Oman Data Park
Powering Oman's Digital Transformation and Economic Growth

Following Oman's highly successful post-pandemic economic recovery, the International Monetary Fund projects "higher growth over the medium term." This optimistic outlook is owed to several factors: soaring oil prices, continued fiscal consolidation, and low government debt. Moreover, Fitch Ratings reaffirmed Oman's credit rating as 'Positive,' citing the impressive turnaround of Oman's fiscal deficit into a surplus of 3.4% of its GDP over the past year. Additionally, the reduction of government debt as a percentage of GDP from 61% at the end of 2021 to 40% further solidifies the positive trajectory.

Looking ahead, Oman's ambitious socio-economic initiative, Oman Vision 2040, promises sustainable growth driven by the non-oil sector. A key driver of this vision is the expansion of Oman's digital economy and the widespread adoption of cutting-edge technologies such as big data and artificial intelligence (AI). Positioned strategically overlooking the Indian Ocean and bolstered by its submarine cable connections to Asia, Africa, and Oceania, Oman has transformed into a thriving data centre hub. According to Statista, revenue from Oman's data centres is projected to reach USD 61.5 million this year, attracting the attention of some of the world's largest hyperscalers. This trend positions the sector to potentially double in size by the end of the decade.

At the forefront of Oman's data centre market, capturing an impressive 70% market share is Oman Data Park (ODP). Recognised for its excellence, ODP offers award-winning managed cloud, cybersecurity, and AI services, as well as software products. Its clientele ranges from private and public enterprises to renowned hyperscalers like Amazon Web Services (AWS). By partnering with ODP, businesses gain the flexibility and security required to stay competitive in today's fast-paced digital landscape.

Maqbool Al Wahaib, CEO of Oman Data Park, explains the company's inception was driven by two crucial government mandates. The first mandate focused on data localisation, while the second aimed to maximise the contribution of data centre services to Oman's GDP. ODP's journey began in 2013 by providing data centre services to Oman's banking sector, starting with Bank Nizwa. Today, nearly all banks in Oman entrust their data to ODP, cementing its position as a trusted partner within the banking industry. Al Wahaib asserts, "Our primary sector is banking. Given the sectors' regulations, our involvement in the banking sector has provided us invaluable risk and compliance experience."

ODP's influence extends to the oil and gas sector, where it offers companies flexible digitalisation plans, leveraging tools such as Microsoft Azure, resulting in up to 25% reductions in total cost of ownership (TCO). Recently, ODP inked a significant agreement with Schlumberger,

Maqbool Al Wahaib
CEO

the world's largest offshore drilling company, to automate parts of its oil drilling process.

In addition to its prowess in banking and oil & gas, ODP provides tailor-made Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) products for the telecommunications sector. Oman's early adoption of 5G technology has been supported by ODP, assisting the government in achieving its network targets. The company currently collaborates with industry giant Vodafone, playing a pivotal role in the launch of their services in Oman. Al Wahaib proudly states, "All Vodafone infrastructure is now cloudified in our data centres and managed by our Oman Data Park team. It's one of the most sophisticated projects of its kind in Oman."

Innovation lies at the core of Oman Data Park's DNA, exemplified by its pioneering achievements. The company has introduced two Omani firsts: an AI-enabled IaaS system in collaboration with Nvidia, and the creation of the Nebula system, the first virtual data centre. Nebula revolutionises the traditional data centre model, reducing TCO by up to 55% and enabling businesses to be up and running within hours, a fraction of the time typically required for a traditional data centre setup. Al Wahaib envisions ODP as one of the

world's top 10 managed service providers (MSPs) by 2025, emphasising the importance of international partnerships in achieving this goal. With esteemed partnerships that include hyperscalers such as AWS, Oracle, Dell, and Cisco, Al Wahaib aims to leverage these alliances to expand into new markets. Saudi Arabia is a primary focus, with ongoing discussions with internet providers, while East Africa, particularly Tanzania, presents exciting opportunities. ODP has already committed to establishing a data centre in Zanzibar as part of the recent Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between Oman and Zanzibar. Additionally, the data centre in Duqm is being prepared to welcome GCC and international investors. Al Wahaib also expresses interest in collaborating with US-based robotics and AI companies, while exploring opportunities in Europe.

ODP's unrivalled reliability and exceptional customer care standards make it an ideal partner for prospective clients. With a remarkable uptime guarantee of 99.9825% and round-the-clock monitoring, coupled with military-grade cybersecurity, ODP ensures the utmost security and uninterrupted service. Al Wahaib emphasises, "Service management is about building capacities and skills. We provide expert support from proven industry leaders who know how to take care of our partners. We have solutions architects and technical specialists–everything hyperscalers need."

As Oman actively pursues diversification, Oman Data Park embodies the transformative economic landscape. In addition to supporting SMEs and start-ups with three years of free cloud storage, ODP is steadfast in its mission to fully cloudify Oman's public and private sectors. Al Wahaib reveals plans to establish a strategic enablement body, working in tandem with the government to expedite digitalisation plans. Furthermore, ODP is poised to offer e-procurement products and collaborative software from Cisco. Al Wahaib concludes, "Oman is strongly focused on building its capacity to provide professional services, and for investors, the resources here are far more cost-effective than in the USA or Europe."

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