Hafiz Sheikh Adnan Ahmed

Co-Founder & CIO,
AZAAN Business Intelligence
& Infosys Services

AZAAN BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE & INFOSYS SERVICES

Governing the Ungovernable

An Unmatched Cybersecurity Professional Spearheading Innovation and Tech Solutions

The idea behind **AZAAN** came from the fact that today, organizations are heavily investing their resources in technology without realizing or putting any effort to ensure Governance, Risk, and Compliance. **AZAAN**, the literal meaning of which is "to listen", provides leading enterprise businesses and government entities with strategic consultancy combined with tailored Information & Cybersecurity, Data Privacy, Governance or Risk or Compliance solutions and services that address their diverse requirements, enabling them to evolve securely with a competitive edge. **AZAAN** ensures that the company's partners always stay ahead of the curve.

Established in 2018 in Estonia, **AZAAN** has come a long way in making an impression as one of the leaders in assessments, consultancy, auditing, and training services in the market. **AZAAN** has established itself as a pioneer in bringing systems and providing a digitally secure environment that is relevant to market niches in various industries.

With a client portfolio spanning multiple countries including Portugal, Ireland, Germany, Indonesia, UAE, KSA, Qatar, Bahrain, Pakistan, USA, Canada, and South Africa among others, **AZAAN** offers cost-effective and result-oriented services that comply with its client's unique business needs and goals. Its consultants and trainers have assured the best delivery of services to clients over the years.

Today, **AZAAN** has a physical presence in Estonia, UAE, and Pakistan while offering services across the globe through its joint ventures and business partners.
To know more: log on to: https://azaanbiservices.com

A Transformational Leader Making Tech-Driven Progress

Hafiz Sheikh Adnan Ahmed's journey started back in 2005 as a Quality Assurance Engineer and over the years, he shaped his career as Information & Cybersecurity, Data Privacy, and Business Governance/Risk/Compliance Advisor. Hafiz is the Co-

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Founder and CIO of **AZAAN**, and his role is to drive and align business strategies of the company's esteemed clients towards Information & Cybersecurity centric and to oversee the people, processes, and technologies within the organizations to ensure they deliver outcomes that support the goals of the business.

Balancing Goals and Objectives to Attain Success
Emphasizing past experiences, Hafiz remarks that over the years, what he has learned is to balance the goals and objectives of the organization while also making sure his teams remain supported, motivated, happy, and successful. He believes that prioritizing, delivering, and balancing business strategy and operations is the key to success. Adding to this, he reveals that he has "CISO Middle East" award, "Rising Stars in Security and Risk" award, and "Personal Contribution to IT Security" award under his belt.

Sailing through the Early Day Challenges with Compassion
Looking back, Hafiz recalls that, one of the major challenges he faced was to set the right direction of the career path since there were not many experts and industry advisors back then. Hafiz and his team were stepping into the Information security and digital transformation era but there were no industry experts to guide and train them, a lack of resources as well as skillset mismatch led Hafiz to take the lead and he was accredited as a Certified trainer from PECB, one of the leading and global certification and assessment bodies worldwide.

'Versatility and Adaptiveness' at the Heart of Professionalism
Since CIOs and CSOs must wear multiple hats, it is very important to have a diverse portfolio of skills to their name, saysHafiz. He believes that the most important attribute of a leader is to have good communication skills. "Being a CIO or CSO, he or she must have a good

understanding of the latest trends and technologies like AI, ML, Digital Transformation, Blockchain, and IoT from a business standpoint. and on top of that, he or she must have a strong grip on Governance, Risk, Compliance, Data Privacy, and other regulatory laws and regulations. He or she must be a champion of Innovation, be emotionally intelligent and be a bridge between technology and business to drive and achieve business objectives," he adds.

Striving for Excellence, The Only Mantra for Victory
Embarking on innovation, Hafiz states, "One thing that differentiates us from our competitors is that we don't do any sales or marketing pitch to our clients; in fact, we don't have any salesperson in our team. What we offer to our clients is strategic business partnership and ownership in their journey towards excellence. We strongly believe in "Striving for Excellence". We offer a business model that creates a "win-win" approach for all our business partners and affiliates at the same time. We value our customers and go the extra mile to reach their needs to deliver sustainable services. We always consider all our clients, business partners, and affiliates as part of our big **AZAAN** community."

Getting Better and Ahead with Good Technology Choices
According to Hafiz, the role of the modern CIOs and CTOs has been in a state of flux in recent years. Increasingly, it has become a balancing act between managing traditional IT operations and driving strategic initiatives with transformational change high on the agenda. Digital disruption and increasing customer expectations are the driving force behind much of it and forward-thinking companies are embracing the opportunity. He highlights that the role of top leadership is to focus on setting clear priorities that are directly linked to measurable business outcomes. Invest in highly talented people, particularly specialized leaders, and those with strong digital and analytical skills. Adopt agile

practices and update your digital strategies frequently. Adding to this, Hafiz also mentions that top leadership must foster cultural change. They should work in collaboration with HR to make technology choices and design processes in a way that supports the creation of the intended organizational culture.

Envisioning to be the Leading One

Hafiz articulates that the company aims to be among the top 10 organizations worldwide for offering the largest portfolio of certified and accredited training programs, ICT consulting, Assessment, and Auditing services. He adds that over the years, the company has achieved PECB Gold Partnership, and it aims to be their Platinum partner in the next couple of years.

"We have a team of Data Privacy Experts, Information and Cybersecurity Consultants, Risk Managers, and Business advisors who work collaboratively to support the organization in their journey towards digital transformation," Hafiz reveals.

He highlights that to keep up with the future requirements, **AZAAN** has partnered with some of the most recognized certification and accreditation bodies that offer training and certification tracks in Digital Transformation, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence, IoT, Big Data, Blockchain, DevOps, Machine Learning, and Service-Oriented Architecture. Hafiz presumes that **AZAAN** is truly keeping pace with its values: Analyze, Zealous, Adaptable, Achiever, and Nurture.

Insightful Advice for the Emerging Leaders

As a piece of advice to all future tech leaders, Hafiz states that great power comes with great responsibility. "First and foremost, identify your niche. Perform an objective inventory of your skills and expertise. Know your customer, and its requirements and provide the best customer experience. Keep pace with the new trends in disruptive technologies but be able to speak the language of the business and not just technology. Be a Learner and not just a knower, and last but not the least, establish transparency in communication and decision-making," he concludes.