

datacentrix

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infocentrix

**Data-driven
enterprise solutions**

Infocentrix is an official newsletter for the Datacentrix Group, its partners and clients.

Datacentrix is a leading hybrid IT systems integrator and managed services provider.

Our expert teams leverage the power of technology to connect, transform and future-proof business.

The company's value-driven approach and proven execution capability reinforce its position as one of the top ICT players in the market.

Datacentrix has a broad African footprint and presence in the Middle East.

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We would like to thank our technology partners for their support and input into this issue:

**Dell Technologies
Hewlett Packard Enterprise
Huawei
IBM
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Teraco**

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A year in review

I feel privileged to be writing this message as the Datacentrix CEO, as we draw closer to the end of the calendar year. I can confirm with a sense of achievement that we have emerged as a stronger team and an even more formidable hybrid ICT systems and services provider since March 2020. During this time, our teams have been single-minded about their objectives and have leveraged our expertise to achieve what we set out to do and have done so with vision, focus, dedication, compassion and ambition. The result of this is a stronger, more agile and responsive business partner to all our stakeholders. We are not an IT company, but a people company, harnessing the power of technology to augment our customers' business strategies. We continue to maintain and operate under high ethical standards, maintaining the integrity of our people and business.

While many business leaders have taken some tough decisions, as a leadership team we are happy to announce that Datacentrix has minimised and in many cases eliminated the impact on our people, shareholders, business partners and general stakeholders. This has been achieved as a result of the combination of our clients' loyalty, our technology partners support and our people's commitment to key strategic initiatives. Some of our strategies involved safeguarding our revenue streams, generating new business opportunities, and managing non-essential expenditure, which our teams have done with distinction. Amid addressing these challenges, we have also made further progress in our transformation aspirations. I applaud the support and tolerance of our people as we have implemented tough measures to protect our business, both from a wellness and an economic perspective. These actions have demanded time and energy from our teams and management. It would be an oversight not to highlight the many individuals who have needed to go above and beyond the normal call of duty. I would like to acknowledge each one of you for helping us navigate this terrain safely.

In the same breath, I salute the numerous people within the business for their generosity in supporting those past employees and communities hardest hit by the pandemic. This heartfelt support has been provided across the regions and has given some relief to many in distress. This social impact was executed through our "This is Us" social investment programme and reflects the true character of the people at Datacentrix. Business is not only about profitability, but must also impact society positively.

On the other hand, our technology partners, who are essential to our business, have been highly responsive to our needs and those of our clients. They have shown such



willingness to support the upskilling of our technical and sales complement on new technology offerings and have also been involved in our marketing efforts to gain further traction in local industries. Their commitment to our success has not gone unnoticed and has influenced the attraction of new business and the maintenance, if not deepening, of existing contracts. For these reasons I extend my heartfelt thanks.

Finally, I would like to express gratitude to our valued customers, the lifeblood of our business, for their allegiance and on-going support. I trust that the uninterrupted connectivity, availability and security of your ICT systems during the adoption of remote working policies, and now with the gradual return to campus, has demonstrated the level of expertise and service excellence that Datacentrix is capable of delivering. We are privileged to be your partner, an extension of your business and caretakers of one of your most valuable assets, aside from your people, your data!

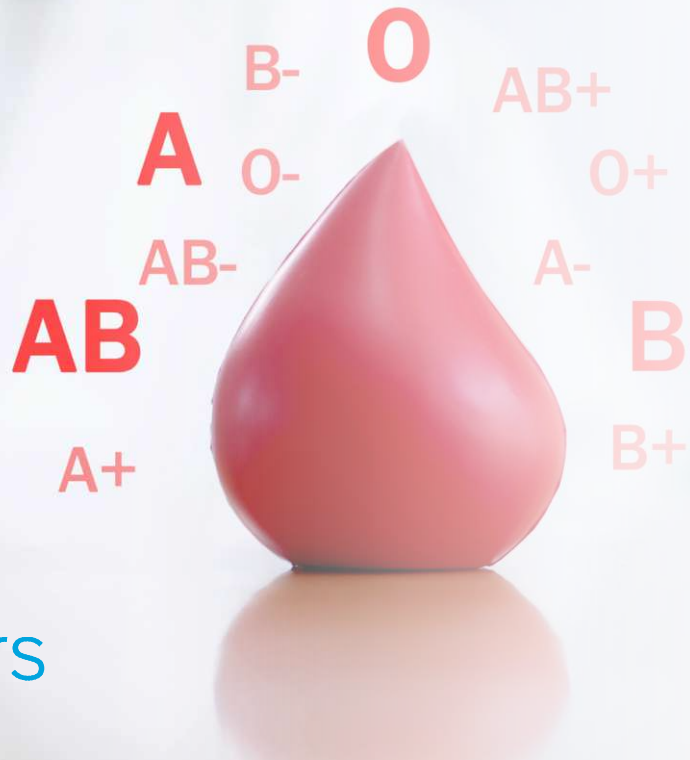
The pandemic has taught us that organisations need to be agile, innovative, inspiring, and visionary. We must resist the urge to view the future through the lens of pre and post COVID, the future is going to be carved out according to new rules and driven by exponential velocity. Change is as old as humanity itself; the speed and velocity of change in this age is what's different. In this new world the past does not necessarily inform the future and control failure and chaos in business is a prerequisite for future success.

The pandemic has taught us that Ubuntu is ingrained in our DNA and the need to have human interaction is a fundamental necessity. Whilst we yearn for social interaction, let us do it responsibly this festive season.

I would also like to extend our heartfelt condolences to those who have lost loved ones in these turbulent times. I wish you all a healthy and successful closure to 2021 and may 2022 be kind and good to all. We are looking forward to achieving new heights and to continue helping move South Africa forward in the years to come.

Regards
Ahmed Mahomed, Datacentrix CEO

Datacentrix provides rugged, compact mobile solution to SANBS for another three years



The South African National Blood Service (SANBS), a not-for-profit organisation providing an essential service within South Africa, has renewed an agreement with Datacentrix to provide a bespoke WiFi solution for its mobile clinics.

The 2018 initial requirement of SANBS, which operates across South Africa with the exclusion of the Western Cape, was to provide donors visiting its mobile clinics with the same experience as those calling in at its fixed sites. And this, according to Amit Singh, Senior Manager: Service Delivery at SANBS, includes the availability of free WiFi.

“We had very specific prerequisites for these mobile WiFi units, which seemed like quite a tall order,” explains Singh. “They needed to be rugged units that could be moved around from clinic to clinic and would not easily be damaged when in transit. We wanted them to be theft and tamper-proof, provide 10 hours of battery life and, beyond this, they also needed to be portable enough for our employees to easily carry, transport and set up the units.

“Datacentrix won the initial tender by meeting all of SANBS’ requirements, with the organisation going the extra mile of building a bespoke solution to achieve this.”

The business outcome was a robust mobile WiFi solution, comments Savan Marimuthu, Senior Account Manager at Datacentrix. “The units were specially customised for SANBS, ticking all of the boxes. Built using military-grade material, they are waterproof, extremely compact, weighing in at just 4.5 kilograms, and have a long-life battery.”

In addition, they come fitted with General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) protocol for wireless and cellular network communication services, adds Frederik van Staden, Senior Consultant: WAN and ISP Services at Datacentrix company, eNetworks, an ISP and network specialist. “The units are easy to use, with GPS location tracking in real-time, and provide



The units were specially customised for SANBS, ticking all of the boxes. Built using military-grade material, they are waterproof, extremely compact, weighing in at just 4.5 kilograms, and have a long-life battery.

excellent coverage, even in outlying areas. As a vendor-agnostic partner, eNetworks was able to look at where SANBS’ mobile clinics were situated and plan for the best LTE coverage. As part of the service, SANBS has access to an online portal, which provides insights on traffic as well as how and where data is being consumed.”

“By opting for Datacentrix’s mobile-as-a-service option, SANBS has been provided with an innovative solution with no requirement for capital outlay, a 24-hour service level agreement (SLA), as well as annual refurbishment of the equipment,” Van Staden adds.

After a successful pilot phase, with positive feedback received from donors, SANBS rolled out 20 primary WiFi units, followed by a further 10 devices. This agreement recently



Savan Marimuthu, Senior Account Manager at Datacentrix and Amit Singh, Senior Manager: Service Delivery at SANBS

came to maturity, and, having followed its due request for proposal (RFP) business process to gauge the current marketplace, SANBS opted to award the new three-year tender to Datacentrix. SANBS plans to add additional units to cover more of its mobile donor clinics.

“SANBS issued an RFP once the initial three-year contract had expired, and we decided to award the new contract to Datacentrix,” says Singh. “Response on the units from our donors has been phenomenal, and not only are they able to use the free service to access the Internet during the blood donation process, but mobile clinic staff can access SANBS’ central database when needed to access donor information.

“We have built an excellent working relationship with Datacentrix over this time, and the entire team, from back-office staff to executives, has been brilliant. Each member goes out of their way to get things done. In particular, Datacentrix bent over backwards to ensure that we received equipment needed over the lockdown period.”

Datacentrix earns Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions Group (ISG) Platinum Partner of the Year award

Datacentrix has been named as Lenovo's Infrastructure Solutions Group (ISG) Platinum Partner of the Year for South Africa. This recognition was announced during Lenovo's fourth annual channel awards ceremony, held virtually, where Datacentrix received the additional recognition of being runner-up for the Intelligent Devices Group (IDG) Partner of the Year award.

“Datacentrix is a Lenovo Platinum Partner for Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions Group, and a Platinum, Tier 1 partner for Lenovo's Intelligent Devices Group, as well as an Authorised Service Partner (ASP),” explains Shawn Marx, Business Unit Manager: Converged Solutions at Datacentrix. “As such, it's clear that Datacentrix has put a tremendous amount of effort into our Lenovo partnership, ensuring that we continue to build the brand locally.

“Being named as ISG Platinum Partner of the Year is confirmation from Lenovo that our dedication and perseverance is paying off. Congratulations go to every Datacentrix team member who made this award possible,

for working smarter, stronger and together across our client base and across the regions. Winning this title reflects our focus on driving solutions that support our clients in achieving their business priorities and the hard work that has been put into these achievements,” he adds.

Greg Pothitos, Channel Manager: Africa at Lenovo Southern Africa, says: “Lenovo is uniquely positioned to help our business partners and customers meet diverse requirements in the enterprise market. Through smarter datacentre solutions and our open ecosystem of partnerships with leading IT providers, Lenovo ISG is able to provide robust, reliable and personalised solutions for any business requirement.

“Datacentrix has always stayed focused on its core business, value offering and service levels. Our partnership leverages Lenovo ISG's wide offering and links it to Datacentrix's strong foothold in the region to support our customers' digital transformation journey. It is with great pleasure that we award the Platinum Partner award to Datacentrix.”

Datacentrix formalises QSE programme – helping develop community skills and employment opportunities with self-sustaining small businesses

Datacentrix has formalised its Qualifying Small Enterprises (QSE) upliftment programme, with a view to providing greater support to help smaller businesses to flourish across South Africa.

The programme not only exposes existing small businesses to sizable contracts as a Datacentrix fulfilment partner, with the opportunity to deepen collaboration across additional clients, it also allows them to build skills, employ additional staff from within the community and to establish sound business practices. According to Datacentrix CEO, Ahmed Mahomed, the ethos behind the QSE programme is to help local small enterprises to build successful, ethical, self-sustaining practices.

“Business leaders in South Africa have a responsibility to our communities. By giving back to society, helping to create employment and sustainable business opportunities, and meeting basic needs, we are improving the quality of people’s lives. Together we can contribute towards the growth and success of South Africa by subscribing to responsible leadership and business values, including compassion, integrity, governance, efficacy, and accountability.

“Datacentrix prides itself on its solid governance and ethical practices and, being vehemently anti-corruption, believes that a business built on principled grounds will be rewarded.

“Through our QSE programme, our aim is to help instil these qualities within our smaller business partners, building a value chain of reliable organisations that can assist Datacentrix in servicing our clients, from the rollout of infrastructure to the provision of on-site support,” Mahomed adds.

Current Datacentrix QSE partners include Sleep-Time Solutions, Delltro Technology, 4Sure Technologies and S'fikile Consulting.

Based in eMalahleni, Mpumalanga, Sleep-Time Solutions is a 100 percent black-owned, 50 percent black woman-owned business that currently supplies IT consumables and hardware to power stations, mines, corporates, and government departments, as well as office stationery and medical equipment. The company has partnered with Datacentrix since 2019 as a QSE partner for Managed Print Solutions (MPS), covering Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng. The partnership has resulted in the creation of 11 new job opportunities, as well as the employment of seven local community-based youths to assist with the deployment and movement of devices.

According to Siphon Kunene, Executive Director at Sleep-Time Solutions, the smaller business' experience with Datacentrix over the past two years has been a positive one. “Not only have we learnt a great amount from both a technology and business perspective, but we've also been given access to bigger clients within larger sectors than would previously have been possible. We'd like to further extend the partnership with Datacentrix into the future, expanding our offering to include field technology expertise.”

Delltro Technology, a small enterprise which is also 100 percent black-owned and 50 percent black woman-owned and has offices in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape, assists Datacentrix with the fulfilment of an MPS services contract within Kathu and Postmasburg, Northern Cape. This agreement has enabled the company to bring seven new employees on board, as well as another four youths from nearby communities.

Says Ginah Kunene, Delltro Head of Operations and Sustainable Development: "At Delltro, we see the relationship with Datacentrix growing and becoming stronger over time. Together, we're able to access many more opportunities, and we'd like to see Delltro flourish alongside Datacentrix as we deepen our offering."

From Constantia Kloof, Johannesburg, 4 Sure Technologies is a Level 1 B-BBEE ICT solutions company established in 2004 focusing on the delivery of consulting, technology, systems integration and managed services, including print media technology. With its head Office in Rustenburg, North West, 4 Sure recently expanded its presence nationally through the establishment of virtual branches.

"We have been engaging with Datacentrix for many years on teaming agreements for multiple projects, signing a five-year deal as a sub-contractor for a large corporate in January 2020," states Tshepo Serutle, General Manager at 4 Sure. "Currently, we manage over 700 MPS devices for this particular Datacentrix client, which has allowed us to employ 13 new staff members. We have also been able to purchase four new branded vehicles to service the contract through this engagement, as well as growing our footprint beyond Rustenburg to include Northam, Mogalakwena, Polokwane and Burgersfort.

"We value Datacentrix's involvement and support and appreciate the organisation's eagerness on teaming with 4 Sure Technologies on previous and forthcoming projects." The formalisation of the QSE programme not only provides these smaller businesses with the security of fixed rates, explains Shaun Hattingh, Business Unit Manager at Datacentrix, but they will also have the requisite service level agreements in place and are assisted with whatever is needed to establish a fully operational model.

"This approach provides real value to these small businesses, while also allowing for employment opportunities within the surrounding communities of our work sites, helping our QSE partners to skill up with industry-recognised certifications, supplement their existing resources, as well as to build ethical, transparent business practices that will stand the test of time," he says.

Corporate Social Investment (CSI) is central to realising meaningful transformation and benefits the broader community, continues Mahomed. "We are cognisant of the growing social needs in South Africa and are committed to making a difference by supporting projects that benefit historically disadvantaged sectors of society. The formal structuring of our QSE programme will play an important role here."



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Shaun Hattingh and Tshepo Serutle, General Manager at 4Sure Technologies



Siphon Kunene, CEO of SleepTime Solutions



Gina Kunene, Director of Operations and Sustainable Development at Delltro Technology

AFGRI leverages technology to help local farmers build a sustainable future

There's a misconception that the agriculture industry is behind the curve when it comes to technology adoption. In fact, the opposite is true, although unfortunately often at the expense of the individual farmer.

So said Pierre Durand, Head of IT and Innovation at agricultural services company AFGRI Agri Services (AFGRI), in conversation with Datacentrix CEO, Ahmed Mahomed. Durand explained that when it comes to technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, they're only as good as the connected infrastructure that underpins them.

"The truth is that unless you have a way to actually use that data being gathered by your drone – showing for instance those pieces of land that need specific assistance in crop growing or additional water requirements – it's difficult to understand how exactly you can increase yield significantly.

"What we've seen with many of the leading-edge farms is that they have self-created platforms to get the connectivity right," he continued. "They have been using varying combinations of 3G, fibre and copper, and, particularly in outlying areas, many farmers have put this infrastructure down themselves."



Pierre Durand, Head of IT and Innovation at AFGRI Agri Services

Bringing economies of scale to local agri

Said Jacob de Villiers, Financial Executive at AFGRI Group Holdings: "Modernisation is probably the conversation we have the most frequently with our customer base. Technology in the form of agricultural equipment has come on in leaps and bounds, and is the leading driver of crop production.

"Our farmers' ability to innovate and use technology is often underestimated, and so, as a 98-year-old organisation, AFGRI is continuously striving to be at the cutting edge of innovation to help our clients ensure sustainable business into the future."

AFGRI has taken on the role of integrator, assisting the local agri sector to find these critical technologies and pull them together in a meaningful way while leveraging economies of scale, Durand explained.

"For a single farmer to put down the proper infrastructure is an expensive exercise. But, with a co-operative approach, a packaged solution can provide economies of scale, bringing the cost down to a place where it makes sense for our clients."

As such, the organisation has made significant investments to extend its support to the industry. There are many examples, such as the revamping of AFGRI's siloes for faster offload speeds, as well as the updating of its stock monitoring systems, ensuring that there is a constant view of stock and its movements through the siloes. Then, there are also the softer issues, such as the company's online platform, which allows easier transacting for its farmers.

"Our smaller farmers need practical solutions, and another example of how AFGRI has stepped in to help unlock this value is with the introduction of Axl in 2020," Durand added. Axl is AFGRI's online platform designed for the convenient rental of farm equipment, facilitating the contract between the renter and the owner in a few simple steps online. "Every farmer is sitting with under-utilised equipment that stands idle between seasons," he stated. "Axl provides a platform for the farmer to rent out equipment during downtime to produce another source of revenue for the farm. The platform takes the risk away from both sides."

Fostering a partnership approach

"It is clear that for an organisation like AFGRI, connectedness throughout the business is vitally important. "Our value chain has become very interesting, and from a client's point of view,



AFGRI is leveraging Datacentrix's holistic Hybrid IT value proposition, optimising workloads by migrating to Datacentrix cloud services to boost performance and improve cost management.

AFGRI wants to avoid the frustration that can come from dealing with a large corporate," Durand continued. "In line with this, we're increasingly seeing a theme of partnership emerge, where our clients are treated as true partners. By the same token, AFGRI itself needs its own strong partners, and we've found this in Datacentrix. By working with Datacentrix, we are able to provide our clients with a holistic solution, one that includes the underlying technology infrastructure.

"An element of true partnership is understanding where your clients want to go, and even more importantly, particularly in the face of the current pandemic, remaining flexible enough to shift with the changing business as needed," he added.

"This is how AFGRI operates, and the fact that Datacentrix is willing to take the journey with us has been reinforced over and over during our time with them. The relationship we have with Datacentrix is extremely honest and transparent."

Technology to deliver agri business results AFGRI's investment in innovation extends to executing on its digital transformation strategy. Last year, the organisation kick-started a three-year project with Datacentrix, which encompasses the rollout of a software-defined networking solution, cloud-delivered security, endpoint visibility with the software-defined WAN rollout, monitoring, connectivity delivery through Datacentrix company, eNetworks, an ISP and network specialist, and more.

"Roughly one year down, the bulk of the transitional work for AFGRI has been completed," commented Ahmed Mahomed, CEO at Datacentrix. "AFGRI is leveraging Datacentrix's holistic Hybrid IT value proposition, optimising workloads by migrating to Datacentrix cloud services to boost performance and improve cost management. The most important reason behind this, is the positive impact it will have on AFGRI's ability to continue delivering value to local farmers.

"Farming is core to any country when it comes to sustainability, and modernisation is critical to safeguarding this asset. Technology plays a massive role in ensuring that you get the best yield from a piece of land and achieving the

planned outcome. Looking at it from this perspective, as a technology partner, Datacentrix's approach is to partner with its clients to solve business challenges by leveraging technology to deliver real business value."

Said De Villiers: "In South Africa currently, we're at a watershed moment. As a country we're fortunately still food secure, but we need to understand that population growth will put pressure on our ability to look after our people. Logistical constraints also hamper our own affordability of food, if we can't ensure that we produce locally at a better price than importing.

"AFGRI takes its role in delivering the best services at the best cost to our customers very seriously, with the aim of profitable, sustainable farming. Through our partnerships with companies like Datacentrix, we will continue to help our farmer base to solve their problems, providing a solid foundation to really deliver sustainable value," he concluded.



Video

Datacentrix CEO, Ahmed Mahomed talks to Jacob de Villiers, Financial Executive at AFGRI Group Holdings and Pierre Durand, Head of IT and Innovation at AFGRI Agri Services about the role of technology in modernising the sector.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvGos2nHEVg>

Datacentrix Mining Indaba 2021 focuses on extending local mining longevity through technology

The critical role technology is playing in mining's transformation, and the importance of the sector's contribution towards rebuilding South Africa's post-COVID economy, were central themes at Datacentrix's recent third annual Mining Indaba event.

This year's Indaba took place at Zebula Golf Estate and Spa in Limpopo with the support of platinum sponsor, Huawei, and gold sponsors, OpenText and Tenable.

Kenny Nkosi, Divisional Managing Director: Gauteng Sales at Datacentrix and Hannah Hanxu, Divisional Director, Commercial Sector, Huawei Enterprise Business Group, welcomed delegates by praising the mining industry for its resilience over the past eighteen months.

Said Hanxu: "This shows how important the sector is to the country's economic recovery. According to the latest PWC South Africa Mining report, there is great opportunity ahead for mines to transition into the new economy and contribute to South Africa's economic rebuilding. And as you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has been the biggest agent of change for all aspects of our lives: it has pushed us into the digital era."

The first keynote speaker at the Mining Indaba 2021, Tafadzwa Chibanguza, Economist at Minerals Council South Africa, spoke on several very current challenges facing the South African mining sector, as well as giving an outlook on the industry moving forward.

He noted that the value mining has contributed to the economy has contracted over time, despite this being an industry of tremendous potential, stating that "mining has become a sunset industry, with its contribution to the South African economy decreasing to around only eight percent as of 2020."

Chibanguza also mentioned the drop off of employment within the sector, from 700,000 in 2012 to less than 460,000 in the first quarter of 2021, and concerns around a decline in

exploration spend, the very start of the mining value chain, which could pose a serious risk to local mining.

Another South African challenge, according to Chibanguza, is the fact that mining is both directly and indirectly dependent on all government-supplied infrastructure, from water provision to the use of harbour, rail and road infrastructure. Mines purchase around 30 percent of Eskom's power, with the availability of electricity and rising tariffs remaining serious constraints to the industry.

More encouraging news, however, was that, while the COVID-19 pandemic caused economies to lock down – with a short, sharp, immediate impact – there was a much faster recovery in production by the industry when compared to the negative influence of the global financial crisis, which saw 18 months needed for a recovery in metal demand, as opposed to around six months due to the pandemic.

He added that, while mine closures are inevitable, technology will allow us to extend the life of mines significantly, with twenty-four-hour mechanisation being particularly effective, extending a mine's life beyond an estimated closure in 2033, in a 'do nothing' scenario, to beyond 2046.

The Mining Indaba's second keynote speaker, respected economist Dr Roelof Botha, concurred that while there are many tests and trials facing South Africa's economic growth, from Eskom's infrastructure concerns and the trillions of Rand lost in the state capture, there are a number of positives on which to focus.

"Renewables are becoming cheaper, and we have incredible capacity here from both a solar and wind perspective.



Through Datacentrix's value-driven approach, we are able to help African mines utilise innovation and technology to mitigate risk, improve efficiencies and drive down costs.



Tafadzwa Chibanguza, Economist at Minerals Council South Africa

Confidence in local agriculture is at an all-time high, and the price of property is set to increase, as we're in the initial stages of a property boom. Our GDP has also made a full recovery from COVID.

"Don't get stuck in the recent past, there is fantastic news all around in South Africa, and we're seeing 22 significant growth drivers, up from 11 last year, such as the lowest lending rate in 50 years.

"The mining industry has helped to save South Africa. We have the resources, the skills and people with the right attitude, so it's time to calm down and grow the economy."

The Mining Indaba 2021 included a panel discussion between Datacentrix, Huawei and Royal Bafokeng Platinum (RBPlat), a mid-tier Platinum Group Metals (PGM) producer, which originated from a joint venture between Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) and Royal Bafokeng Holdings that looked at unleashing the real power and value of data for mining.

RBPlat's Karina Geyser, Manager Information Management, also provided attendees with a real-life view of a connected mine, providing a view of modernisation in mining and exploring how RBPlat is creating value from data through its roadmap towards a digital ecosystem.

Speakers on the event's agenda included Huawei Solutions Manager, Gys Malan; Datacentrix Chief Security

Officer, Rudie Raath; Regional Director at Veritas Technologies, Neil Thorns; Stiaan De Waal, Business Development Manager, Africa Region at ManageEngine; and Luis Gomes de Jesus, Sales Engineer at Tenable South Africa, amongst others.

In his presentation, entitled 'Empowering local mines through partnership', Raath made specific reference to the important role partnerships play in resolving today's mining challenges of connected workloads and apps, converged network risk, the empowerment of a productive hybrid workforce, and data optimisation and automation, amongst others. "Through Datacentrix's value-driven approach, we are able to help African mines utilise innovation and technology to mitigate risk, improve efficiencies and drive down costs," he explained.

Other topics delved into evolving technologies that are influencing business models, connectivity and security in mining, ranging from embracing a hybrid-IT strategy and the importance of managing unstructured data in content management, to combining the power of artificial intelligence and humanity in mine surveillance.

To access the Datacentrix Mining Indaba 2021 presentations and more, please visit www.datacentrix.co.za/mining_indaba_2021

HPE GreenLake edge-to-cloud platform combines control and agility so customers can accelerate innovation

Hewlett Packard Enterprise has announced a sweeping series of new cloud services for the HPE GreenLake edge-to-cloud platform, providing customers unmatched capabilities to power digital transformation for their applications and data. This represents HPE's entry into two large, high-growth software markets – unified analytics and data protection.

Together, these innovations further accelerate HPE's transition to a cloud services company, and, give customers greater choice and freedom for their business and IT strategy, with an open and modern platform that provides a cloud experience everywhere.

The new offerings, which add to a growing portfolio of HPE GreenLake cloud services, allow customers to innovate with agility, at lower costs, and include the following:

- **HPE GreenLake for analytics** – open and unified analytics cloud services to modernise all data and applications everywhere – on-premises, at the edge and in the cloud;
- **HPE GreenLake for data protection** – disaster recovery and backup cloud services to help customers take ransomware head-on and secure data from edge-to-cloud; and
- **HPE Edge-to-Cloud Adoption Framework and automation tools** – a comprehensive, proven set of methodologies expertise and automation tools to accelerate and de-risk the path to a cloud experience everywhere.

"The big data and analytics software market, which IDC predicts will reach \$110 billion by 2023, is ripe for disruption, as customers seek a hybrid solution for enterprise datasets on-premises and at the edge," said Antonio Neri, president


**Hewlett Packard
Enterprise**



HPE provides customers with an unparalleled platform to protect, secure, and capitalise on the full value of their data, from edge to cloud. Antonio Neri, CEO, HPE

and CEO, at HPE. "Data is at the heart of every modernisation initiative in every industry, and yet organisations have been forced to settle for legacy analytics platforms that lack cloud-native capabilities, or force complex migrations to the public cloud that require customers to adapt new processes and risk vendor lock-in. The new HPE GreenLake cloud services for analytics empower customers to overcome these trade-offs and gives them one platform to unify and modernise data everywhere. Together with the new HPE GreenLake cloud services for data protection, HPE provides customers with an unparalleled platform to protect, secure, and capitalise on the full value of their data, from edge to cloud."

HPE continues to accelerate momentum for the HPE GreenLake edge-to-cloud platform. The HPE GreenLake platform now has more than 1,200 customers and \$5.2 billion in total contract value. In HPE's most recent quarter, Q3 2021, HPE announced that the company's Annualised Revenue Run Rate was up 33 percent year-over-year, and as-a-service orders up 46 percent year-over-year. Most recently, HPE announced HPE GreenLake platform wins with Woolworths Group, Australia and New Zealand's largest retailer, and the United States National Security Agency.



Datacentrix acknowledged as top HPE as-a-service partner for MESA region

Datacentrix has taken the title of Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) As-a-Service Partner of the Year for the Middle East and South Africa (MESA) region. Datacentrix took the award at the HPE Discover 2021 Edge-to-Cloud conference.

The 2021 HPE Partner of the Year Awards recognise HPE partners from across the ecosystem for their incredible commitment to customer excellence, continued strong performance, focus on growth, and dedication to our mutual achievements. Winners were selected based on financial performance, innovative solutions, and ability to drive transformative business outcomes for shared customers.

“In today's cloud and mobile world, there is no doubt that businesses are having to become more agile and the ability to scale technology resources up and down as needed comes hand in hand with this approach,” explained Tony de Sousa, General Manager: Technology Solutions at Datacentrix.

“Datacentrix was an early adopter of a consumption-based model, in alignment with HPE, and we are extremely proud to have moved our partnership to the next level with the recent announcement of a new multi-cloud Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) datacentre solution, provided in conjunction with HPE and Teraco, Africa's largest datacentre ecosystem.

“The HPE GreenLake platform forms the basis of a unique new 'pay-as-you-use' model, which provides businesses with the opportunity to harness the multi-cloud in a highly flexible, cost-effective manner.



Our partnership with HPE has been a phenomenal one, and Datacentrix looks forward to continuing to build this relationship while bringing a world-class Hybrid IT offering to the local market.



**Tony de Sousa, General Manager:
Technology Solutions at Datacentrix**

“Our partnership with HPE has been a phenomenal one, and Datacentrix looks forward to continuing to build this relationship while bringing a world-class Hybrid IT offering to the local market,” he added.

“In the last year, I've seen HPE partners go above and beyond the call of duty. I'm incredibly proud to honour them with these accolades,” said George Hope, Worldwide Head of Partner Sales, HPE. “As a channel-led company, HPE is committed to supporting our partners with the best-in-industry innovation, initiatives, and expertise to drive differentiation and deliver better outcomes to our shared customers. We are grateful for the continued strong partnership, which allows us to collaborate and grow together, while setting a new standard for our joint success.”

Datacentrix holds the highest HPE accreditation as a Platinum Partner, offering the broadest portfolio of end-to-end solutions. The company builds complex server, storage, networking virtualisation and application infrastructures, all the way up to the cloud. Datacentrix is also a Platinum Hybrid IT partner, a HPE GreenLake partner; HPE Pointnext partner; a Gold HPE Pointnext Services partner; and an Aruba Platinum partner with ClearPass Policy Management competencies.

Datacentrix supports Athlone High School's future vision

Friedall Swarts, Head of Sales: Western Cape region at Datacentrix; Mr. V Hendricks, Principal at Athlone High School; Munique Stellenberg, Coastal Human Resources Manager at Datacentrix

Datacentrix has set up a partnership with Athlone High School, assisting the school in kitting out its computer room, as well as providing training moving forward. The school was founded in 1947 and has a rich history of academic excellence, cultural firsts and sporting successes.

Based in Athlone, a suburb of Cape Town in the Western Cape, and located to the east of the city centre on the Cape Flats, Athlone High School's principal, Mr. V Hendricks, reached out to Datacentrix, requesting assistance specifically for the institute's computer lab, which had been broken into and was standing unused.

Says Friedall Swarts, Head of Sales: Western Cape region at Datacentrix: "Datacentrix is firmly pro-education and is willing to help previously disadvantaged South Africans to further themselves. In line with this ethos, and our ongoing dedication to community development, we donated hardware to Athlone High School, including printers for the school's library, as well as for the principal's office, and printers, copiers, laptops, desktops and monitors for the computer room.

"The fact that the school has recognised the importance of ICT and is proactively trying to gear up its students to embrace technology was a major factor in our decision to provide Athlone High with ongoing support. This includes upskilling both students and teachers at the school, which also complements the provincial government of the Western Cape's initiative to drive equal education through ICT.

"It is critical that the users at Athlone High School understand how to use the equipment to its full extent, and Datacentrix has been holding high level discussions with the teaching staff at this stage not only on how to use the

devices themselves, but also on the importance of ICT for South Africa's economic growth," Swarts continues. "Students from grade eight to matric will receive Datacentrix skills development participation certifications as they master various achievement levels, and Datacentrix will work hand-in-hand with the learners to assist."

Gearing learners for the future, Athlone High School's staff stays abreast of the latest trends in the workplace, placing a strong focus on skills including sense-making, novel and adaptive thinking, social intelligence, cross-cultural competency, computational thinking, transdisciplinary, new-media literacy, design mindset, cognitive load management and virtual collaboration.

Athlone High School's principal, Mr. V Hendricks, states that the timing of the donation was perfect, as both the school management team and its children had desperately needed an injection of technology resources to help with e-learning and preparing learners for the workplace.

"Two of my main focus areas as leader are literacy and e-learning, and our library and computer lab are two significant spaces for the improvement of reading skills and e-learning," Hendricks explains. "We will utilise the technology infrastructure optimally so that Athlone High can achieve its vision of good administration and sound academic results.

"The description that comes to mind with regards to our partnership with Datacentrix is ineffable; I'm at a loss for words! We thank the entire Datacentrix team for the donation. We will always, with gratitude, remember the generosity that Datacentrix has shown and the demonstration of the company's ongoing commitment to social upliftment."

Datacentrix signs partnership with OutSystems to expand low-code, rapid app development to Africa and Middle East

Datacentrix has signed a partnership agreement, for both Africa and the Middle East, with OutSystems, the industry-leading application development platform.

Says Ahmed Mahomed, Datacentrix CEO: "The OutSystems modern application platform was designed to accelerate the development and deployment of critical applications, while also delivering flexibility and efficiency. This allows us to assist customers in their application modernisation strategies, with a cloud engagement strategy that aligns to Datacentrix's vision."

OutSystems was recently named a leader in the 2021 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Multiexperience Development Platforms (MXDP). According to Gartner: "OutSystems' low-code platform offers greater productivity to development teams by focusing on the creation of reusable components, such as user interface (UI), headless, business logic, processes, integrations and edge deployments."¹

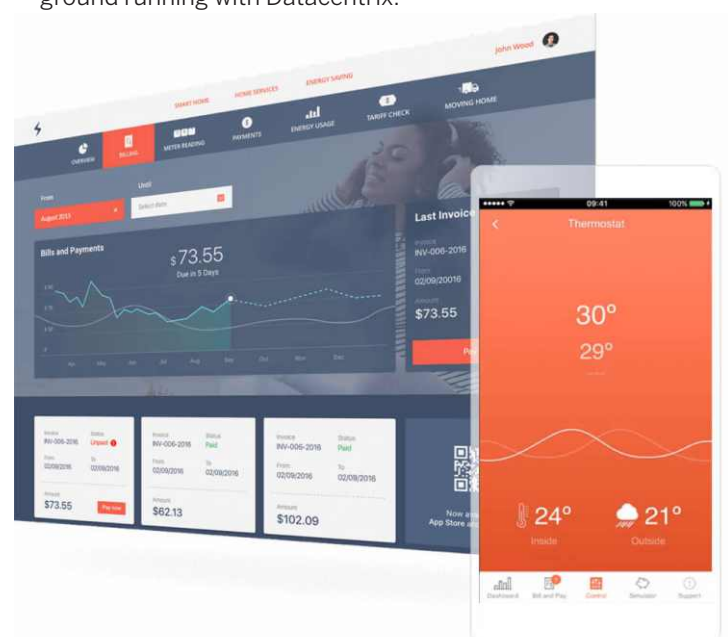
"Gartner identified an OutSystems strength as market understanding, stating that the organisation anticipates changes in the market and shows the ability to incorporate new capabilities (such as AI-enabled tooling) as the need arises," Mahomed continues. "It also noted OutSystems' innovation in the use of emerging technologies, such as AI and machine learning, as well as its focus on components and reusability, which enables higher developer productivity in a low-code environment."

"Furthermore, Gartner stated that the company's sales execution was exemplary, with a simplified, easy-to-understand pricing plan. We believe that the combination of OutSystems' industry best-practices and application platform expertise will augment Datacentrix's digital capabilities. In addition, the partnership supports our multi-vendor strategy by ensuring that we are able to provide

customers with an excellent value proposition and the best-fit solution for their specific business needs.

"These strengths all contribute to OutSystems being the ideal fit for Datacentrix to assist our clients in Africa and the Middle East in their digital transformation journeys, helping them to build more flexible apps, faster," he adds.

"Datacentrix is an important addition to the OutSystems' partner ecosystem, and we are thrilled that this partnership will help joint clients in South Africa, UAE and Qatar achieve their digital transformation goals," says Rodrigo Castelo, Regional VP, Middle East and Africa with OutSystems. "We finished a four-day bootcamp, where we trained 15 Datacentrix sales representatives, and are extremely happy with the outcome. Armed with the right experience, market knowledge and positioning, we look forward to hitting the ground running with Datacentrix."



¹ Gartner, "Magic Quadrant for Multiexperience Development Platforms," Arun Batchu, Adrian Leow, Jim Scheibmeir, July 26, 2021

Is cloud the anti-hero of the moment?

By Jaap Scholten, Head of Group Hybrid IT Strategy at Datacentrix



There have been many plays, books and movies produced featuring an anti-hero; a lead character who, despite perhaps lacking the qualities of a conventional hero, is at the centre of the story and thereby becomes the hero. It can be argued that cloud fulfils exactly this role within the modern technology world.

There is no IT conversation currently that does not at some point mention cloud. Yet, without good connectivity or proper security, cloud is of no use. So yes, we must talk about cloud, but all the supporting roles must be scripted into the story for it to make any sense.

Looking at it from this perspective, it becomes clear that data remains the golden thread that keeps it all together, so instead of cloud taking centre stage, these conversations should rather be data-led.

With real-time access to your company's data – specifically unstructured data – machine learning tools can provide insights that are very specific to your business. Whether it is customer behaviour, procurement trends, stock levels and even staff behaviour, you can now have information insights at your fingertips that allows your business to adjust to these dynamics, hopefully also in real-time.

And where is all this heavy lifting done? In the cloud of course... This is where the business tools are located and from where they are able to access the data securely, with all your data from disparate systems aggregating in one ecosystem – one cloud ecosystem.

So, a data-first strategy provides an end-to-end journey, or roadmap, to digitalisation. This includes the three pillars that support Datacentrix's Hybrid IT strategy, being data hosting, data transport, and data security.

And yes, it is possible to put a timeline on a cloud journey. While tried-and-tested projects, such the moving from Microsoft Exchange to M365, are well-known and well-scripted, taking a business on a digitalisation path is a multi-faceted process. The size of the projects, as in how many apps, users and servers it involves – effectively the nuts and bolts of the IT aspect of the business – hugely influences the time required.

That said, proper transformation via digitalisation for an enterprise is typically a five- to seven-year plan. A good strategy takes time, even if you are a cloud-first business. Referencing Uber, the organisation took a year and a half to offer its first ride in San Francisco, and another year to activate in New York. The app arrived in South Africa four years later, and it took them a total of 10 years to list. That is a long ride.

Ultimately, you would want a digitalisation plan to help your business become more competitive, that almost goes without saying. You need to be able to learn from the data you have, about your customer behaviour, your vendor purchasing habits and more. If your aim is simply to get rid of hardware

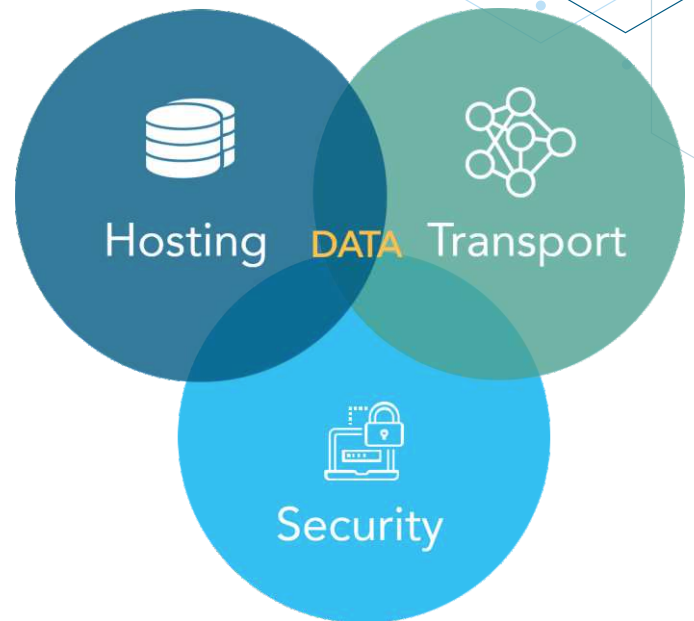


Whether it is customer behaviour, procurement trends, stock levels and even staff behaviour, you can now have information at your fingertips that allows your business to adjust to these dynamics, hopefully also in real-time.

and virtualise this in the cloud, it can become a costly exercise. Also, that is not a business strategy, but rather an IT plan.

A clearly defined business goal – perhaps to improve competitiveness, drive down manufacturing costs, or move toward e-commerce – will allow for massive cost optimisation to take place. And by having all your data and subsystems in the cloud, you will have a more integrated data set on which to apply the insights that machine learning and outputs that artificial intelligence will deliver.

We have seen a trend where the net IT costs increase initially, but these are offset against market research, or even against the traditional discounting methods. For example, when you ask a data scientist to research your data to see what the company's sales trend was last season, you have already biased the outcome. The scientist will provide you with accurate feedback as requested, whereas a machine learning tool will not give you that answer. Machine learning will instead look at all the unstructured data and provide unbiased insights of trends that you may not have requested. Yes, it will provide last season's sales trends, but may also highlight that logistics costs were at an all-time high, your cost of sales was greater than average, and



because discounts were introduced, your margin was rock bottom.

And cloud or no cloud, a result of not investing in business systems is the inevitable need to sunset business applications, often due to a hesitancy around spend. Yet, IT and business are intertwined – we are seeing that everywhere – and by separating the cost of a server from the application that runs on that server, we create these silos.

Closing down legacy apps and migrating the business functions served by them elsewhere is not an impediment to the adoption of cloud, as these processes can comfortably run in parallel. In fact, the hybrid cloud falls squarely into the philosophy of Hybrid IT, meaning that you can run what is needed on-premises, some co-located in an off-site data-centre, and some in a hyperscaler or cloud.

IT costs and business costs are blending more and more, and the fixation on the IT component in isolation effectively misses the point. What is important now is to elevate the IT conversation to a business dialogue. Cloud needs to be part of that discussion, and while it might not take centre stage all of the time, it will certainly be waiting in the wings.

Datacentrix and HPE Greenlake videos from the recent MyBroadband Cloud Conference 2021.

Cloud - the anti-hero with Aki Anastasiou and Jaap Scholten, Head: Group Hybrid IT Strategy at Datacentrix. <https://vimeo.com/605597361>

A unique infrastructure partnership with Aki Anastasiou, Rachel Cooke, GreenLake Country Lead at HPE South Africa, and Jaap Scholten. <https://vimeo.com/605599576>

All roads lead to Teraco, and to Datacentrix

By Di Buijs, Strategic Partnership at Teraco Data Environments

At Teraco, we consider ourselves the shepherd of digital transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa. Teraco enables total solutions for our customers through partnerships, as with the likes of Datacentrix, guided by delivering the best experience possible. This experience is anchored by interconnection and is bespoke, depending on where you are in your journey to the cloud, and on your IT architecture: whether it is in the cloud, on-premise, or hybrid.

Interconnection sets Teraco apart from other data environments and our strategy and execution as South Africa's first vendor-neutral datacentre operator has ensured that we attracted and continue to attract the best in the market – from all the networks, undersea cables, Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), Cloud Service Providers (CSPs) and enterprises.

They all pick Teraco as their own datacentres in Africa. This interconnection ecosystem that we've built within our walls – which has become our secret sauce – is the foundation that delivers more value, easier compliance, reduced costs, minimised risk and greater innovation.

Datacentrix walks the talk. Their infrastructure resides at the very core of the Teraco environment. "We have been operating out of all the Teraco data environments from a communication and co-location aspect for many years. However, as we charted our rapid expansion plan around Cloud and Hybrid IT, Teraco was the natural choice for all the right reasons: space, power, facilities, and interconnect services. This completely removed obstacles associated with expansion, and underpins our mandate as a systems integrator," says Jaap Scholten, Head of Group Hybrid IT Strategy at Datacentrix.

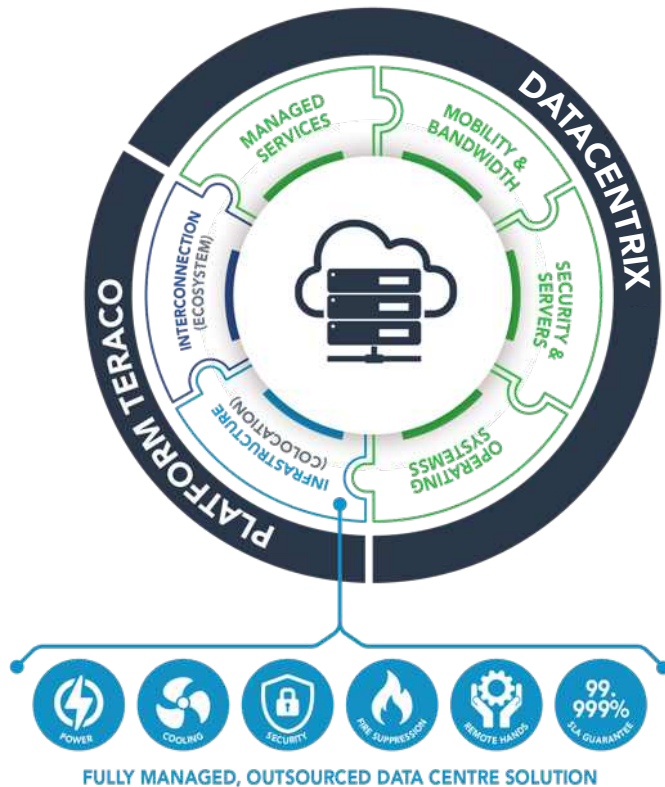
Teraco strives to make cloud adoption readily available to all and bring the edge ever closer by providing cloud proximity and adjacency to our customers. Our approach is spartan: Teraco has an absolute focus on space, power, cooling and interconnection. It is that simple.

The business benefit is far greater than this simplicity, however. Teraco provides the infrastructure in world-class facilities and we partner with Datacentrix for cloud, networking, managed services, mobility, broadband, servers and operating systems. This has allowed us to become the datacentre of choice for all the networks, CDNs and cloud on-ramps in Southern Africa.

Teraco's vendor neutrality is central to its attraction of key players in the market. We are not a telco, or a systems integrator. The neutrality that comes with this is the power of the platform, accelerated by the partnership with Datacentrix.

Teraco enables a strategic decision, not an operational or tactical one. With a genuine strategic view on a company's growth and sustainability, Teraco has attracted the critical infrastructure deployments of:

- 7 out of the 10 largest internet companies;
- More than 250 networks;
- 8 out of the ten largest CDNs, which in turn attracts the clouds and then enterprises like Financial Services, Retailers, Mining, Agriculture, etc.

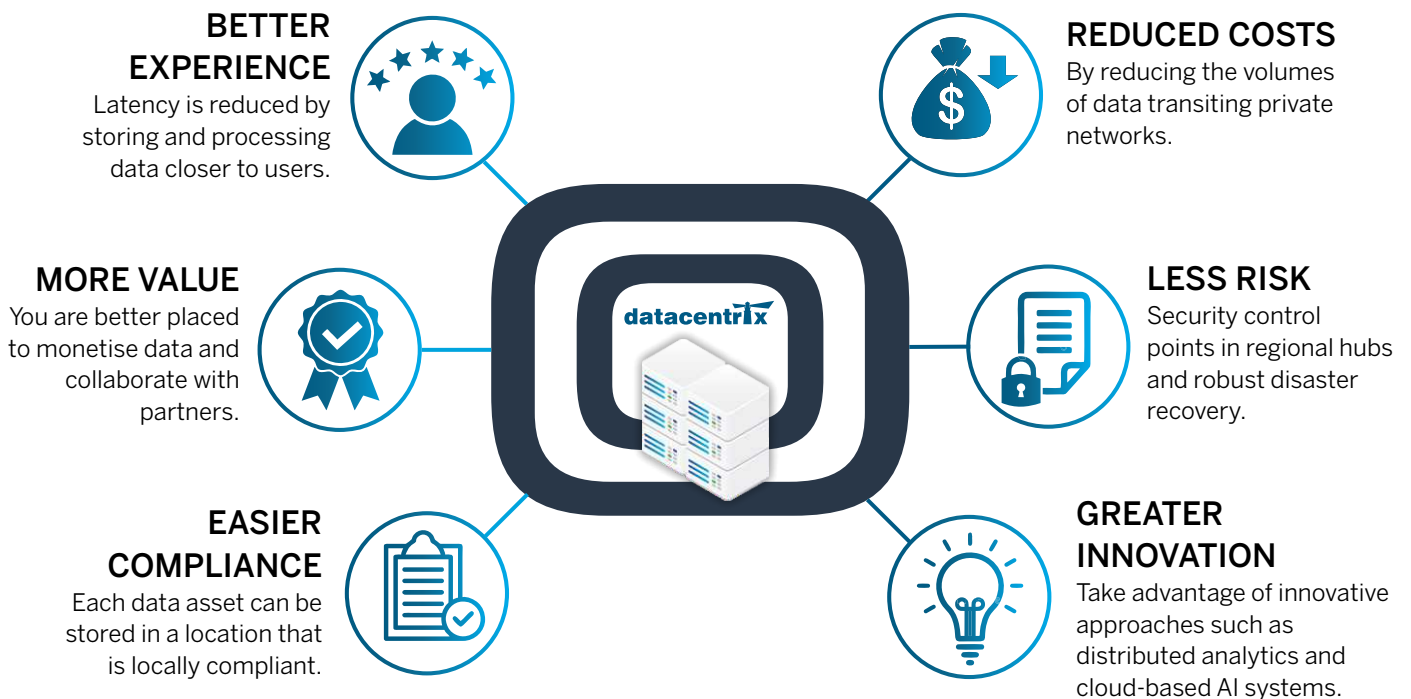




Solution versus product

Overwhelmingly, enterprises are looking for solutions. They are looking for a strategic enabler to solve their data environment needs, but beyond that, they are looking for a partner to guide them on their journey to the cloud.

They do not want to have consultants come in and present a procurement list of products which may not contribute to their bigger picture. What they are looking for is a total solution, from advisory, through connectivity, datacentre deployments, pervasive security, systems integration, to managed services and a single management view. Enter Datacentrix.



Teraco is a small but critical component of the total solution, and in true partnership we can transform business and guide modern leaders on their journey to digital transformation.

Data insight, a key component of growth in local agri sector, says Datacentrix

The continued strong performance of the local agricultural sector over the past decade, the critical nature of a connected supply chain in food security, and the role of technology in modernising the sector were all topics under discussion at the fourth annual Datacentrix Agri Indaba 2021.

Hosted by Datacentrix and its sponsors at Zebula Golf Estate and Spa in Bela-Bela, Limpopo, sentiment at the event was most positive. Datacentrix CEO Ahmed Mahomed affirmed in his welcome address that, while 2020 was a difficult year for many industries, agriculture in South Africa has made positive growth gains, and also seen employment growth of around 69,000 people in the Western Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West and Limpopo.

“Technology supported a seamless transition to the new normal and will continue to do this, driving sectors like agriculture and playing a significant role from a strategic point of view for future growth,” he said.

Keynote speaker and respected economist Dr Roelof Botha explained that South Africa has resumed its position as the number one African economy, based on 2020's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of R375 billion, and that the Rand is 30 percent stronger than it was last year – and was in fact the strongest currency in the world at that time.

“Agri and its related exports have played a critical role in its strength. Our exports of agri have exploded, going to the Netherlands and England as the top destinations, and confidence in the farming sector is at an all-time high, at a very encouraging 67 percent,” he stated.

Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist of the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa (Agbiz), author of 'Finding Common Ground: Land, Equity, and Agriculture' and second



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keynote speaker, was of the same opinion, saying that agri is in good shape, with all sectors – other than wine and tobacco due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions – showing 13.4 growth year-on-year.

“Last year, we had the second largest grain production in history, and the 2021/2022 production season is promising, although rising costs are a concern,” he added. “The story of trade is very important to South Africa. We are exporting around 50 percent of what we produce. And while the last year has been tough – with Transnet's recent logistical challenges for instance – export continued nonetheless and should reach the \$11 billion mark.

“We do, however, need to look at boosting volumes for the export market in terms of farmer profitability, with logistics and export development needing to receive more attention. It hasn't all been shiny for farmers, as the input costs have been hard-hitting.”



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Wandile Sihlobo, Chief Economist of the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa

Additional points made by Sihlobo in his closing remarks included the need to strengthen investment in infrastructure that supports agriculture, and also the use of fintech to enhance access to finance by emerging farmers.

A highlight of this year's event was a panel discussion, where guest panellists, Pierre Durand, Head of IT and Innovation at AFGRI Agri Services and Alf White, Group Executive, Digital Transformation at Senwes, joined Sihlobo and Datacentrix General Manager: Gauteng Commercial Sales, Josua Taljaard, to debate the opportunities that modernisation makes available for agriculture today, including the importance of being data-driven for greater insight into the value chain.

Other topics on the agenda included a joint Datacentrix, Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), Teraco Data Environments

and Rubrik presentation on Hybrid IT, looking at the real power and business value of data and giving a modern take on cloud computing; a look at the journey of AFGRI's Axl digital innovation ecosystem by Niki Neumann, General Manager: Strategic Innovation at AFGRI; and a talk by Datacentrix Head: Group Hybrid IT Strategy, Jaap Scholten, Hardus Dippenaar, Senior Network Architect, and Brian Smith, Business Unit Manager, on Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) and the ability to run your network as a service.

Datacentrix Agri Indaba 2021 was made possible by our sponsors. We thank them for their support and valuable contributions to the discussions: Dell Technologies, Cisco, HPE, Lenovo, Cybereason, Hitachi, Rubrik, Teraco and eNetworks.

Download the Datacentrix Agri Indaba 2021 presentations: https://www.datacentrix.co.za/agri_indaba_2021.html



01

The phantom menace of a ransomware attack: double extortion

Being hit with a ransomware attack is one of the worst threats IT and Security teams can face. But it often turns out that another threat, the phantom menace, is the possible exfiltration of the data to leak or sell it on the dark web. Cyber criminals know that some organisations may have a chance to recover some of their data from backups, even if it will take a while. So instead of just encrypting the files, or the backups, they will also try to exfiltrate the data first, threaten to publish it, and thus apply more pressure to pay the ransom.

When organisations are facing a double extortion, they may not even know the content of the data that was encrypted by ransomware or what is in the data that may be leaked. Is it sensitive personal data, banking data, health data, or the company's IP? Between the panic, scramble, and the race to bring back the business, paying the ransom seems to be the quickest way out.

Luckily, there is a new hope in the fight against cyber criminals and phantoms. Rubrik enables customers to mitigate ransomware attacks so they don't have to pay the ransom and there is a way to discover what was in the encrypted data. Knowing what data may have been exfiltrated can help you prepare for a potential data breach and guide you in your negotiations with the criminals.

Moreover, Rubrik ensures that any new added workload is automatically protected and ensures that backup policies are applied, thereby eliminating further vulnerabilities and ensuring compliance with business requirements.

All of this is possible with Rubrik Zero Trust Data Management™ architecture which, provides security at the point of data. It helps to ensure that you can now protect critical data from ransomware attacks, leverage secured backup data to perform attack forensics, and initiate recovery operations quickly to maintain business continuity.

Compliance, a fundamental component of the Rubrik Zero Trust architecture, ensures that all workloads are automatically protected, backups can be locked to prevent tampering with, and specified contents of data that may have been exfiltrated can be identified.

Discovery, classification, and reporting on data is done via Rubrik Polaris Sonar. Sonar applies machine learning to scan and indexes the data and does not have any impact on the production environment. You simply leverage existing Rubrik deployments to process the backup data and metadata with zero additional infrastructure required and no installations of agents. The scanning and classification of the data is done with Analyzers, where a user defines the type of sensitive data that Sonar should be discovering, and Policies, which are a logical grouping of one or more analyzers that are associated with the specific objects, like VMware VM, NAS filesets, Windows filesets, and Linux filesets, for example.

By automating the process, you can drive consistent, repeatable monitoring of your data for instant visibility into where the data is stored, apply policies that alert you to policy violations, and proactively ensure data controls.

With Compliance, as part of the Zero Trust architecture, you get to:

- **Minimise vulnerability with Asset Discovery and Protection:** Discover all assets with few API calls across your environments, from the datacentre to the public cloud, and automatically apply SLA policies. When a new workload is added, it will be automatically protected and the backup cannot be corrupted by ransomware. You can periodically run an “Unmanaged Objects Report” to discover any virtual machine, database, fileset or cloud workload without an assigned SLA and bring them under compliance, eliminating human error and ensuring you are always in compliance with your SLA policy and all workloads are backed up.
- **Prevent malicious actions of rogue users and intruders with Retention Lock:** Ensure no single person can clear or shorten retention policies or delete snapshots, archival or replication locations. The security of Retention Lock is controlled through a validation process within the Rubrik Compliance Team, who are part of the Support Team. If a modification to a retention locked SLA is requested by a customer, two appointed individuals from the customer's organisation are required to authenticate and acknowledge the modifications with the Rubrik Support Team. This is especially important in heavily regulated industries requiring WORM compliance, SEC Rule 17a-4(f) and FINRA Rule 4511(c) for example.
- **Mitigate sensitive data exposure with Compliance Reporting:** Proactively scan your backups to identify certain types of sensitive data and its location. By applying predefined or custom policies, Rubrik can identify certain types of data that are governed by applicable privacy laws, such as GDPR, HIPPA, PCI-DDS, and others, and when needed, quickly produce reports on some types of regulated data or policy violations.

Rubrik is a holistic solution that can give IT teams the confidence that their data is always secure and available, while helping withstand a data breach or ransomware attacks. By automating the protection of new workloads and helping identify at-risk and non-compliant data, organisations can avoid reputation, financial, or legal damage and consequences associated with a ransomware attack and double extortion.

Rubrik Ransomware Recovery Warranty

Rubrik recently announced a Ransomware Recovery Warranty to further assure customers that their data will be available to keep their business running. Rubrik allows companies to recover their data from cyber attacks and

operational failures, and this first-of-its-kind ransomware recovery warranty underscores Rubrik's deep commitment to data security for its customers. The Rubrik Zero Trust Data Security platform is designed to protect business data against surging ransomware attacks, enabling IT teams to rapidly recover their applications and resume normal business operations.

“With this new Ransomware Recovery Warranty, our customers have our commitment that we care as deeply about protecting their data as they do,” said Bipul Sinha, CEO and Co-Founder of Rubrik. “With ransomware attacks increasing more than any time in history, having a recoverable copy of your data has become a top agenda item for CIOs and CISOs, and we understand how important data security is to ensuring the security of a business.”

This offer will be available for Rubrik customers running Rubrik Enterprise Edition and working with a Rubrik Customer Experience Manager (CEM) to ensure industry data security best practices are in place. This strategic collaboration and offering will enable the highest standards of data security excellence.



<https://www.rubrik.com/warranty>



Datacentrix achieves security and cloud best-practice standards

Datacentrix has successfully achieved certification to the International Organization for Standardization's (ISO) information security standard 27001:2013, as well as proving compliance with two cloud-related best-practice standards.

Ahmed Mahomed, CEO at Datacentrix, explains: "The company, which recently underwent a surveillance audit of its information security management system (ISMS) and cloud offerings, has received internationally recognised assurance of its commitment to the security and privacy of its customers' data."

ISO/IEC 27001:2013 is the recognised standard for computer security, physical security, broader cyber security and privacy, as well as a guideline for best practices. Importantly, several of the ISO 27001 requirements also fulfil those for compliance with the European Union's (EU) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the United Kingdom's (UK) Data Protection Act and the local Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA).

"Implementing ISO 27001 demonstrates to regulatory authorities that Datacentrix takes the security of information it holds seriously and, having identified the risks, has done as much as is reasonably possible to address them.

"There has been much discussion surrounding the implementation of compliance with these laws and regulations, including the potential impacts of security risks," he says. "Establishing an ISMS that adheres to the internationally recognised best practice framework of ISO/IEC 27001:2013 helps reduce the likelihood of breaches, demonstrates the controls we have in place, and allows us to react to these security risks faster.

"The fact that Datacentrix's ISMS continues to fulfil the requirements of ISO/IEC 27001:2013 assures clients and partners that we are able to safeguard their valuable assets and information security."

Datacentrix chose to extend its audit to include ISO/IEC 27017:2015, a security standard developed for cloud service providers and users to deliver a safer cloud-based environment and reduce security risks, and ISO/IEC 27018:2019, a code of practice that focuses on protection of personal data in the cloud.



A company that is ISO 27018:2019 compliant has proven that it provides the highest possible level of protection for personal data and is actively identifying and mitigating risks.

The ISO/IEC 27017:2015 framework provides cloud users with practical information on what should be expected from cloud service providers, like Datacentrix, outlining the shared roles and responsibilities of the cloud, and also verifying that cloud services are being effectively utilised.

ISO 27018:2019 is a certification awarded to companies that take rigorous measures to protect personally identifiable information (PII). This could include contact details, bank statements, IP addresses and medical records. A company that is ISO 27018:2019 compliant has proven that it provides the highest possible level of protection for personal data and is actively identifying and mitigating risks.

Says Mahomed: "Whether it is your own valuable information or that of your customers, poor information security can be costly. In line with our acceleration into the hybrid IT space, providing local businesses with a multicloud, multi-vendor ecosystem, Datacentrix felt that it was important to provide its employees and clients with the correct tools to make the most informed business decisions, while also assuring customers that information processed in the cloud is highly secure.

"Congratulations to the Datacentrix team on maintaining these certificates as it attests to the dedication of our leadership and teams towards continual improvement of our processes and services," he adds.

What CIO's should consider before adopting an as-a-service model

By Mark Chadwick, Head of Cloud Services at Datacentrix

The “as-a-service” concept is not new. In fact, it's been around for decades when you consider that email was delivered as-a-service as far back as the mid-90s. It eventually evolved to businesses consuming virtual machines, which was the beginning of infrastructure-as-a-service, and subsequently expanded to other platforms as-a-service offerings.

Ultimately, as-a-service is a cloud-based on-demand resource, usually delivered on a consumption basis. On-demand models help companies shift from the capital expenditure model to operational expenditure, allowing them to move away from lengthy procurement models to month-to-month subscription cycles.

Most CIOs understand that, in a simplistic way, as-a-service removes the barriers to achieving agility, scalability, simplicity and cost savings. This is the very nature of the model to help you achieve this. However, there are some key considerations to be taken into account before adopting an as-a-service approach for your organisation.

Business priorities: Most importantly, as a CIO, you need to ask, “Why should we be doing this?” Considering your organisation's business objectives and challenges, could these not be met with an investment in your current infrastructure?

Individual business requirements: Also, these objectives and challenges need to be aligned with your business strategy and to have a good understanding of how this strategy integrates with the IT roadmap. This does not need to be a hugely complex and highly-theoretical scenario. It simply boils down to individual business requirements, how these can be satisfied and how as-a-service can help deliver that.

The next step is evaluating suppliers, vendors and partners and understanding the type of capabilities that each of them can deliver. As a CIO, you need to realise that you will not be doing this alone. While some big enterprises may have the capabilities to adopt an as-a-service model, more than likely, you'll be looking to partner. It is about knowing the right partner networks and weighing up their capabilities to establish whether they meet your requirements.

It's important to do comparisons between the players and consider the pros and cons of going with specific technologies or as-a-service capabilities. You should also look at vendor

versus vendor, and supplier versus supplier. In the end, it might not be just one, but more likely a hybrid approach using a multi-platform of suppliers and technologies. So it's key to know what each supplier and technology can deliver for you.

Hybrid situation: On that point, CIOs must realise that their adoption of as-a-service will more than likely result in a multi-platform and multi-partner situation. Yes, it's great to go with a single service provider and get them to do everything for you, but that's not always practical or feasible. Because as-a-service now encompasses almost any and every aspect of IT, most suppliers specialise in specific areas and capabilities. Therefore you have to consider respective service providers' individual strengths in a multi-pronged approach.

With different capabilities delivered by different services, your organisation will require system integration and orchestration. There may be various operational and organisational platforms that you won't be retiring, yet also not migrating or converting to an as-a-service model. It is vital to consider how these will integrate, function and interoperate with your environment.

Need the professionals: One will quickly realise that there is a need for professionals to help you navigate through this complex landscape. The right professionals must deliver capabilities that go beyond just enabling you to consume services from them. They must help you integrate the as-a-service model with your existing platforms, grow your capabilities and take stock of what you currently have to help you move everything to the right platform.

The ideal as-a-service model that CIOs should aim to achieve is a multi-platform, multi-capability, and multi-technology environment, where the service provider has the ability to add resources as and when your business needs them.

When choosing a partner, CIOs need to consider the capabilities that they require to achieve their immediate as well as their longer term goals, which may involve activities that they have not even considered yet. A meaningful ICT service provider will support you across all disciplines along the journey to digital transformation.

VxRail D Series

New ruggedised platform expands VxRail benefits to extreme edge environments



Dell EMC VxRail D Series is a durable platform that delivers the full power of VxRail hyperconverged infrastructure for workloads in environmentally challenging locations or space-constrained areas. That means you have the full power of automation and orchestration with VxRail HCI System Software and 24x7 single point of support enabling you to rapidly react to business needs no matter how extreme the conditions.

Whether you are deploying a datacentre at a forward operating base, running real-time GPS mapping on-the-go, or implementing video surveillance in remote areas, you can ensure availability, integrity and confidence for every workload with the new D Series model.

VxRail D560 / D560F

Dell EMC VxRail D Series is a reduced footprint, ruggedised HCI platform that is temperature resilient, shock resistant, and easily portable.

The D560 and D560F models are designed to withstand remote and harsh conditions such as shock, vibration, dust, humidity and electromagnetic interference (EMI). Its short-depth and portability make it ideal for edge and remote locations where space is at a premium. The D560F model is MIL-STD-810G certified.

The D Series offers the same compelling benefits as the rest of the VxRail portfolio – simplicity, agility and lifecycle management – but in a compact and ruggedised form factor. With VxRail D Series, both administrators and end-users gain a consistent environment from deployment and management, to user experience. Additionally, VxRail HCI System Software with fully automated lifecycle management ensures continuously validated states.

VxRail Rest APIs

While VxRail drastically simplifies operations of the virtualised IT environment, VxRail REST APIs take it a step further



through easy-to-consume APIs. VxRail APIs can be integrated into a broad spectrum of existing solutions to automate IT processes and tasks such as: remote collection of system status and health data; remote simultaneous execution of LCM upgrades at scale; and remote graceful shutdown of VxRail clusters. Large enterprises, federal agencies, and service providers in particular will benefit from automation at scale for globally distributed clusters and edge deployments.


VxRail Deployments

VxRail deployments deliver an experience that is flexible and simple. VxRail Manager, natively integrated with and accessed via vCenter, is the overall management engine for all VxRail operations to deploy, manage, upgrade, patch and add nodes to a cluster. VxRail's intelligent life cycle management keeps your clusters in a continuously validated state so you can rest assured that your workloads are consistently up and running regardless of where they are deployed.


Additionally, the VxRail HCI System Software suite includes cloud-based multi-cluster management for centralized data collection and analytics enabling you to monitor the health status of all your clusters around the globe from a single command centre.




VxRail users are realising exceptional productivity and business advantages as highlighted in a recently completed IDC study: “The Business Value of Dell EMC VxRail and VMware Cloud Foundation on Dell EMC VxRail.” Participants in an IDC study from December 2020 described achieving strong value with Dell EMC VxRail by establishing a cost-effective, efficient and agile IT infrastructure that enables automated operations capable of stretching from their datacentres to cloud and edge environments.




Temperature resilient
Certified for cold start down to -15C and heat up to 45C, with excursions up to 55C for eight hours



Shock and vibration tested
Operational shock certified to 40G with SSDs



Aim higher
Certified for operation at up to 15,000ft of elevation



Short-depth
20" rack depth for space constrained environments

Extend the agility, scalability and simplicity of VxRail beyond the datacentre to space-constrained, remote, harsh environments without compromising on performance.

For more information visit:
www.delltechnologies.com/asset/en-za/products/converged-infrastructure/briefs-summaries/dell-emc-vxrail-d-series-rugged.mp4



Organisations move from tactical to strategic on hybrid IT deployments

Following the rush to deploy tactical solutions to enable business continuity, South African organisations are now taking a more strategic approach to long-term planning of a new model for hybrid IT infrastructure.

This is according to Ahmed Mahomed, Group CEO at Datacentrix. “It has become clear that for many organisations, a hybrid and remote workforce will remain in place. This means that most organisations are looking closely at strategic digital transformation from the desktop to the cloud. They are focusing on long-term solutions to key issues, such as connectivity, security and how to manage applications and workloads, more efficiently and cost-effectively.”

Mahomed says the cloud plays a critical role in this hybrid IT environment, but that, at the same time, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to the cloud, and that not all workloads and applications are suited to a public cloud.

He says careful consideration must be given to the desired outcomes and the business case for moving workloads and applications to particular environments. “The platform an organisation chooses must be fit for purpose. An e-commerce business for example, needs the right connectivity for global access, and must have the capacity to burst out when necessary.

“Many organisations that adopted cloud early on are finding some workloads are proving costly to run in the cloud. The result is that many of our client engagements are now focused on assessing the environment in its entirety and then planning which applications are more suited for running in which cloud, and which must be modernised to integrate with a new hybrid IT environment. For enterprises such as large banks with home-grown bespoke software running core systems, this modernisation process could take years to complete. Depending on the client's requirements, we might put cloud-type infrastructure on-premises in some cases, and migrate some infrastructure to the Datacentrix Teraco co-location datacentre or hyperscalers and others.

“Because the technology is fairly mature, it is getting easier and faster to migrate to cloud environments,” he says.



Stone He, President Huawei Cloud, Southern Africa

“However, unless there is a thorough analysis and planning before migration, organisations could experience complexities.”

Where major enterprises such as banks and telcos may have been among the first to move to the cloud, Datacentrix is now assisting mid-to-large businesses and smaller entities across all sectors to modernise their environments and migrate to the cloud. One such example is AFGRI Agri Services (AFGRI), an agricultural services company. Datacentrix helped the organisation move from a lower performance siloed environment and hosted PaaS cloud environment to the Huawei Cloud, enhanced with security meeting international standards and a full IaaS and PaaS service. Huawei and Datacentrix also provided easy to use migration tools and VIP support to enable AFGRI to make the move quickly and easily.

“In every organisation's cloud journey, the solution needs to be tailor made, so having an in-depth understanding not only of the environment, but the client's business needs and strategies, is a fundamental part of the process,” says Mahomed.

Stone He, President Huawei Cloud (Southern Africa) also added: “Partnering with Datacentrix helps us to empower businesses in South Africa through a joint value creation model. We believe the potential benefits of technology depend largely on who you choose to partner with, who can support you in the long term without disruptions and with minimal risks,” he concluded.



Datacentrix still only SA managed services provider to achieve PCI DSS compliance

Datacentrix has for the second year, achieved Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) certification for its Managed Services division, which includes the organisation's industry-leading security operations centre (SOC).

Datacentrix remains the only local managed services provider and SOC in South Africa to have attained compliance. This is according to Johan van Zyl, Chief Operating Officer at Risk X Data Assurance, a global provider of practical and effective governance, risk, training, audit, advisory and assurance services and solutions and the company that performed the PCI DSS audit.

"Current and future Datacentrix clients may rest assured that the business has met all relevant requirements from a PCI DSS perspective to ensure the services it offers enhance the position of its clients," explains Van Zyl.

"This can give peace of mind to any institution, including merchant, financial and point-of-sale clients, that Datacentrix not only has the requisite controls in place for the safety of cardholder data and secure payments, but also that it can help play a role in helping these organisations to attain their own PCI DSS compliance," he adds.

Says Sunil Singh, Managing Director: Managed Services at Datacentrix: "As a company that is heavily involved with cyber incident responses, Datacentrix has seen first-hand that cyber crime aimed at South African individuals and organisations has scaled massively since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Through the Datacentrix SOC, we currently deal with around 50 000 defences per second and have been privy to several ransomware attacks on high-profile South African businesses.



Current and future Datacentrix clients may rest assured that the business has met all relevant requirements from a PCI DSS perspective to ensure the services it offers enhance the position of its clients.

"Financial cyber crime in particular is on the rise, with financial organisations being more frequently targeted with ransomware extortion attacks, crypto currency accounts being seized and financial-based malware used to steal financial information.

"Through the revalidation of its PCI DSS compliance, Datacentrix clients have the comfort of knowing that sensitive payment card data is protected and remains uncompromised, while Datacentrix upholds its link in the PCI DSS value chain.

"It is more important now than ever before that the business community worldwide works together as a collective to improve cyber awareness, and a critical part of this is the adoption of smart security policies and practices that operate within the framework of strong security standards, like the PCI DSS. This type of collaboration is critical to address ever-growing cyber threats and attacks, and Datacentrix is ready to help build these defences," Singh concludes.

A multi-layered strategy to fight cybercrime

In 2020, verified ransomware payouts worldwide totalled R670 billion. Those are just the verified payouts, which represent only a portion of what is happening out there.

No matter how much technology you have at your disposal, you're never 100 percent safe from a cyber attack. COVID has digitally revolutionised our society so fast that we have skipped a few steps along the way, and criminals are exploiting the opportunities in the chaos.

Identify your weakest link

In the security consulting and vulnerability assessments that Datacentrix offers, we simulate what a hacker would do. We test the people, policies, processes and technology within the organisation to see if they are stopped. Then we do a gap analysis, which gives unique feedback on each customer's security and identifies where they would most likely be breached.

Understand your data

Many years ago, security teams worried mostly about infrastructure. Never did anyone think that backups would become so crucial, but the explosion of ransomware attacks has changed this. We are now data custodians who track data according to its accessibility and purpose, and from an exfiltration viewpoint, to see if people have accessed it abnormally.

Stick to the plan

If the worst happens, don't panic. The hackers will be pressuring and threatening you to pay up in a matter of hours. Make sure you understand the threat. A knee-jerk reaction can cause stock to plummet and inaccurate information to circulate. Ripping the internet cable from the wall might cause more harm. Make sure you follow the cyber breach process you have hopefully rehearsed with dry runs. Who gets called, what gets established, how does the team validate the information, and how does the response team act on it?

The best case scenario will be that your systems are all in place and you have rehearsed so well that you call the hackers' bluff, and they cannot exfiltrate the data. You then use your backups, which the hackers could not touch, restore over the damage they have done, do a broad-based password reset, and follow processes to ensure all controls are up and running again.

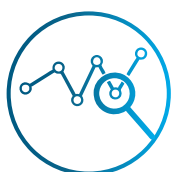
Instil a zero trust culture

The 'security onion' used to consist of layers of technology. Today, the outermost layer is the human element, involving cyber education.

This is usually the weakest layer. We no longer have the option of staying out of the connected world, so we have to improve our understanding of it. A zero trust culture needs to be



Identify the weakest link



Understand the data



Stick to the plan



Instil a zero trust culture



Collaborate

Datacentrix simulates what a hacker would do. They test the people, policies, processes and technology within the organisation to see if they are stopped. Then they do a gap analysis, which gives unique feedback on each customer's security and identifies where they would most likely be breached.

instilled. How do we interact on email and social media, where do we click, what do we disclose, who will access the data? Passwords should have no commonality. A good password manager and two-factor authentication for all logins are vital.

If people, processes and technology are not seamlessly interwoven, the gaps will be exploited. Today, the Chief Information Security Officer needs to be involved in every decision, investment and internal review. Security starts at the boardroom table, and if it doesn't, your organisation will be vulnerable.

Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate

Collaboration is our most powerful weapon in this fight. Sharing experiences can quickly put a stop to criminal opportunities. We must create a collective force for good, to fight the dark side. The dark side shares information continually, so we must do the same.

We need to start talking and sharing, both within our organisation, and with other organisations. And we must never stop educating. If cybersecurity can become part of our collective 'muscle memory', then we will all be in a stronger position.

Are you prepared today for the security threats of tomorrow?

Intelligent enterprise security solutions and services from Datacentrix and IBM put zero trust into action and place security everywhere.

Email SecNet.Sales@datacentrix.co.za for a free consultation.

Don't be sorry, be fierce

- Easily manage compliance obligations
- Discover where sensitive data lives
- Encrypt and monitor what's important
- Reduce data risk and respond to threats



Modern, scalable protection across environments and platforms

IBM Guardium prevents leaks from databases, data warehouses and big data environments, ensures the integrity of information and automates compliance controls across heterogeneous environments. Your business needs a solution that supports a zero-trust approach to data management across its lifecycle.



Platinum
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The role of cloud computing in datacentre energy management

Datacentres are an indispensable part of computing infrastructure, particularly from the perspective of cloud and colocation options.

This is an excellent starting point for companies to transition towards more environmentally-friendly energy management practices, particularly when the abundance of potential renewable energy sources, like wind and solar in South Africa are considered. Many of the newer tier 3 and 4 datacentres utilise a hybrid energy solution including solar, wind or hydro power.

Datacentrix's Louis van den Berg provides his top recommendations on how and why this transition is not only necessary but also achievable in today's landscape.

Reducing datacentre dependency on the grid

Electric power is an important resource when it comes to critical infrastructure. The response protocol to a power outage should be part of any company's business continuity plan. However, the best option is to reduce dependency on the grid as far as possible.

Two main options are to either select a service provider that offers a co-located, cloud-based service with the necessary energy management services in place. Or, to upgrade the existing datacentre or re-imagine it completely to include hybrid solutions that use a combination of renewable, battery and utility power.



Companies are becoming more confident about moving their applications and data to the cloud where energy-efficient servers are utilised within a virtual environment.

Subscribing to sustainable practices

There is a thin line between the redundancy of infrastructure, and financial configurations and opex availability. A well-structured approach will ensure greater sustainability when designing a datacentre. Considerations about whether the datacentre will be hybrid, rely on batteries and uninterruptible power supplies (UPSes) or rely solely on solar or wind power must be asked upfront.



Making room for green energy

In South Africa, we are in a very fortunate position when it comes to wind and solar energy. Our coastal regions are ideal for wind farms, while inland regions have access to high levels of solar energy, as well as expansive areas for the building of solar farms.

The presidential announcement earlier this year that companies producing excess power will be able to sell it through the transmission network, subject to agreements with Eskom and municipal authorities, is a favourable incentive for local energy entrepreneurs.

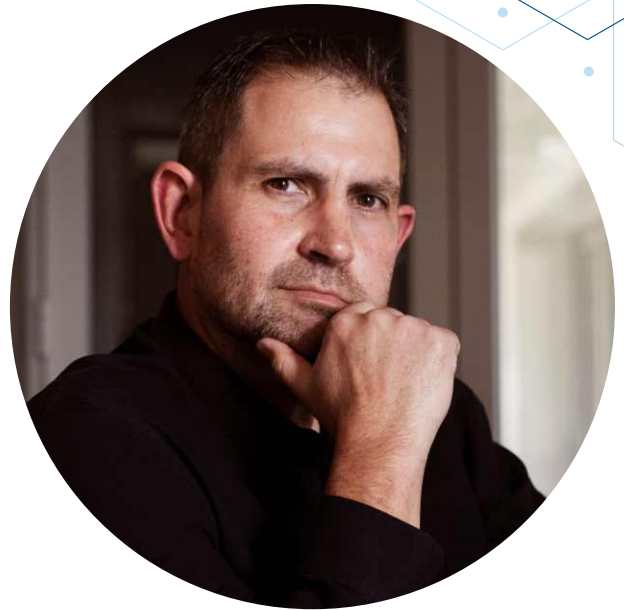
Formulating an energy management strategy

The critical starting point in formulating an energy management plan is setting up a sustainability strategy, which outlines the planned approach – whether hybrid, solar or wind. If setting up your own green energy farm seems too extreme, then finding a service provider for green energy would be your next step.

But, if building a green energy farm is for you, then contracts must be negotiated with the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa) and Eskom to establish the power to be sold back into the grid, or to be used to power other datacentres or office parks. Careful monitoring of carbon emissions will provide insight on the most financially viable options.

Cloud technology is helping companies to meet their green targets

Today, business leaders are under increasing pressure to control and decrease carbon emissions and to reduce carbon footprints. Legacy equipment ran everything on a specific server that emitted heat and used high levels of energy. Most legacy datacentres don't have the capacity to handle new volumes or the capability to handle the new complexities of digital transformation.



Louis van den Berg, Consultant at Datacentrix

The emphasis now is on moving to co-located services that harness cloud technology and using virtual machines and hyperconvergence to provide processing power. Companies are becoming more confident about moving their applications and data to the cloud where energy-efficient servers are utilised within a virtual environment.

Powering a datacentre efficiently

Efficient power management requires a holistic approach that must also include optimising certain datacentre operations and processes, such as using temperature control by way of a hot and cold aisle strategy for greater temperature efficiencies. It's also important to look at what the environment can provide. For instance, the use of cold water in a place like the Free State, where the Sterkfontein Dam could be used to generate hydropower, as well as to cool a datacentre.

Smart power management and attractive savings are driving the shift to modern datacentre environments.

www.datacentrix.co.za/modern-data-centre-environments.html **#hybridIT**

Consumption-based IT – it's all about the money really

By Kenny Nkosi, Divisional Managing Director: Gauteng Sales at Datacentrix

While money may make the world go round, it is also definitely the biggest driver for the adoption of consumption-based IT models among modern enterprises. The shift to consumption-based services is becoming increasingly pronounced, especially as companies seek to do more with less.

As much as organisations understand that IT is critical for business enablement, many are constantly looking for better ways to manage IT spend through cost reduction, containment and savings. Many find that consumption-based IT is the answer.

In terms of adoption, uptake is so far the strongest in the storage space, and Gartner predicts that in 2024, 50 percent of newly deployed storage capacity will be consumed as a service. Meanwhile, on the server side, 5.6 percent of on-premises x86 server spending will be consumed as a service in 2024.

Due to tough economic conditions, many organisations are progressively reducing their IT budgets, with every budgeting cycle. This inevitably puts pressure on an organisation's IT department, as technologies change frequently and businesses need to keep up to remain relevant and competitive.

Massive risk

On the one hand, the financial constraints that limit access to expensive IT technologies can result in a massive risk for organisations when they lag in terms of acquiring the relevant products and solutions to drive their businesses.

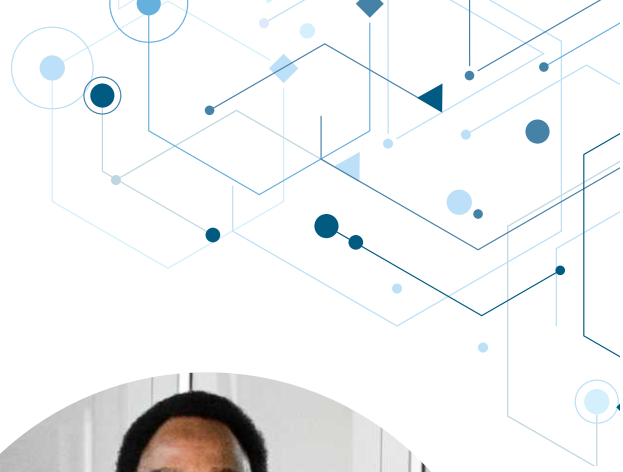
The consumption-based model helps organisations ease the pain of having to lay out significant capital expenditure



The adoption of hybrid IT solutions, coupled with a consumption-based IT model, resonates well with many modern enterprises, as this approach addresses the fundamental issue of cost efficiency that all organisations are looking for.

(capex) upfront when acquiring IT-based technologies. These savings can enable enterprises to use their available cash reserves to grow their core business and become more innovative in their quest to lead in their specific markets.

Conversely, the traditional outright purchase of ICT hardware, software and services absorbed a significant amount of cash, while often realising insignificant return on investment for many organisations.



Grudge expense

Needless to say, the capex model did little to dispel the notion among business executives that IT spend is essentially a grudge expense. It became a painful exercise for IT departments to continuously present business cases for technology upgrades and refreshes.

In simple terms, with the adoption of a consumption-based model, businesses and IT departments can pay less based on usage and such amounts can be remitted through the monthly operating expense (opex), for example. This gives the organisation full control over its monthly IT spend. They can monitor the usage of IT resources and can make business decisions quickly and efficiently in terms of which services are yielding desirable return on investment and which ones are not.

I would argue that a consumption-based IT model is one that every organisation should look at very closely. We live in a world that is riddled with unknowns and untold levels of risk. The COVID-19 pandemic has permanently alerted the world and businesses have not been spared from its devastating impact.



**Kenny Nkosi, Divisional Managing Director:
Gauteng Sales at Datacentrix**

Why you should switch

Therefore, I would encourage organisations to consider adopting a consumption-based IT model for the following reasons:

- **Obsolescence:** Technology has become pervasive, but changes and evolves constantly. Businesses often find it onerous to keep up with this fast pace of change. Opting for a consumption-based model, anchored on an opex payment structure, allows organisations to manage their cash reserves better, gain agility and lessen the risk of taking full ownership of IT.
- **Service excellence and currency:** An opex model is beneficial to businesses because annuity contracts with service providers can be structured so that exit clauses are not onerous or too taxing. On the other hand, businesses can demand the highest level of service, in the context of the “as-a-service” model from respective providers. It gives them currency to push service providers to implement the latest, safest and most resilient IT as-a-service in their environments.
- **Chargeback and recovery:** Adopting a consumption-based model allows IT departments to introduce intra-business chargeback and recovery, which ensure that IT investment is continuously aligned to business value. This is particularly well suited to organisations that use activity-based costing models in their manufacturing operations.



Obsolescence



**Service excellence
and currency**



**Chargeback
and recovery**

The adoption of hybrid IT solutions, coupled with a consumption-based IT model, resonates well with many modern enterprises, as this approach addresses the fundamental issue of cost efficiency that all organisations are looking for.

Predictions are that over the next five years or so, organisations across the globe will be adopting consumption-based IT model at speed. Given the overwhelming acceptance of this model by businesses, it is also fast becoming a strategic imperative for almost all leading OEMs to drive this agenda.



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