Letter from the Editor

By: Scott St. John

It's getting dicey out there. The pandemic rages on, as the world passes a grim milestone of 3 million COVID deaths globally, and patients in hardest-hit regions such as India run out of hospital space, burial grounds, and oxygen. Businesses have been forced to transform to survive and embrace our new global reality. At the same time, cyberattacks, including those sponsored by nation states and aimed at medical institutions, are on the rise as geopolitical tensions between China, Russia, and the US heat up.

Apple made it onto the notorious list of cybercrime victims, as their supplier Quanta was hit with a 50-million-dollar ransomware attack, holding new product development data hostage – while releasing it to the public over the internet, as the demand amount increases. Apple joins a growing list companies such as Microsoft and SolarWinds who have fallen victim to the increase of cybercrime.

Meanwhile, the market is hot. 5G is gaining ground, as is the application of technologies such as AI, IoT and more. The playing field is growing increasingly competitive, and level, as operators and enterprises struggle to differentiate their offering from the myriad of other offerings available. It's harder to think of who doesn't have hot tech, rather than who does. 5G? Just about everyone. AI? IBM, Microsoft, Google, C3.ai, Mobileum, Netcracker, Federos, and Subex, off the top of my head. Video Conferencing? Take your pick: Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, RingCentral, Webex, GoToMeeting and on and on. As for 'more competitive,' major hyperscalers are now moving into mobile networks including Google, AWS, Azure, and Equinox – perhaps as the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing. But the message is clear, transform or die.

As businesses adjust to this rapidly shifting landscape, they are counting on and need – now more than ever – the systems that support their operations and help them transform. Last month, we took a look at [Digital Transformation](#), and now we take a deeper dive into the specific technologies and approaches that help smooth enterprises' digital transformation journey.

And this road isn't always smooth. It's rife with cracks, crevices, forks, pitfalls and potholes. Many enterprises have [hundreds of disparate systems, networks, and applications](#). All of which need to work seamlessly together to do the seemingly simple task of enterprise operations. Leveraging the latest support systems technology to digitally transform is helping organizations thrive despite the dicey landscape. But, transformation done wrong can have devastating consequences. Which is why this issue of *Pipeline* is so important.

In this issue of *Pipeline*, we explore a broad set of systems that are supporting today's business operations. Spector Information Security tells us how enterprises can [prevent the potentially devastating consequences of ransomware attacks](#). We explore ways to [mitigate risk and compliance, and empower lawful intercept](#), with lawful intelligence from SS8 Networks. We sit down with the CTO of Aryaka, to discuss the impact of [digital transformation for enterprises](#), and how enterprises can begin their DT journey. Subex covers [five key trends for digital trust](#). Netcracker tells us how [AI-driven operations are being combined with B/OSS to unlock the potential of 5G](#). Maxbill looks at taming the complexity for [B2B2B and B2B2X billing and partner management](#) in gaming and applies that to cross-industry digital transformation. Connected2Fiber looks at the need for [systematic support for next-generation networks](#) using SD-WAN. We spotlight Carma, who is burying the infrastructure, [integrating B/OSS with Dynamics CRM](#), and adding a host of new innovative functionalities such as AR and CAD/CAM to it. Principal analyst, Mark Mortensen provides [an OSS retrospective and looks at the future of OSS](#), and *Pipeline*'s Dr. Mark Cummings sounds the [last call for telcos](#) as hyperscalers advance their encroachment on wireless services, and the mobile network itself. All this plus the latest [industry news](#) and [more](#).

We hope you enjoy this and every issue of *Pipeline*,

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