

Satya Nadella Becomes Microsoft New CEO



Microsoft recently declared that co-founder Bill Gates will step down as chairman of the board to spend his time with the company advising the new CEO, Hyderabad-born Satya Nadella.

The change is historic. "This is a milestone, an indication of not only a changing of the guard in Microsoft, but also a change in the technology

business between the past and the future," said Patrick Moorhead, principal analyst at Moor Insights & Strategy. Gates has been Microsoft's one and only chairman.

"The past means software on PCs, the future is about mobile devices where most of the processing is happening in the cloud, and where the client moves to online app stores," Moorhead explained.

Gates' new title will be "Founder and Technology Advisor," and he will remain on the board of directors, Microsoft said Tuesday. In his place as chairman, Microsoft has selected John Thompson, a former CEO of security firm Symantec and the director who led the CEO-search committee. Thompson joined the board two years ago.

The move doesn't mean that Gates is returning full-time, but he will be significantly increasing his involvement. By assisting Nadella, who was named CEO, Gates will fulfill that promise.

Gates, 58, has been Microsoft's sole chairman since its birth 39 years ago. He co-founded the company with Paul Allen, who left the firm in 2000, and is now best known as the owner of the Seattle Seahawks ■

Windows XP Cutoff Poses Breach Risk for Retailers

Retailers will face an increased risk of data breaches after Microsoft ends support for Windows XP, a version of which powers the majority of modern cash registers, security vendor Symantec warned in a report published on February 3, 2014. Many point-of-sale (POS) devices run the Windows XP version of Windows Embedded, a scaled-down version of the operating system designed for devices such as set-top boxes and vehicle computers. Microsoft will no longer provide security patches for Windows XP as of April 8, when it ends support for the 13-year-old OS.

"This event will certainly place POS operators under increased risk of a successful attack, and POS operators should already have mitigation plans in place to meet this coming deadline," Symantec's 12-page report said.

Security experts theorize that POS hackers are either attacking the terminals directly from the Internet or are finding another way into company networks by exploiting other software vulnerabilities.

Companies handling payment card data are required by Visa and MasterCard to follow industry security practices, known as the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS). Those standards recommend but do not require retailers to isolate networks that handle card data, termed the cardholder data environment (CDE), Symantec wrote.

POS systems must be accessible for software updates, the export of business data such as purchase orders and inventory, and to connect with external payment processors, the report said ■

MIT Sloan Announces the Creation of the Zamir Telecom Fellowship for MBAs



The MIT Sloan School of Management, together with Zamir Telecom, the London-based global telecommunications company, on January 14, 2014 announced the creation of a new scholarship for promising MBA students who plan to pursue careers in the technology sector.

The Zamir Telecom fellowship, which is made possible by a \$100,000 gift from Naufal Zamir, the company's founder and managing director, is open to students who are either from an emerging economy (Africa, Asia, or the Middle East) or who have an interest in technological advancement in those regions. A native of Bangladesh, Zamir trained as a lawyer before launching his company 10 years ago. Today Zamir Telecom is one of the fastest-growing businesses in the United Kingdom, according to The Sunday Times Tech Track 100.

Zamir said the scholarship represents a way to "both give back and invest in" capable young people in the developing world ■

Samsung to Offer 3 New Tablets



Samsung introduced a 105-inch, curved-screen, Ultra High Definition TV at a pre-International CES news event, but the new product was upstaged when movie director Michael Bay walked offstage because of a problem with a teleprompter.

Later during the event, Samsung announced a line of new tablet computers running Android 4.4 that will carry the names Galaxy Tab Pro

and Galaxy Note Pro. Two models will have 12.2-inch displays, which allow for a full keyboard for faster typing. Samsung also announced a bendable TV that can be transformed from a flat to a curved screen with the push of a button. Curved screens are being promoted as more immersive, and Samsung said its new model offers consumers a choice of styles. Samsung sold the most UHD TVs of any vendor in 2013, but the market is expected to grow slowly, according to Consumer Electronics Association economists.

The new tablets will allow for four windows to be opened on a screen at once. The TabPro and NotePro each will come in 12.2-in. models, with the TabPro also available in a 10.1-in. and an 8.4-in. version. All the new tablets will be available globally in the first quarter, but pricing was not announced. The two larger models feature 2560 by 1600 pixel resolution ■

Apple iOS 7.1 Close to Final Release

Many people didn't understand how Apple could take so long with iOS 7.1, though we have been able to detail the company's progress every step of the way. We have learned that Apple will most likely not release another iOS 7.1 beta for download, meaning that the public release of the software should be available sometime in the coming weeks. One of their sources pegs the release happening in early March, though that does seem far away for. They expect a gold master build to be available before iOS 7.1 makes it way into general customers' hands, though there is currently no hard date for that.

Apple dramatically overhauled iOS in iOS 7 and with 7.1 a lot of problems like slowness, app crashes and even phone restarts are fixed. Apple has released five beta versions of iOS 7.1 so far ■