

“This partnership will enable us to drive innovation and efficiency faster in the energy management sector” – Labib Matta, NXN

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NXN, a thought leader in smart cities and next generation technology innovations domains recently announced a strategic agreement with telecommunications operator, EITC (du), to help accelerate the deployment of smart energy solutions within various industries across the UAE. Telecom Review managed to secure an exclusive with NXN's chief business officer, Labib Matta, in an effort to find out more about this innovative partnership.

In what was an engaging and insightful interview, Matta outlined the benefits of the collaboration with du, and expressed his confidence that together they can both achieve their primary objectives of improving sustainability in the energy sector. Moreover, he highlighted the capabilities of NXN's DNX platform and how the partnership with du will drive a faster and more efficient go-to-market.

Can you elaborate on how your recent partnership agreement with du will help bring smart energy solutions to buildings and facilities all across the UAE?

We're very excited about the partnership agreement with EITC (du). This is a very strategic agreement which will allow us to position and deploy our energy measurement services across the UAE by leveraging the du infrastructure, reach and go-to-market capabilities. That's really some of the distinct advantages of this partnership in the sense that the technology, innovation platform and service are leveraging our platform hosted at du; du positions the energy management service as

part of their enterprise services portfolio. Accordingly, they add to the connectivity, hosting, support and the reach capability. This combination is very synergetic, and allows both of us to go fast-to-market - rather than each party doing it on its own. If we were going to do this independently then it would take much longer - we'd have to engage in multiple technology evaluations and commercial collaborations which will take a considerable amount of time. Working together allows us to accelerate the delivery of the service and its scaling for new features leveraging advanced technologies.

Can you outline to us in detail how NXN is using its DNX platform to help industries and cities meet their sustainability goals and objectives in an effort to reduce their carbon footprint?

Sustainability is hugely important and is globally evidenced by the Sustainable Development Goals led by the United Nations Climate Change Group. Sustainability is an extensive topic, and it boils down to efficient usage of natural resources. We need to make better use of these resources by reducing waste, inefficiencies and improper consumption of these resources.

Focusing on energy specifically, we're looking at how we can leverage smart energy services to impact operational efficiency and sustainability measures with various entities. Each entity, depending on their industry and corporate objectives, would have to achieve clear sustainability metrics. A lot of these measures and KPIs can be impacted by the smart services that we offer on our DNX platform.

So, the DNX platform is basically a digital services enabler. Specifically, the case of the smart energy management service allows us to positively impact sustainability requirements and metrics that are needed by our customers in various industries to reduce their consumption, reduce their carbon footprint, improve their operational efficiency and meet their sustainability goals.

It's become very evident how important it is to develop more efficient and sustainable services and solutions. Can you highlight to us what NXN's role is in the energy management sector?

The energy management sector builds on an extensive value chain from production, to distribution to consumption. Our role is exactly what we're trying to do currently through this partnership with du, which is to leverage our DNX platform as well as our core skills and experience in the various sectors, specifically the energy sector in this case, to create value for our customers and help them achieve their corporate goals in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Our primary objective is to provide innovative solutions that would have clear business and sustainability benefits. We do this by helping the businesses reduce their consumption, reduce their utilities cost, eliminate inefficiencies thus optimizing their energy operational costs, thus improving their bottom line in a cost-efficient managed services model.

What are the key functionalities and features of the energy management service offered by NXN platform? And who can benefit from it?

The energy management service is geared to four key sectors, which are the commercial sector, the hospitality sector, the industrial sector and the data centres. Beyond the initial assessment which is ASHRAE audit-based, and the definition of the baseline of the current energy consumption that the customer is incurring, we recommend and implement various measures to improve the energy consumption - and then continuously monitor and optimize the consumption in assessing the processes and actions that have been put in place to achieve the needed efficiencies.

Our energy management service provides multiple KPIs levels geared to various levels and focus in the customer's organization. It provides operational KPIs relevant to the people operating the facility, like facility and operational managers. The service also provides business level KPIs, related to business efficiency, operational costs improvement, return on assets, etc. For example, a CXO level executive would be interested in finding out ultimately how much operational and utility savings are achieved, return on investment, improvement in asset value.

The electricity consumption management service is just the start, as energy management encompasses electricity, water and waste. There is also an immense opportunity on the water side by tracking and reducing water leakage, optimizing water usage and the same goes for various aspects of waste management. The key difference in this service is that it's not purely a technical service that is reading the data and then affecting processes and measures in order to improve the consumption, but also giving a business view and an operational view to the executives to monitor their business performance, KPIs compliance progress and ultimately sustainability objectives.

Can you tell us what the planned scalability of the NXN DNX platform is in terms of expanding the breadth of services offered?

The DNX platform is the digital platform enabler for our smart digital services. Energy management is one of the services, but obviously there are more provided services that are leveraging the platform. We have actually categorized our services into two types: pre-defined services that fall under the smart district or smart city services, like smart energy, smart water, smart security and smart waste already built into the platform, and are readily offered to market in a managed services approach.

The other type of services provided by the DNX platform are tailor made services, developed in response to market and industry demand. We have the ability to leverage the inherent capabilities of the DNX platform from IoT data ingestion to analytics, to advanced technologies like blockchain and artificial intelligence to develop new services as well as improve the functionality and features of pre-defined services. Ultimately, these tailor made services will become part of our pre-defined services portfolio offered to the market.