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SaaS vendor Infostreet expands into Canada

By Maxine Cheung , ITBusiness.ca , 08/06/2009

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Siamak Farah, the director and CEO of U.S.-based Infostreet, has a goal to increase his company's channel business by 30 per cent by the end of the next calendar year by engaging in more partner relationships and directing more sales through them.

Infostreet is a business productivity and IT software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution vendor based in Tarzana, Calif. Although this is the company's only location, Farah said he'd eventually like to open additional offices, including one in Canada. Currently, Infostreet does business worldwide, with over 100,000 users and growing.

StreetSmart is the company's flagship SaaS solution that's designed primarily for small businesses. The solution can either be hosted in Infostreet's data centre, or on the customer's premise. Otherwise, the solution can be deployed to the data centre, using the customer's own hardware. StreetSmart helps to connect offices and increase employee productivity by allowing end-users to share information and files, archive e-mail, manage an employee directory and more. In addition to these features, the solution also comes with built-in spam and virus protection. As a SaaS solution, Farah said customers don't need to purchase any additional hardware or software in order to use it, all they need is a working Internet connection and a Web browser.

Today, Infostreet conducts close to 60 per cent of its business through its channel partners, which includes original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), value-added resellers (VARs), agents and resellers. Farah said his goal is to increase Infostreet's channel business by another 30 per cent by the end of next year.

In Canada, Farah said he'd like to first work with partners that do business in major cities such as Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.

"We're always interested in more resellers, especially in Canada, where our presence is weak," Farah said. "We're trying to improve this. Today, we have one or two partners in Canada and as a whole, we have two or three OEM-type partners, as well as a number of resellers and VARs. In total, though, I'd say we have less than 30 active partners working with us."

Margins for Infostreet's StreetSmart solution range from 14 to 30 per cent and vary depending on the amount of business an agent or reseller brings to the company, Farah explained.

Pricing for the solution starts at \$10 per user, per month, Farah said. The cost also goes down as the number of users increase. For 100 users, Farah says the solution comes priced at \$6 a user, a month. Unlike other SaaS offerings which require a lease-term, there's no contract required for StreetSmart, he added.

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