



Why cloud strategies are falling short of the mark p26

Brand ambassadors give you the winning touch p28



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3-20  
**Industry News**  
Catch up with events in comms

---

22  
**News Interview**  
Gradwell ramps up SME channel

---

24  
**Workshop**  
Opportunities in retail technology

---

38  
**Market Review**  
Building value from insights

---

40  
**Vertical Markets**  
Retail sector's sold on the IoT

---

54  
**Comms People**  
This month's movers and shakers



# Daisy builds new force in channel

**THE merger of Daisy Group's channel serving divisions into a £200m business creates the largest partner-only organisation in the channel.**

### SPECIAL REPORT

The three separate Group entities formerly known as Daisy Wholesale, Daisy Distribution and Daisy Worldwide have combined their portfolios, platforms and teams under the just-launched Digital Wholesale Solutions name and brand.

The rebrand, which was unveiled on April 30th with a new logo and website, is the culmination of a six month integration period in which teams and portfolios were brought

together into a single hub to simplify how partners transact.

"The new Digital Wholesale Solutions business has been given complete autonomy to focus on partners while retaining the financial benefits of being part of the wider Daisy Group of companies," explained CEO Terry O'Brien (pictured right), who was formerly Daisy Wholesale MD.

"The IT and comms market is characterised by fast change and we are responding to this by evolving our business to become

more capable and valuable to our partners, whether they are comms, IT, cloud specialists or more generalist MSPs.

"With our combined skills and capability I have a vision for our new business to become the channel aggregator."

CDO Nathan Marke (pictured left) added: "Growth is coming from digital infrastructure, fibre, IP, cloud, SaaS and mobility. Therefore to capture growth resellers need to be selling the right products to the right businesses." See page 34

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# Daisy creates partner-or



Terry O'Brien reveals the new company and rebrand to staff

With the merger and rebrand of Daisy Group's partner serving organisations a £200 million 'Super Aggregator' has been created at a time of unprecedented market growth, disruption and transformation, according to Digital Wholesale Solutions CEO Terry O'Brien and CDO Nathan Marke.

**D**aisy Group created a single partner-only organisation from its channel serving businesses to offer more choice and easier access to a wider portfolio of products and services, while meeting the demands of the evolving market. "The name Digital Wholesale Solutions positions us in the converging market that we serve – whether telco, IT or cloud partners etc – and the mission statement 'Power in Partnership' underscores our 100 per cent focus on channel partnerships," said O'Brien. "We are an established scaled business with great growth but feel like a start-up with a fresh brand that represents our culture, entrepreneurship and how our staff feel about our business."

The job of Digital Wholesale Solutions is to empower partners through its scale and ambition as a 'Super Aggregator'. At the root of its channel strategy and market outlook are a number of factors, among them the changing shape of the business landscape and the

challenges faced by partners. "The IT and communications market is characterised by fast change and we are responding to this by evolving our business to become more capable and valuable to our partners, whether they are comms, IT, cloud specialists or more generalist MSPs," said O'Brien.

According to the Office for National Statistics there are now 5.7 million businesses in the UK, up from 3.5 million in 2000, with the majority of these businesses employing less than 10 people. "We are becoming a nation of entrepreneurs," stated Marke. "These new companies aren't interested in old technology. If you start a business today you would use IT and communications in a very different way compared to five years ago. Modern businesses are putting all their data and business services in the cloud and enabling these services to be accessed 24x7 from anywhere.

"Growth is not coming from traditional on-premise IT. It's coming from digital

# Only 'Super Aggregator'

infrastructure, fibre, IP, cloud, SaaS and mobility, which are all growing at fast rates, well above 10 per cent as smaller businesses move rapidly to fibre, IP, cloud and XaaS. This means that to capture growth resellers need to be selling the right products to the right businesses."

This shift is reflected by analyst predictions which show that the market overall is growing at around three per cent. However, spend in large enterprises is flat – all of the growth is coming from SMBs (four to five per cent growth) suggesting that smaller businesses have a sharp appetite to spend on the technology that enables them to punch above their weight against larger competitors.

"How organisations are buying is changing too, driven by the fact that although the technology should be getting more simple it is getting more and more complex," noted Marke. "This is partly driven by a greater reliance on technology to run the business. Take Digital Wholesale Solutions – we are completely reliant on technology platforms as nearly everything is automated through our systems. Not only do we need good technology, we also need to worry more than ever about reliability, cyber security and data privacy. So all of our products are intrinsically wrapped in security."

Buying trends are also being driven by a desire to use technology to make people more productive and efficient, which is being captured more generally by the term Digital

Transformation. In response to this, businesses need to ensure their technology deployments are effective and can change quickly, and they are rationalising their ICT suppliers as part of this endeavour. "Businesses are finding that they have too many suppliers providing parts of the jigsaw and this is slowing them down," said Marke. "So they are trusting fewer suppliers to deliver more.

#### Subscription economy

"Just like the consumer market, business customers are increasingly researching and completing transactions online. Automated and subscription services are growing at eight-times the rate of traditional purchases. The channel is naturally responding to all of these changes, with partners increasingly seeking to offer a wider set of services to their customers."

Traditional communications and telco partners are broadening their offerings, stepping into providing IT

products and services. At the same time IT partners are increasingly offering networking, comms and telco services. "All partners are realising that to generate long-term value for their customers and their own businesses they need to create managed services, characterised by high levels of automation and remote management, that provide them with differentiation and long-term subscription revenue streams, the value

## Growth is not coming from traditional on-premise IT. It's coming from digital infrastructure, fibre, IP, cloud, SaaS and mobility

of which cannot be easily removed by the big cloud vendors," added O'Brien. "It is against this backdrop that Digital Wholesale Solutions provides our services, to help partners address their changing customer requirements. We

aim to be the one place that the channel can come to provide digital infrastructure for its customers."

Working with partners during the past five years Digital Wholesale Solutions has delivered 'tremendous growth' across every category of product offerings. "We do not do any direct business and work with partners of all shapes and sizes, from the earliest stage start-up that just wants to sell and

wholesale products and propositions and wrap these in their own services and support," explained Marke.

"We know that our products need to be simple, work first time, be competitive and surrounded by support. This enables our partners to confidently sell to their customers. We use our scale and breadth to offer straightforward and low risk commercial terms and often disrupt the market to enable this to happen. For example, wherever possible we reduce our partners' contractual commitments down to a minimum. Hop-on hop-off monthly contracts are always our target. We would much rather get growth from repeat business than from locking our partners into onerous long-term commitments that are hard to commit to into your customers.

"We also know that working with lots of suppliers is complex, adds to cost and means it takes longer to

**Continued on page 36**



**Nathan Marke: 'Modern businesses are putting all their data and services in the cloud'.**

**Continued from page 35** deliver to customers, so longer to get paid. Digital Wholesale Solutions offers a single point of contact and a single contract for all requirements, alongside smart tools. Most of the ordering experience will be automated, partners can badge our sales collateral as their own – and leverage our online and face-to-face training academy. The roster of smart tools also includes Insight, an intelligent engine that constantly monitors a partners' base of services with us, providing analytics and reporting that enables them to improve business, spot operational issues and sales opportunities in their customer base."

### Scale matters

Digital Wholesale Solutions also sees itself as a 'Super Aggregator', one place for all digital infrastructure requirements. "We have a broad, modern portfolio enabled by a portal and a rich set of APIs," commented O'Brien. "The backbone of this is our connectivity offering where as an ISP we own and operate our own secure and high performance aggregation network. We enable our partners to deliver broadband, Ethernet, Wi-Fi, SIP and fixed line services across the UK with access services from all of the major carriers."

Digital Wholesale Solutions also claims to be the largest independent provider of business mobile in the UK, with a fast growing base of more than half a million business mobile connections under management. "We work with all the major networks, enabling partners to connect either with a network billed dealer model or on a self-bill wholesale model, offering simple commercial models with hop-on hop-off monthly contracts and an automated end-to-end process," added O'Brien. "We also have a suite of MDM and fixed

back-up solutions, and bundled propositions with our voice and hosted voice offerings which enable partners to offer single bill and FMC solutions."

Hosted voice and UCaaS solutions are also in growth mode, with more than 70,000 business seats on Digital Wholesale Solutions' platform. "We anticipate this growth to continue as we enable integrations with cloud workplace productivity suites such as 365 and Teams, and get really smart with propositions that enable our partners to capture not just the UC and voice opportunity, but also connectivity by bundling business class QoS enabled broadband and mobility through integrating mobile and fixed using our mobile app," added Marke.

Digital Wholesale Solutions has built a stable of smart software products designed to help telcos and MSPs better serve their customers in the subscription world.

"We are disrupting the traditional cash model for hardware and software supply," said O'Brien. "The imminent launch of our One and Only Webstore will enable partners to build solutions online by searching and selecting across a range of ICT products from all the major UK distributors. We

## We use our scale and entrepreneurial spirit to challenge the status quo

have automated the process to turn this basket into a subscription that enables partners to quickly close business with their customers with competitive rates enabled by our scale and ability to incorporate residual values into the sale process."

Ultimately, said O'Brien, the reason people buy technology is to deliver an outcome, a change that could make a business more productive, more efficient, more mobile, and

facilitate a more contented workforce with a better work life balance. "We are conscious that our partners have this job to do, and so we build our products in a way that enables them to fit together to create solutions for customers that deliver outcomes fast," he commented. "And with

customers increasingly seeing the value of moving to SIP and hosting, and with the switch off of TDM due in 2025, we are making it easy for partners to migrate from ISDN to SIP by providing compelling reasons to move customer voice bases to us and to work together on taking customers on a journey to IP. With all of this we provide all of the training, pre-sales and specialist support to ensure that partners get it right for customers first time."

Digital Wholesale Solution bills itself as a 'challenger'. "We are in a market dominated by a few big telcos," said O'Brien. "However, these models of doing business are often not suited to the commercial reality and the speed in which our partners need to operate with their customers. So we use our scale and entrepreneurial spirit to challenge the status quo. Our partners tend to be smaller businesses and it is hard for their voice to be heard. By working with us, they are in effect joining a buying consortium. Our 2,000-plus partners have over 8,000 sales people and, we estimate, more than 400,000 end customers. This is a scale that matters and means that we can work with the top tier telcos and IT vendors to do deals that work for partners.

"Just as important, we are a team that loves what we do and loves working with partners. It's hard to describe a culture – it needs to be experienced first hand." ■



**United force: The Digital Wholesale Solutions Board team**



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