

Q&A with Ken Kennedy and James Kirby

A New Era of Digital Transformation for Service Providers

Two executives from CSG, a purpose-driven, high-growth SaaS platform company, weigh in on economic uncertainty, the role of CSPs in aiding the transition to the digital age, 5G and more.

As 2023 promises continued innovation and digital transformation, **BROADBAND COMMUNITIES** asked a couple of telecom industry experts for their thoughts on what to expect in the new year. Ken Kennedy, COO and president of revenue management and digital monetization, and James Kirby, senior vice president of global telco at CSG, share their predictions about the future of digital transformation in broadband and beyond and what people can expect from the economy and communications service providers (CSPs) in 2023. Following are highlights of the conversation.



Ken Kennedy

BROADBAND COMMUNITIES:

As 2023 unfolds, economic uncertainty is front and center for everyone. How can enterprises stay on top of their technology and everything else?

KEN KENNEDY: With economic uncertainty in the market, enterprises will be challenged to rethink legacy systems that are both limiting and expensive. In 2023, enterprises will embrace cloud-based platforms that lower operational expenditures and free up critical capital for more impactful investments. The economy will push many enterprises to fully embrace the next generation of tech and leave behind the older systems they've relied on in the past but won't effectively support future needs. Consider it a blessing in disguise – change is always challenging, so it's often avoided for as long as possible, but this is evidence of push coming to shove.

BBC: *What role will CSPs play in aiding the transition to the digital age?*

KK: CSPs will have to be ready to help enterprises of all sizes transition to the digital age with the possibilities, higher capacity and lower latency of 5G. Digital connectivity is the key to this top-to-bottom transformation, and CSPs will be uniquely positioned to assemble industry-specific solutions for manufacturing, gaming, health care, retail, public

safety, entertainment and supply chain management. CSPs know the game of connectivity, and this is where that knowledge and skill set can be applied for the gain of everyone involved.

BBC: *Let's get specific. What industries do you see benefiting the most from these changes?*

KK: 5G will, of course, transform every industry, but one that it will help dramatically is health care. CSPs have the power to transform the health care industry. Low-latency connectivity, guaranteed quality of service, and the development of life-saving devices are all vital to



James Kirby

telehealth, which has seen a surge in popularity over the past few years. So too have cutting-edge advanced medical technologies. Brand-new technologies such as the IoT, artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality and edge computing can make all the difference regarding life-saving measures and unrestricted access to care. Tools such as AI will be able to honestly fill in the gaps in human capabilities, and the level of medical care will no longer depend on what humans can do. In 2023, CSPs will be able to advance their health care industry offerings – both as connectivity and tech providers – and play an important role in ushering in the next era of health care.

BBC: *It sounds like CSPs will become invaluable partners to enterprises and businesses alike in this new era*

of digital transformation. Can you elaborate?

JAMES KIRBY: In 2022, a new dynamic emerged: CSPs delivered connectivity as a service and enabled partners to launch new services quickly. This drove demand for CSP services. In 2023 and beyond, CSPs' success will hinge on their ability to find the right partners and manage the partner ecosystem. Doing so will require them to build processes to seamlessly onboard new partners; provide easy integration; and streamline charging, billing and partner settlements.

BBC: *Circling back to the first question – how do businesses justify these essential partnerships in this time of economic uncertainty?*

JK: The backdrop of the current economic climate will change the

way businesses contract with CSPs in 2023. As a potential recession looms, now is the time for CSPs to embrace partnerships and seize new opportunities to solve underlying industry challenges. For example, they should provide consumers with the flexibility of security-as-a-service, including VPN, MVNO and 5G packages that help ensure their networks are secure because business customers increasingly work from extensive locations. For CSPs, adaptivity and willingness to take risks will be key contributors to growth in the new year. No matter what, growth is the goal, and it's now more critical than ever. If they haven't before, businesses should start to look at CSPs as they explore every avenue to aid in this growth. 🙌



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