KEN: Europe, the Middle East and Africa — known as EMEA — is made up of multiple time zones, languages, and cultures. For anyone doing sales and marketing in the region, it's a place of rich diversity as well as challenges. Sammy Zoghlami, senior VP for Nutanix in EMEA, is based in Paris but spends a lot of time in planes and on the road covering this vast geography. I'm Ken Kaplan for the Tech Barometer podcast, and I spoke with Sammy last fall about his role and the places he's been doing business.

Sammy: So far I've been discovering the culture in South Europe. But if we take a big countries like Germany, it doesn't matter what your title is, it matters what your knowledge is. In the UK and France is maybe a bit different where there's a little bit more requirement to see the boss at some time in the sales cycle. And the title is more important. So that's one of the difference. So I think you find situations where in appearance it's very formal, like in the Middle East for example, you have to wear a tie. Everyone is always in a suit, you know, it's very formal in the way that you dress, where in reality people care about the trust, the respect, and they can take a verbal commitment for a strong commitment, and not necessarily a contract. As, you know, a difference with all the countries I'm used to where it's maybe a more laid back in terms of how you talk to people, how you interact, how you dress. But then the only thing that matters is the contract. There are some countries where we are just entering the market, countries like Poland, countries like Czech Republic. Portugal is just launching. Nigeria is launching. So we have many countries like that that we are just launching from scratch. And it's interesting to be in that position where the brand in most cases is not known yet. The network of partners is not built, the awareness. So for us it was a matter of when we enter those countries. We've grown very fast in EMEA. We are now in 35 countries but we are not done yet.

Ken: All right. Describe from a few years ago to what you feel now is going on.

Sammy: So I would say EMEA in general is a bit late compared to the US in terms of public cloud adoption. The UK is a bit advanced from the rest of the countries where it's coming, especially with large and international companies. And they start to learn the beauty of public cloud and the downside of public cloud. There's always good and bad. So I think as the companies in the countries mature on that proposition, what we have been cooking for them, which is a good middle ground between "we will help you accelerate the move to public cloud," but "we will help you make on prem infrastructure look as close as possible to public cloud."

Ken: Describe some of the trends regarding the technology that you're bringing to market.

Sammy: So I, I see several trends. I see legacy companies who've been there for a hundred years who are trying to become you know, cutting edge in terms of their market positioning, and a lot of it comes down to how they use technology. Their struggle is to become appealing to great technologists. So they're doing all the branding necessary to attract different kind of talent. They also need to transform their people. So that's the biggest headache of CIOs I see right now in EMEA. Now you have the other kind which are the new companies who are very fast, launching services. They don't have any legacy infrastructure to be slow. They just struggle a

little bit on funding. Apart from that, you know, those are the new startups that we see on the markets. And I see more and more European startup coming to a certain size, which is, you know, either companies that will move to Silicon Valley, or are getting funded by governments. Because I see also governments being much more aware of the urgency to fund those startups and to make sure that all those great companies stay in Europe. We came to market in 2013 when a lot of companies have tried to put together the private cloud. This was a very complex project for many companies. A lot of them have failed, but they were always looking for automation. Now you fast forward a few years later, which is today, you see in Europe a lot of companies adopting the public cloud because the whole automation is done for them and we can accelerate their business by consuming it. So I think our messaging and our positioning is today even more relevant than when we entered the market. The hybrid cloud requests from customers is really new. They went from private to, "I want to do everything in the public cloud" and now realize they will longterm be a hybrid organization. So this is a fairly new trend in Europe. If we compare it to the U S where have been on that trend for awhile.

Ken: Many in Europe started private, didn't do very well. They spent a lot of attention on public. So tell me what brought them back to private.

Sammy: So you have companies who tried to do it themselves, like the big cloud providers, but without necessarily the scale and the skills that those public cloud provider had. So you saw a lot of open stack and open source initiatives that were attempted and then failed. You have the other kind of initiatives that were based on enterprise products. Companies put together a lot of components to try and build those private clouds. But this was very costly and a lot of professional services before building those platforms. So then public cloud became a very sexy option for most companies because it was all made for them, yeah? So they just had to consume the IT. And now that you have players like Nutanix who are offering this kind of simplicity, the whole work is done for the company, but you can also do it on prem. Then private cloud becomes sexy again. That's the new trend. And a lot of companies who went from private cloud to look at public cloud, now they look at hybrid because they want both. And this is a perfect spot for us.

Ken: I don't know, maybe it had a premonition, but I thought you were going to say it was going to be sexy. Like yeah, I did have that premonition. So I'm glad that you said it. Talk to me about, you don't have to name the customer if you don't want to or you can, but what is it like to go in and they have interests but you're able to really get them, "Yeah, this is the solution that they want."

Sammy: Well, I think a lot of customers who went all in with us, went very large, take Society Generale for example, which is a large private cloud customer, they went all in after experiencing the product. In today's world every one talks about simplicity, openness, multicloud. Now the difference is how we do it. How does a work on a day to day basis, does this really work at scale? And I think most of our large customers have become large over time. So it started small on one use-case and suddenly they realize, you know, operations were a

better, level of availability was better, and the whole simplicity promise was there. Then they started to go all in with Nutanix.

KEN: Sammy Zoghlami is the senior vice president for Nutanix overtseeing the EMEA region. This is the Tech Baromter podcast from the online publication, The Forecast. Find more stories at the-forecast-by-Nutanix dot com.