Nominee: WhatMatrix

Nomination title: Comparing Datacentre Solutions so you don't have to!

WhatMatrix - the crowdsourced consultancy community platform - officially launched in December 2015 with many additions and enhancements made to its comparison matrix during 2016. WhatMatrix is the first crowdsourced-powered IT comparison community and is changing the consultancy landscape. By providing free curated and "always-online" technology comparisons through respected industry experts, WhatMatrix significantly reduces the time and cost spent on researching suitable technologies to solve today's business challenges.

WhatMatrix's goal is to provide unbiased and meaningful product information in an industry segment that is dominated by proprietary marketing assets (e.g. tables with all "green" vs "all red" that avoid limitations and technical depth. The information provided allows the consumer to apply it to THEIR environment in order to make an informed product or purchase decision. The comparison matrix allows the reader to quickly (visually) identify strengths and weaknesses through a colour coded evaluation, explore detailed product information and even print free comparison reports for further use.

During 2016 six new comparisons were published and eight new category consultants joined the community. WhatMatrix currently provides comparisons for the following categories:

• **Software Defined Storage and Hyperconverged Systems**

• **Cloud Storage Gateways**

• **Disaster Recovery for Virtual Environments**

• **Cloud Management Platforms**

• **Backup in Virtual Environments**

• **Virtualisation Platforms**

• **Application Delivery Controllers**

• **Unified Device Management**

New categories to be introduced this year will, amongst others, include Public Cloud Services, End User Computing (EUC), that will also include vGPU, and Application Virtualisation.

We also continue to update the WhatMatrix platform with significant functionality & usability enhancements. Recent enhancements include open community-driven curation, product ratings and reviews and the ability to generate an evaluation report.

New features coming soon include the ability to prioritise evaluation criteria and scores based on the viewers' actual use case, as well as the generation of custom reports. In addition, WhatMattrix will start to publish "Landscape Reports" – complementing the currency and depth of WhatMatrix "always online" comparisons with a reflective summary of the respective industry segment Starting with the SDS & HCI Landscape Rrport, the reports will include key industry trends, top-level analysis of vendor capabilities and a forward looking view that enables the reader to make even more information product purchase decisions.

A comment on our launch blog sums up the value of WhatMatrix delivers from an end user's perspective:

 "I believe that there's a growing demand for deep-domain expertise that IT buyers crave — knowledge of specific enterprise technologies, combined with industry vertical experience. The challenge, in the past, has been finding the most qualified resources via the typical approaches — i.e performing a keyword search via Google. That being said, I believe that your community-based approached to sourcing insight and guidance from a collective of proven IT consultant practitioners is very timely."

We work very closely with the vendor community to ensure we factually represent their company's technology solution(s) and have received the following supporting statement from SimpliVity (prior to their acquisition by HPE):

"For us at SimpliVity, we work with WhatMatrix to provide pre-GA updates, working with the category owner and then ensuring we validate the published information in technical review sessions," commented Katie Curtin-Mestre, VP of Product Marketing and Content, SimpliVity. "Hyperconverged infrastructure is just starting to enter mainstream adoption, so we appreciate all the work WhatMatrix and, in particular the SDS & HCI category consultant, Herman Rutten, do to help educate the community."

WhatMatrix comparisons enable end users and consultants alike to take the drudgery and effort out of comparing data centre technologies based on our easy to use platform. We eliminate the majority of research that many companies spend an inordinate amount of time on – too often even prior to considering a proof of concept or pilot phase. We aim to accelerate informed decision making and time to deployment by providing experience, knowledge and unbiased information for the IT user community.

At the same time the comparison platform offers vendors a unique mechanism to raise product visibility and brand awareness by publishing consumable product details, linking to assets and articulating target use cases for these products.

Why nominee should win

- WhatMatrix is a worthy winner of this innovation award as there is no other solution like it available in the market today that are "always online", curate and absolutely free

- WhatMatrix is unique in its structure; utilising subject matter experts, who conduct their analysis and comparisons and combine it with Open Community Curation for the benefit of the IT user community

- WhatMatrix is a global initiative that has rapidly increasing number of category consultants based in all four corners of the world – demonstrating a new community-based consultancy model for the industry

- The number of viewers of the site has grown exponentially since launch, indicating that IT professionals are looking for insightful, unbiased and independent information