



Building the engine of a rocketing economy

TIME dotCom brings network automation to ASEAN

by Rob Spencer
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“You get the rocket. We do the science.”

These words greet visitors in the lobby of TIME dotCom’s corporate headquarters in Malaysia.

They serve as a fitting mantra for a company dedicated to building the infrastructure—the engine—that gives its customers the speed, power and technology they need to thrive in today’s fast-changing world.

TIME is a regional hyperscale communications service provider (CSP) delivering cloud, data center and connectivity services that foster innovation and commerce in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), an economic union of 10



countries with a total population of more than 650 million.

TIME has been a major facilitator of the rapid changes in ASEAN, where GDP has doubled over the last decade and the economy has grown from twelfth to fifth largest in the world. In parallel, technology access and use in ASEAN has surged. From 2010 to 2019, the

number of internet subscribers in the region grew more than 200%.

TIME’s mission is not just to accommodate growth, but to help perpetuate it. Although its hyperscale capability positions the company well for the future, TIME knows that the requirements will continue to evolve, sometimes in unexpected ways.

The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, intensified the pressure on CSPs and necessitated changes that may be here to stay. The sudden and exponential growth in the number of people working from home probably won't subside to pre-pandemic levels. For enterprises, digital transformation reached breakneck speed with more and more organizations accelerating adoption of cloud.

Meeting the evolving needs of both B2C and B2B markets means maximizing speed and consistency and enabling the most agile access to an ever-growing ecosystem of services.

How does TIME do this? By continuing to refine the science that boosts the rocket.

TIME can deploy services with

~80%

less effort

Maintaining operations at scale requires

~20x

less manual work

The latest in agility and flexibility

TIME had a vision. It wanted to give customers more network flexibility and provide the best customer experience from the moment of onboarding. It took a major step toward the realization of the vision in 2018, when it launched Malaysia's first-ever horizontal network functions virtualization infrastructure (NFVI), giving customers the option of either on-premises or virtualized network setups. In 2019, TIME became the first Malaysian company to adopt IBM automation technology to orchestrate customer lifecycle management.

Now, to complete the vision, TIME seeks to maximize the flexibility it



provides to customers by bringing greater AI-powered automation and agility to its own control over the network. It will accomplish that with a comprehensive service orchestration solution.

Ang Thing Jiun, TIME's Chief Technology Officer, explains: "We set out to achieve fully automated lifecycle management to bring the latest in agility and flexibility to our services. With the implementation of NFVI and service orchestration, our customers will have more flexibility in terms of network planning, implementation, operation and even budget planning."

To find the right orchestration solution, TIME invited proofs of concept from multiple companies.

“Network automation on our end-to-end ecosystem with NFVI capabilities enables us to execute large workflows systematically. The setup allows our clients to gain speed and efficiency on their digital transformation journey.”

Ang Thing Jiun, Chief Technology Officer, TIME dotCom Bhd

One of them was IBM Business Partner Persistent Systems. Persistent had already worked with TIME for several years, helping implement network monitoring solutions, so it had a strong understanding of the vision and was ready to propose an effective solution.

As Mark Kelemen, Senior Vice President of Worldwide Sales at Persistent, explains, “TIME needed a solution to help them scale and adhere to network standards as they took on more enterprise clients and grew their network.”

The Persistent team pitched a solution based on IBM® Agile Lifecycle Manager software, which is now part of the [IBM Cloud Pak® for Network Automation](#).

“Zero-touch network automation is a possibility,” says Kelemen. “It requires standardization and digitization of operational processes, the right software in place to manage and orchestrate, and more importantly, vision and courage to take the leap.”

TIME had the vision and courage. Ultimately, it chose to move forward with Persistent and the IBM solution, becoming one of the CSP industry’s early adopters of network automation technology. Persistent provided end-to-end services to help TIME ensure success, from solution design through systems integration and customizations. “There were growing pains,” says Kelemen, “but we worked closely with the IBM product and support team to ensure that the solution delivered the capabilities to match TIME’s requirements.”

The new capabilities cover three areas:

End-to-end, automated service lifecycle management: TIME can automatically provision services across physical and virtual networks and flexibly scale in and out (adding or removing virtual machines or other resources) and up and down (adjusting memory, CPU and storage capacity).

Self-subscription and activation services for customers: Dynamic service chaining allows for efficient tailoring of services to individual customer needs.

Closed-loop operations for greater resilience: Auto-healing and usage-based auto-scaling help maintain stability and performance while minimizing manual effort.

Gaining speed and improving the customer experience

“We can deploy services with approximately 80% less effort and require approximately 20x less manual activity to maintain operations at scale,” says Ang.

These numbers mean faster deployments and speed to market, of course. Heightened automation means reduced risk of human error. Most important, these improvements help strengthen the customer experience. They mean TIME can continue delivering the required bandwidth and stability and the desired services so that its customers can access the exact services they need, exactly when they need them. And TIME, in turn, has



increased its capacity to pursue and onboard more customers.

“Network automation on our end-to-end ecosystem with NFVI capabilities enables us to execute large workflows systematically. The setup allows our clients to gain speed and efficiency on their digital transformation journey.” For TIME and its customers, that journey is ongoing. Moving forward, says Ang, “We will continue to explore and assess new technologies to further enhance our network and improve on the services and experience delivered to our clients.”

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Ang Thing Jiun, Chief Technology Officer, TIME dotCom Bhd



About TIME dotCom Bhd

TIME (external link) is a telecommunications provider headquartered in Malaysia that delivers domestic and global connectivity, data center, cloud computing and managed services to customers across ASEAN. Powering TIME's businesses are its fibre optic network assets that span Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. TIME's network also extends beyond the region, delivering international connectivity via stakes in several subsea cable systems.

Solution component

- IBM Cloud Pak® for Network Automation



About Persistent Systems

With 14,000 employees around the world, IBM Business Partner Persistent (external link) is a global solutions leader that has been delivering digital business acceleration, enterprise modernization and digital product engineering for more than 30 years. Persistent has deep experience helping telecommunications and media companies redefine the customer experience, capitalize on digital convergence and launch new business models.