

Observatory Crest: True value-added distribution

Observatory Crest takes value-added distribution seriously. And those efforts are paying off for their vendors, their reseller partners and ultimately, end users.

"We have assembled a suite of complementary security, infrastructure management and application delivery solutions that address very real challenges for today's mid-sized and larger enterprises," says Paul Grover, founder and managing director of Wellington-based Observatory Crest. "But more importantly we have made the strategic decision to support these products 100%. By that we mean that we go beyond traditional distribution. We strive to offer significant value at each step of the sales process from technical training, helping resellers identify opportunities, qualifying prospects, selecting solutions and configurations through demonstrations and post-sales support. We don't simply sell products. We help our resellers provide best-of-breed solutions that nurture and grow revenue streams for the long-term."

The ICT industry is evolving as more and more enterprises move from the 'ad hoc' approach to growth and re-engineer their business processes to adhere to 'best practice' policies. "Until recently," notes Grover, "enterprises have taken

the 'number 8' wire approach to infrastructure management, security and compliance. But now, with more threats on the horizon, more data moving around and more users taking advantage of mobile computing, a few scripts and informal policies are no longer cost-effective or adequate. What we've done at Observatory Crest is to bring together a set of solutions that help ease the transition from disparate systems into a coherent, easily manageable, secure and scalable architecture."



Paul Grover

Product knowledge - key to success

Education - for both reseller partners and end users - is a key consideration for Observatory Crest. "We provide multiple levels of training for all parties," continues Grover. "We regularly host vendor-sponsored training on specific technologies in both Auckland and Wellington. In addition, we can coordinate on-line training for individual staff or customers. Plus

we are proactive in face-to-face sessions where we can set up demonstration equipment and really explore all of the features and benefits of the particular product. We can do these hands-on sessions at your premises or at the customer's facility. Often times the concepts can seem rather esoteric to prospects and, in those cases, a demo can really

have an impact on the sales process."

Observatory Crest's hands-on, value-added approach is proving to be successful. "We have appeared on the Deloitte 'Fast 50' list in NZ multiple times and were on the Australian list for 2011," explains Grover, "in spite of opening our Australian office only three years ago. Because we have kept our product set relatively compact we can specialise in just a few areas of high growth and opportunity and where the needs are especially demanding. The phenomenal expansion of cloud-based computing, data centre consolidation and remote access have put major strains on many enterprises and our solution sets are optimised to help them not just cope with these challenges but to help them reap the benefits that they afford."

Reseller recruitment

Right now Observatory Crest is looking to expand their reseller base. "We're ahead of the curve with our product mix," says Grover, "having anticipated the directions in which the industry is heading. As a result, we can offer our resellers an unequalled line-up of complementary products that fill very real needs. Our ideal reseller has a fairly technical staff and a cross-section of clients in the 25+ seat market. We work especially well with systems integrators, security specialists and network organisations. Our solutions work across almost all vertical markets from local and central government through health and finance to services and hospitality."

Close support is another differentiator between Observatory Crest and others. "Because we focus just on a few quality brands," says Grover, "we have extremely tight relationships with the vendors. In fact two vendors, ArcSight and MobileIron, have recently appointed local representatives

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AT A GLANCE

Key vendors

- F5 Networks - Application delivery networking
- ArcSight - Security and compliance management
- MobileIron - Mobile device management
- Axway - Optimised business transactions
- Arbor Networks - Network security

Key services

- True value-added distribution
- Training and education
- Pre- and post-sales support
- Demonstrations and customer liaison

in New Zealand to help facilitate all the business we are pushing their way. We are always in constant communications with our vendors and consider them as an extension of our own team."

Managed services

One area to watch is the provision of managed services. "Many of our solutions lend themselves quite nicely to a managed services model," says Grover. "This means you can offer the benefits of these products to your clients as a service. Not only does this make it easier for your clients to buy into the solution but it also provides a regular revenue stream for the reseller. We see this particular market as one poised to have a huge impact on the whole distributor / reseller / user relationship. So we've made a conscious effort to work with vendors - and resellers - who share our vision."



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