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MicroWorld charts expansion plans

By Tabrez Khan

End-point security vendor MicroWorld is planning to increase its presence in B and C-class cities, and aims to triple its channel base over the next one year.

"These cities offer tremendous growth potential, especially since the prices of security products have dropped over the last year to become more affordable for SOHOs and SMBs in smaller cities," said Sunil Kripalani, Vice President, Global Sales and Marketing, MicroWorld.

He said the company's focus on the consumer segment has also increased over the last one year due to the growing awareness and interest among consumers about security products.

"The sale of security products is directly proportional to the sale of PCs, and we have witnessed the consumerization of all sorts of data security products, even in B and C-class cities. We therefore plan to increase our focus on these smaller cities to tap the growing consumer and SOHO base there."

In addition, MicroWorld is looking at national distributors (NDs) to aid its expansion. "We did not want to go the reverse way by first appointing NDs and then expanding our channel base, hence we established our channel first. We are now open to national relationships to increase our breadth, and we will look at players with a wide national reach who can help us to increase our penetration levels by 3-4 times," said Kripalani.

According to him, the vendor also plans to boost its technical support by hiring 80-100 engineers over the next one year. Although MicroWorld provides free 24x7 online and toll-free [phone] support, onsite support was emerging as an important differentiator for security vendors, Kripalani said. "In India and the rest of south Asia onsite support is preferred; we are therefore strengthening our technical team to be able to provide support not only in metros but also in B and C-class cities."

Kripalani revealed that MicroWorld was considering a number of global and regional tie-



ups with PC vendors and motherboard OEMs to increase the offtake of its security products and further enhance its brand image. "We have been talking to players such as Acer, Asus, MSI and Gigabyte, and discussions are at an advanced stage for global tie-ups with some of them. We recently announced a global tie-up with motherboard vendor Biostar to bundle our antivirus with their motherboards. Locally, we had a short-term arrangement with Rashi Peripherals for bundling our e-Scan Internet Security suite with the motherboard brands they distribute, and we plan to extend that relationship."

On the products front, Kripalani said that MicroWorld has several initiatives lined up. These include making its products compatible with mobile operating systems, launching Mac-compatible products, and strengthening its management console's compatibility with the Microsoft Management Console.



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