Two unique IT businesses find synergy together

A Trust X Alliance success story

As a company focused on customized industrial computing solutions for corporations working in energy, oil and gas, coal, and other verticals that operate in harsh environments, FoxGuard Solutions rarely needs a partner to deliver its highly specialized solutions to customers. So while it's an active member of a technology industry peer-to-peer community, Trust X Alliance, it doesn't often get to take advantage of partnering with its peers.

"We're very different than many of the businesses in Trust X, so our conversations with our peers are often focused on building bigger, stronger companies, and that's where we're finding a lot of business value in the community," explains Marty Muscatello, CEO of FoxGuard. That all changed recently when the software development arm of FoxGuard went in search of a new cloud partner. That group develops software solutions, delivered as a service to FoxGuard's large corporate customers. That as a service model was supported by the cloud, with Rackspace hosting the company's assets. "They had great customer service and a local group we worked closely with, but then they went private and changed their business model. We needed to find a new solution," said Muscatello.

Luckily, as that need unfolded, Muscatello connected with Malik Khan, CEO of PointClick Technologies, at a Trust X chapter meeting. Located in the same region—FoxGuard is headquartered in Christiansburg,

Va.; PointClick in Raleigh, N.C.—the two had met briefly before, but this time, the light bulb went on. Muscatello introduced Khan to the software team's CTO and PointClick jumped into the search process. Much like FoxGuard, PointClick Technologies doesn't fit the typical solution provider template. Instead, it provides managed cloud hosting, based in Raleigh, but with offices in Asia, Africa and Spain. That deep expertise in cloud hosting and international footprint made PointClick a great fit for FoxGuard, who also works internationally. "We looked at a lot of alternatives besides him, and he won against some big players," says Muscatello.

A trusted partner with deep expertise brought more value to FoxGuard.

Muscatello stresses the business decision was just that—not a community favor. "While some partnership choices are a friendly exchange, this was a huge decision for us. The whole success of our software group relies on this partnership, and Malik knew that going into this process," explains Muscatello. How did PointClick win out over the competition? Muscatello says it was twofold—a close geographic location helped jumpstart a personal relationship between the

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> **Marty Muscatello,** CEO, FoxGuard Solutions

teams, and the realization that, while a choice such as going direct with Microsoft Azure was simple and cost-effective, a trusted partner with deep expertise brought more value to FoxGuard.

With the decision made, Muscatello expects the partnership will grow as more of FoxGuard's customers relinquish hardware for the cloud. "Right now, everything we're doing is on-premises because of our focus on the energy and power industry where there are many regulations and high resistance to cloud solutions. Eventually, that will change, and as we prepare for that, Malik is someone we'll look to for help."

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FoxGuard is also hoping to partner with PointClick on international opportunities; it needs support in other regions where hosting and security regulations can vary from those in the U.S. "We're excited to be working with a partner, a peer, and uncovering places where we can expand together," says Muscatello.

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