made by moving to a purely subscription-based service and partly because we've continued to focus heavily on a subset of the market. Small and medium-sized accounting firms are our area of expertise. We know them well, and we know their problems well. This gives us the opportunity to design and offer the best solutions.

If we had approached the market as a generalist, we wouldn't have had the success we've had. Instead, we have a specific niche and we've written the software for it. That's what makes us attractive to our partners, and also to their customers.

CompTIA: What are your plans for the year ahead?

Nick: In the year ahead, we plan to consolidate our customer base and increase our partner channel. We also expect to do some do some central deals and deliver those through our partner channel.

CompTIA: What advice can you give other IT channel players?

Nick: I've learned that you need to embrace change. We're still operating in a fairly young industry, and embracing change is important. However, understanding the new buyers in today's market is really key. It will help you find or develop new solutions that are specific to your client's needs. This has the potential to make you unique in your offering, meaning you can get more customers or charge a premium.





No matter what else you're doing, the most important thing is to understand the industry you've decided to focus on and understanding your customers in that industry area. Understanding the industry well gives you the ability to have the business-focused conversations with today's IT buyers, shortening the sales cycle and building long-term relationships.

