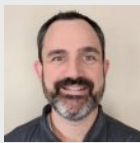# Technology and Innovation

Delivering Superior Customer Excellence with White Glove Support

Mike Falco and Moshe Rivel

Biography

Mike Falco is Director of Technical Advisors at Infinidat (https://www.infindat.com). He is an accomplished customer-centric leader with over 35 years of experience building positive customer relationships. He has worked at Infinidat for nearly eight years, driving continuous improvement to the customer experience.

Prior to Infinidat, Falco spent over 23 years at EMC (now Dell/EMC), including senior roles in global services.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in Applied Sciences from the City College of New York.

Mike Falco
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Moshe Rivel is Senior Director of Tech Sales for EMEA & APJ at Infinidat.

With more than 20 years' experience in IT, Rivel is customer focused with vast experience working with US, European, Middle Eastern and Indian customers.

Both Mike and Moshe blog at https://www.infinidat.com/en/blog

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Abstract
In an era where customer service is king, enterprises and service providers/hosting providers expect a higher level of pro-active customer experience, both in terms of service and support, and technical user experience. IT buyers want "easier, faster and better". Easier, faster, better translate into time savings and cost savings. What usually takes two hours, they now want in ten minutes, which provides an improved customer experience. IT buyers also expect higher levels of service and support, obtaining answers immediately from qualified professionals, with a preference for a "white glove service." As the authors of this article explain, Infinidat is a world leader in delivering a white glove service – with an Infinidat's Technical Advisors have already diagnosed the issue before a customer knew they had one, and proactively dispatched a trusted solution to the problem so that the customer is not adversely affected.

Introduction

Reputations and relationships are built on trust. This is a core value Infinidat has based our business on, and we embrace this philosophy in everything that we do. From the start of a business relationship, our goal is to instil trust with our potential customers, and something that we continue to deliver throughout the lifecycle of our relationship with our customers.

One of the most important parts of our business is that ongoing support, service, and trust that we constantly provide. This isn't a one-person job − it takes a village, as some like to say, but this article is going to focus on what is the keystone to making all this strong trusted relationship between Infinidat and our enterprise customers happen. That is the Infinidat Technical Advisor (TA).

We don't just believe having a designated technical resource assigned to your enterprise account is the best way to invest in your success − we include it in your support service at no additional cost.   We do not require enhanced or add-on support programs or packages, as most of our competitors require, and yet, again, an extra cost for a TA. It is just part of what we do. We have always made Infinidat easy and cost-effective to do business with and the award-winning support and service should not be any different. That is how we ensure you get the absolute best support and service in the storage industry, as several storage analyst firms have noted, throughout the lifecycle of any solution from Infinidat — from installation to decommission.

Your TA is your trusted advisor. Each customer is assigned an advisor who is talking to you on a continuous basis, not a random team member that may have to re-learn your environment. The TA is there to make sure your Infinidat solutions are delivering powerful technical and business value for your enterprise, considering all aspects of your IT infrastructure and business needs, from performance to workload to data security and more. To deliver that, a TA must wear many hats and be experienced in many things.

The TA's breadth of knowledge is across a wide range of operating systems, protocols, and applications that enable them to support a multitude of use cases. The trusted advisor role is critically important as they provide risk-averse account management that includes historical support trends across the environment and sound recommendations for firmware and software targets, including an upgrade strategy. The many hats that our TAs wear cover a vast set of important areas:

- **Technical Account Manager (TAM):** A dedicated professional, the TA knows your business inside out. They recommend upgrades and product enhancements tailored to your specific requirements

- **Service Account Manager (SAM):** The TA monitors open cases, opens necessary tickets, and assures that nothing slips through the cracks. They act as a vigilant guardian of your technical landscape

- **Customer Service Representative (CSR):** Beyond technical aspects, the TA creates and reviews status reports regularly. They maintain a close cadence with customers and sales teams, tracking metrics relevant to individual customer interests

- **Project Manager (PM):** The TA ensures a seamless experience by coordinating delivery, installation, and post-installation reviews of each system. They also facilitate system re-locations and decommission activities with precision

- **Escalation Manager:** In critical situations, your TA takes charge from start to root cause analysis. Their swift and decisive actions ensure a prompt resolution

- **Sales Engineer (SE):** The TA contributes to knowledge transfer sessions and demos, ensuring that customers have a comprehensive understanding of Infinidat's offerings.

As part of Infinidat's industry-leading "white glove service," the TA is managing everything for the customer: whether it's an escalation, or a warranty that is about to expire, or an application that needs more capacity, or any variety of actions that need to be taken. If you're a customer, Infinidat is there for you. No other major storage vendor does what Infinidat does with such an extensive "white glove service."

Infinidat had made a decision early on to prioritize customer success, and this is one more reason why our company has been growing in the Fortune 100 segment. We pride ourselves on the agility that Infinidat demonstrates with our customer service and support, and respond to the evolving needs and requirements of our customers quickly and skillfully. The TA acts as the central point and customer-centric interface for a multidisciplinary team, including R&D, product management, engineering, sales, and customer support, to best serve the customer. Each customer knows that the full power of Infinidat is backing them at all times.

"InfiniBox, phone home"
In addition to the personalized support from a Technical Advisor, Infinidat's platforms themselves contribute to the white glove service as well. All Infinidat solutions are proactive and have "call home" capabilities to fix themselves without bothering the customer. Infinidat enterprise solutions are self-healing.

If a component is failing, the system, which is in direct contact with the back office at Infinidat, will automatically work to fix the issue. In most of the times, there is no need for an on-site visit from a technician. Infinidat systems come with pre-installed spare parts and self-healing capabilities. Uniquely available and reliable from its triple redundant architecture, the system can experience "failure" of a part but have zero disruption to the availability of the data, application, and workload infrastructure. In fact, this could happen multiple times, yet with no downtime.

Competitors in the storage industry likely must send a technician on site to figure out and rectify the problem, like a 3-star hotel sending up a technician to a room after a long wait when a 5-star hotel with "white glove service" would ensure maximum customer satisfaction with an automatic, smooth elimination of the problem before the hotel guest even knows.

Since our main competitors have dual-redundant architectures, you can imagine how much more can go wrong – and some of you have experienced the downside of a storage system with only a dual-redundant approach. This is partially why the incumbents cannot provide the level of service that Infinidat does.

When it comes to customer support, Infinidat is in a class by itself at the high end of the enterprise market but not at a high-end price. It's really all about what our customers think. Here is an example of an Infinidat large enterprise customer in the insurance/financial services industry:

As you would imagine, a very large enterprise infrastructure consists of multiple vendors in any end-to-end solution that varies by uses and applications. Recently, at one of Infinidat's largest enterprise customer implementations at a very large Fortune 500 company, there arose a need to problem manage a unique and intermittent failure during a complex fail-over operation and test cycle.

The inclusion of the assigned TA with a solid understanding of this specific environment took on the role of a project manager, not just of Infinidat personnel but including the customer's team as well, and in this capacity removed a huge burden from the customer's IT team.

They coordinated the collaboration with all the vendors, consolidated data collections, and provided real-time oversight and the scheduling of the technical follow-up calls. A massive amount of logistics for any project, person, or company. Having this level of support led to a speedy and successful conclusion that, by far, exceeded the customer's expectations. It allowed them to quickly remove older legacy systems from previous vendors to a highly optimized set of InfiniBox® and InfiniBox™ SSA, consolidating to a significantly smaller footprint, and saving a huge amount of data centre space and associated power, cooling, storage management, and capital costs.

In conclusion

Our customers speak even louder than our own words. We are proud to be recognized by our enterprise customers for the sixth time as a Gartner Peer Insight Customers' Choice for Primary Storage Arrays. We obviously are doing things right, providing robust storage solutions that are backed by guarantees around performance, 100% availability, and cyber resilience. We top that off by making sure we provide our customers with the best white glove customer experience in the industry!

Service defines every industry. For every business wanting to create a white glove experience for its customers, being able to deliver superior customer excellence makes a good starting point.