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American Megatrends India plans to launch vehicle tracking as a service



SRIDHARAN MANI, Director & CEO, American Megatrends India

V. RAMANUJAM

AMERICAN Megatrends (AMI), a leader in storage and computing innovations worldwide creates and manufactures key hardware and software solutions for the global computer marketplace.

AMI's extensive product line includes BIOS, diagnostic software, remote access, motherboards, backplanes, driver/firmware development, service processors, storage systems, chassis design and integrated systems. With these product groups, AMI is uniquely positioned to provide all of the fundamental components necessary to offer complete system performance, manageability and availability for today's enterprise computing requirements. AMI is the leading company in the industry today offering all of these core technologies.

Founded in 1994, American Megatrends India Pvt Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of American Megatrends Inc (AMI USA). With a strong focus on Embedded, Storage and Telematics Solutions, American Megatrends India is dedicated to driving innovations in computing solutions. Apart from being closely associated with AMI USA, American Megatrends India works with Fortune 500 clients in Europe, Middle East, Africa and South East Asia. The 25-year old AMI USA is the world's largest BIOS firmware vendor, with its AMIBIOS deployed in more than 65 per cent of all computers worldwide.

A high-end technology player, American Megatrends India announced the launch of its new product, SafeTrends 2.0. "SafeTrends 2.0 is a breakthrough Continuous Data Protection (CDP) software suite for Windows environments that offers complete protection of

valuable digital media," says Sridharan Mani, Director and CEO. SafeTrends 2.0 is an ideal data backup solution for SMBs and SOHOs running Windows-based desktops and laptops, he adds.

As Director and CEO, Sridharan is responsible for promoting business in the Asian, African and Middle East markets for AMI's products and services. Sridharan has Bachelor's degree in Physics from the University of Madras, and an MBA from Emory University, USA. He says that the worldwide market for global positioning system (GPS) navigation and location based services has been growing exponentially and is expected to cross US\$13.4-billion mark in 2014. "This industry however is still at a nascent stage in India. But undoubtedly the GPS navigation and tracking market holds tremendous potential for growth in the country. In order to tap this potential market, American Megatrends India launched Falcon-i, a vehicle tracking system in India. American Megatrends India provides robust vehicle tracking solutions to a wide range of verticals."

Here are excerpts of Sridharan Mani's interview given to INDIAN TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS NEWS:

ITLN: American Megatrends India is providing solutions to a range of industry verticals in this country. In terms of business opportunities, what is your experience while tapping the potential in India?

SRIDHARAN: In our experience, we found that most enterprises are looking for custom solution integrated with their existing setup to improve their overall operational efficiency.

In enterprise segment, customers look for justifiable ROI and integrated solutions. Merely a vehicle tracking that displays vehicles on the map doesn't meet the requirements any longer. Customers are looking for advanced solutions.

ITLN: Road transportation is a high growth sector in India. What is your strategy to quickly increase American Megatrends' market share in this country?

SRIDHARAN: We understand that every customer requirement is unique and needs a robust customised solutions meeting the demand.

We invested our solution experience gained over the years to develop a robust AMI M2M Cloud framework to rapidly develop solutions for In Vehicle Entertainment and Telematics segments.

AMI M2M Cloud framework is designed to work any telematics device that includes traditional tracking devices, flow meters, power meters, mobiles, tablets and netbooks.

ITLN: American Megatrends is providing solutions to healthcare which again is another area that witnesses rapid growth. How do you see this vertical to service the customers?

SRIDHARAN: AMI has rich experience working on this domain. We have provided various solutions such as: Rapid Response to Emergency Patient Care by Ambulance Tracking Solution; Facility Management; Grievance Management; Remote Diagnostics; Solutions for Medical Equipments; and, Asset Management and Tracking. Currently, we are in the process of rolling-out solutions based on our AMI M2M Cloud framework for: Out Patient Monitoring and Telemedicine Solutions.

ITLN: You have introduced vehicle tracking system in India to a range of key high-growth sectors, including logistics. What is the feedback from your customers prior to launch?

SRIDHARAN: Small and medium transport sector that holds the majority of the market, is extremely price conscious and they had very bad experience with low cost imported systems. When they realise inconsistencies with the systems after spending good bit of money, they tend to hold back and not wanting to reinvest. Large transporters feel the need for a customised consistent product with good support network and we are able to meet the demand. In major transport hubs, there is shortage of drivers and hence the transporters in these hubs do not want to invest in the technology due to the risk of losing the drivers.

ITLN: In India, you are planning to launch vehicle tracking as a service. Please brief on the challenges you anticipate and how you will meet them.

SRIDHARAN: Most of the government transport corporations want this to be provided as a service. We see many transport corporations asking for a BOOT (build own operate transfer) model. As this technology is still not adopted fully in India, the customers are not clear in specifying their requirements. Customer requirement keeps changing. The high investment that the customer is expected to make and the stringent SLAs and penalty clauses make it unviable to operate. Hence you find many tenders getting postponed.

In private companies where employee transportation is used, the transportation itself is used as a service and hence, these technologies are also wanted as service. When the transporter is changed, we need to redeploy the units to new transporters. We have service tie ups to take care of such redeployments. □



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