

As 2017-- a most tumultuous of years, by any standard-- comes to a close, it is as good a time as any to reflect on the times that have been, be it with major acquisitions, giants getting fined and surprise returns...

- **Tech Data Completes Avnet TS Acquisition**: This year saw Tech Data finalise the €2.45bn acquisition of the Avnet Technology Solutions (TS) business, creating what the distributor describes as "a premier global IT distributor with unmatched capabilities." The combined entity operates in 40 countries, and has an end-to-end portfolio of solutions and services ranging "from the datacentre to the living room."

- **Containers are the Rage:** 2017 was all about the containers, even more so through orchestration services such as Kubernetes. Google extended its partnerships with Citrix and Cisco to push the Google Container Engine, Microsoft rebranded the Azure Container Service to point out its use of Kubernetes, and even Amazon has added Kubernetes to the AWS. Either way, it is clear containers indeed hold a big opportunity.

- **Broadcom Buys Brocade:** Broadcom expands its chip making business with the $5.9 billion all-cash acquisition of Brocade Communications Systems, consolidating its position within the networking industry. Formerly known as Avago Technologies, Singapore-based Broadcom is known for connectivity chips used in devices ranging from smartphones to servers. However Broadcom quickly dropped the Broadcade networking hardware business, selling the datacentre business to Extreme Networks and the Ruckus network edge portfolio to Arris.

- **The Malware Woes of 2017:** This year was something of a landmark for big stories involving malware. In May WannaCry, a piece of ransomware taking advantage of a Windows XP vulnerability, spread across the world. Following that was a strain of the malicious code dubbed Petya, which was first seen in the Ukraine before spreading to Spain, Germany, the UK, the Netherlands, Israel and the US. Malware was even found in CCleaner and Mac machines.

- **EU Fines Google:** European antitrust officials declared Google gives own services an "illegal advantage" in search results, leading to a fine worth no less than €2.42 billion. This is the most significant antitrust ruling in Europe since the 2004 Microsoft decision, and is part of investigations into the search giant's practices in both search advertising and the bundling of own products in the Android OS.

- **Toshiba Sells Memory Unit**: After much tribulation, including legal woes involving Western Digital, Toshiba settled on a buyer for its prized TMC memory chip unit-- a consortium formed by Bain Capital and SK Hynix, together with some financial backing from Apple. It took until December for WD to reach an agreement with Toshiba, leading to a new partnership. Now Toshiba just has to wait for approval from the relevant Japanese authorities before TMC goes to its new owner.

- **HPE Prototypes the Machine:** HPE inched closer towards realising its long-running The Machine program as with the showing off of a prototype of the memory-driven computer -- an ARM-powered monster featuring 160TB of memory spread across 40 physical nodes. First announced back in 2014, The Machine brings together a number of advanced technologies. The aforementioned 160TB of memory and nodes are interconnected using a new fabric protocol, while a custom Linux-based OS runs on ThunderX2, the 2nd generation Cavium dual socket-capable ARMv8-A system on a chip. However it still lacks memristors, a combined memory/storage technology.