

# 'Cisco wants to export innovations through partners'

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Wendy Bahr, Senior Vice-President of networking major Cisco's Global Partner Organization, manages and supports over 60,000 global partners. The global connected partner ecosystem accounts for over 85 per cent of its revenue (\$49 billion). Bahr, who reports to CEO Chuck Robbins, replaced Bruce Klein in July this year, becoming the first woman to don that role in Cisco. On a recent visit to India, Bahr told BusinessLine that the India Partner Organization is strategic to Cisco as India is one of the company's key emerging markets. Edited excerpts:

## How strategic is the India Partner Organization to Cisco?

The Partner Organization is extremely important to Cisco.

co's business globally. In India, the Partner Organization contributes to over 90 per cent of the annual revenue generated here. We have over 2,500 partners in India, which is one of our key emerging markets with a good growth trajectory over the last four quarters. The India team has put in great efforts on opportunities, whether they be the national programmes, solutions

or commercial opportunities. In India, we are leading in Internet of Things and in

applications. Through our partners we want to export a lot of innovation that is happening out of India to other parts of the world. Our large SI partners are Infosys, TCS, Wipro, HCL and Cognizant; manufacturing partners are Rockwell, Yokogawa, Honeywell, software partners are SAP, MapR, and master system integrator partners are L&T and ILFS, to name a few.

**Cisco India is targeting revenue of \$5 billion by 2020. Are you planning to deepen engagement with your partners to meet that goal?**

We will do all of that and much more. The challenge we face right now is that customers

want more than just great technology; they want positive business outcomes. Many of our loyal traditional partners are telling us that we need to do more together, differently. For instance, we need to bring in part-

ners like SAP and MapR; ILFS, L&T and Covacsis to create customer-centric solutions. In the past we have been a manufacturer and sold our products through a partner who is a reseller, which we will continue.

However, it is important that we now add to that by bringing multiple partners together or having a very large partner bringing on new capabilities through acquisitions, through application developers, that can provide solutions that are outside of IT as well.

**What are the revenue opportunities you want to address along with your partners outside of IT?**

We see tremendous opportunity for new buyers such as a Vice-President of Human Resources and a Chief Marketing Officer.

The former may be concerned about attracting and retaining top talent through a better experience with IT tools and communications.

The latter will be interested in taking data from consum-

ers, analysing it and coming up with competitive approaches based on that data to deliver superior customer experience.

Similarly, Chief Digitisation Officers are also among new buyers. Many buyers are now starting to have budgets and are empowered to decide what they need to deliver business results.

While our partners have played a strong role in the success we have had with IT Chief Information Officers, they can now help us bridge conversations with these new buyers.

**Any new opportunity that you are looking to provide solutions for in India?**

Two very crucial areas that we want to provide solutions for new businesses wanting to come to India are supply chain and logistics.

These businesses want to know how they can get a better, more agile opportunity to improve their supply chain and logistics with the end goal of reducing operating expense, improving margins and reacting faster to what customers, suppliers and manufacturers are asking for.

The digitisation opportunity is also huge for e-commerce firms in India; IoT, IoE (Internet of Everything) and Digital Analytics are the other big areas that we are focused on.

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WENDY BAHR,  
Senior Vice-President,  
Cisco's Global Partner  
Organization