

**datacentrix**

First issue 2021

# ***infocentrix***

**Connecting IT today  
to the business of the future**

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

Datacentrix is a complete ICT systems integrator, providing solutions and services across the full information value chain. The company's value-driven approach and proven execution capability reinforce its position as one of the top ICT players in the market.

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Dell Technologies  
Fortinet  
HPE**

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Veeam**

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# Measure your digital transformation by the value it delivers



Companies across all sectors are needing to accelerate innovation to remain competitive within the framework of the digital economy. This requires smart strategies and modernised ecosystems to support the delivery of uninterrupted services that consistently meet customer expectations.

For a company to make progress on their digital journey they need to leverage their data and the services of an ICT partner who they can trust – one who understands their business, aligns with their strategy and builds capability to deliver the right outcomes.

Data is at the heart of the digital transformation conversation. The shift to working remotely has emphasised that companies that are able to access their data quickly and safely from anywhere off any device can conduct their business faster and smarter. In response, Datacentrix has built a fully customisable hybrid cloud environment according to the best global practices. It touches on every point of the cloud journey and leverages the company's collective expertise across the Technology Solutions, Managed Services and Digital Business Solutions competency areas. The company's strategy has resulted in Datacentrix achieving some of the top certifications with our technology partners, some of which are included in this publication.

The shift to Hybrid IT needs to be a data-first approach, one that responds to the challenges of the digital world. It needs to deliver:

- the ideal datacentre environment;
- a modern transport network;
- identity-driven data access and pervasive security;
- reliable knowledge and intelligence; and
- relevant, real-time business decisions that enable on-going operational efficiencies and consistent customer satisfaction.

Datacentrix has formed a strategic alliance with Teraco to bring scalable services to our clients. We have migrated our own infrastructure into their data centres and have combined our technical expertise and systems integration capabilities, with Teraco's infrastructure power to provide modern infrastructure that:

- is resilient and highly flexible;
- is scalable as network strategies evolve;
- provides fast and secure inter-connectivity;
- connects to hyperscalers effectively; and
- is priced locally making it affordable to businesses in Africa.

Datacentrix can support you on this journey. We understand technology integration, infrastructure monitoring, cybersecurity threat mitigation technologies, data protection, governance and risk frameworks – and drive client business through flexible service levels that suit your needs and budget. We can help you to develop a digitalisation roadmap and address your business priorities to achieve competitive edge and futureproof your business.

We are looking forward to helping you achieve the business of the future.

Regards  
**Ahmed Mahomed**  
 Datacentrix CEO

# Datacentrix takes award as top OpenText value added reseller for emerging regions

Datacentrix has been named as the winner of OpenText's award for Emerging Market Value Added Reseller (VAR), beating a number of candidates vying for the title from across Africa, the Middle East, Central Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Datacentrix is OpenText's largest partner in Africa and the only Platinum Partner on the continent.

Speaking at the recent OpenText Partner Summit 2021 virtual event, Mark Baillie, Regional Vice President for Channels and Alliances: EMEA at OpenText, explained that the information management firm has a strong partner-centric approach. "From the very top of our organisation, partners are held in high esteem and are considered to be a 'force multiplier'," he said.

"Datacentrix has been a great partner of ours every year," he stated. "The company has really shown some good criteria; they've hit their revenue targets, been well aligned with OpenText in its entirety, engaging with the partner team, the sales team, with management, services and support – across the whole business. However, what really stands out for Datacentrix is their investment in competence."

Joining Baillie on the virtual session, Harry Adams, Vice President of Emerging Markets at OpenText, noted that having visited South Africa several times and met with Datacentrix, it has been gratifying to see what the team has built over the last decade of the partnership between the two organisations.

"Thank you to Datacentrix for your contribution this year, and all the years before. The organisation has been doing a really great job in Africa and the Middle East. We look



As OpenText's only Platinum Partner in Africa, Datacentrix takes its partnership extremely seriously, ensuring that it is not only highly capable across the entire spectrum of OpenText's offerings, but that it maintains and builds on this skill and expertise every year.

forward to seeing more success in these areas, with OpenText's full support."

Datacentrix has been acknowledged by OpenText on many occasions since the beginning of this partnership, achieving status as 'Fast Growth Markets Partner of the Year' in 2014, and as 'OpenText Africa Partner of the Year' for 2015, 2018 and 2019. In addition, joint Datacentrix/OpenText clients, namely the Western Cape Government, NamPower, Engen, MediClinic and SANParks, have been given global OpenText awards over the years.

As well as receiving the 2021 Emerging Market VAR title, Datacentrix was once again recognised as one of OpenText's top value-added resellers globally at this year's event.

Says Shakeel Jhazbhay, General Manager of Digital Business Solutions at Datacentrix: "As OpenText's only Platinum Partner in Africa, Datacentrix takes its partnership extremely seriously, ensuring that it is not only highly capable across the entire spectrum of OpenText's offerings, but that it maintains and builds on this skill and expertise every year."

"Datacentrix is proud of its accomplishments with OpenText. We will continue to deliver success, win awards and invest in its skills set to maintain this leadership position within these emerging markets," he comments.

"Well done to the Datacentrix team for once again receiving outstanding recognition from OpenText, and thank you to OpenText for our solid, long-term partnership," adds Ahmed Mahomed, Datacentrix CEO. "Information management has been an important strategic area of investment for Datacentrix over a number of years, and one that we will continue to focus on into the future."



**Shakeel Jhazbhay, General Manager of Digital Business Solutions at Datacentrix**

## Timeline of our OpenText Journey

**opentext™** | Partner  
Reseller Platinum

**opentext™** | Partner  
Services Platinum

**opentext™** | Partner  
Support



**1998**

**Datacentrix - IXOS**  
Exclusive partner in Africa



**2004**

**OpenText acquires IXOS**



**2011**

**WCape Government**  
Global Star Enterprise Awards



**2012**

**WCape Government**  
Global Star Enterprise Awards



**2014**

**Datacentrix**  
Fast Growth Markets Partner of the Year



**2015**

**WCape Government**  
Elite Awards  
**NamPower**  
SAP Innovation Award



**2017**

**WCape Government**  
Advocate of the Year  
**Engen**  
Innovation of the Year



**2018**

**Datacentrix**  
Africa Partner of the Year



**2019**

**Datacentrix**  
Africa Partner of the Year  
**SANParks**  
Customer Visionary of the Year



**2021**

**Datacentrix**  
Emerging Market Value Added Reseller

**Datacentrix**  
Africa Partner of the Year

**Mediclinic**  
Visionary of the Year

# Hewlett Packard Enterprise – brings new multi-cloud data centre model to South Africa

HPE has brought a new multi-cloud solution, underpinned by HPE's GreenLake platform, to the South African market. Hosted at Teraco – Africa's most interconnected data centre hub – the collaborative service drives flexibility and capability into both private and public cloud environments. This powerful multi-cloud data centre model is all about leveraging the cloud to define the customer experience.

The HPE GreenLake platform is bolstered by a host of Datacentrix solutions and services that are running on top of it, including backup and disaster recovery by Veeam, as well as storage and compute.

## Take control of your data

There is a huge uptake of public cloud services in South Africa, but companies still need to retain control over their own data. Globally, as much as 70% of applications and data remain on premises, for good business reasons. However, companies with an existing public cloud presence can now leverage GreenLake to combine the cloud's simplicity and agility with the governance, compliance, and visibility of the Hybrid IT model.

HPE GreenLake delivers the modern cloud experience for all your apps and data, everywhere. It delivers the cloud experience across datacentres, multi-clouds and edges, and provides data insights to better manage capacity, performance, compliance and cost.

"Companies can't take everything to a public cloud environment. However, we can give customers flexibility, by enabling them to pay for what they use rather than having to invest upfront," says HPE South Africa MD President Ntuli.

## Powerful collaboration

This unique multi-cloud offering is the latest culmination of a long-standing partnership between HPE and Datacentrix. Says Ntuli: "We are also in the next technology curve, an era of Edge-to-Cloud and Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS). With their expertise and knowledge of cloud hosting, Datacentrix is the ideal systems integrator and partner for cloud collaboration."

Datacentrix CEO Ahmed Mahomed says that the almost two-decade-long partnership has seen Datacentrix develop deep skills across a broad solution portfolio. "HPE is one of our strategic partners and we are excited about pursuing this opportunity with them. Our strategy is to ensure we provide our clients solutions that suit their business requirements, be that on-prem, off-prem or hybrid."

## Boost for local enterprises

Teraco CEO Jan Hnizdo says the offering has come at a great time for South African enterprises that now have even more choice with regards to cloud offerings. "Enterprises will benefit from the flexibility of the cloud whilst leveraging the Teraco data centre and interconnection platform that provides enterprises with cost effective and secure interconnections to dense ecosystems and cloud-on-ramps. Datacentrix deploying the HPE GreenLake cloud platform at Teraco was a strategic choice."

  
**Hewlett Packard  
Enterprise**

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# Datacentrix takes top accolades at HPE Partner Awards for 2020

Datacentrix received no less than six awards at the Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) South Africa's 2020 Channel Partner Awards. This includes the top titles of 'HPE Hybrid IT (HIT) Partner of the Year' and 'HPE HIT Platinum Partner of the Year'.

The event, which marks the first virtual partner awards event in HPE's history, saw the organisation celebrate the theme 'Art is Life', using the opportunity to advocate the responsibility of all South Africans to help curb the spread of the coronavirus. A minute of silence was held for those who have lost their lives to COVID-19.

During the afternoon, Datacentrix was named as:

- HPE HIT Partner of the Year;
- HPE HIT Platinum Partner of the Year;
- HPE Nimble Partner of the Year;
- HPE Pointnext Services Partner of the Year; and
- HPE Pointnext Services Delivery Partner of the Year.

Tony de Sousa, Business Unit Manager: Enterprise at Datacentrix, explains that HPE thanked partner individuals and teams for their efforts and performance over 2020.

"For Datacentrix to be named as both HPE HIT Platinum Partner of the Year and HPE HIT Partner of the Year was a



The overall title of HIT Partner of the Year was given to Datacentrix for our excellent performance, according to HPE, as well as consistent attention to happy clients, delivery capabilities, our excellent leverage of HPE's solutions and services, innovative spirit and determination to thrive.

tremendous honour," he says. "The HIT Platinum Partner award was presented based on our significant contributions to HPE during the past year, drawing particular attention to the close relationship between the Datacentrix and HPE, as well as our vested interest in improving the way we work while focusing on delivering value to local clients.

"The overall title of HIT Partner of the Year was given to Datacentrix for our excellent performance, according to HPE, as well as consistent attention to happy clients, delivery capabilities, our excellent leverage of HPE's solutions and services, innovative spirit and determination to thrive."

Datacentrix holds the highest HPE accreditation as a Platinum Partner and is also a Platinum Hybrid IT and HPE Pointnext partner; a Gold HPE Pointnext Services partner; and an Aruba Platinum partner with ClearPass Policy Management competencies.

The company was pleased to be named as HPE Pointnext Services Partner of the Year for services sold over the year, with a focus on new business, as well as its contributions to GreenLake pipeline advancements and year-on-year growth. Says Mark Ridley, Pointnext Country Manager at HPE: "As the winner of Pointnext Services Partner category, Datacentrix has proven itself as a steadfast partner, working closely with HPE South Africa to bring in new business and penetrate into new markets. Importantly, Datacentrix is our first partner in the Middle Eastern, Saudi Arabian and South African (MESA) region to close a GreenLake public sector deal.

"Our final award in this category was the HPE Pointnext Services Delivery Partner of the Year, and Datacentrix has excelled in the areas of delivering a total customer experience, exceeding our joint clients' expectations and building their loyalty, while also ensuring both business retention and opportunity for future growth," says Ridley.

Datacentrix clinched the HPE Nimble Storage partner of the Year award by working closely with clients to transform their infrastructure by delivering simplicity, flexibility and intelligence. "Our deep technical expertise in storage and design was critical to winning this title," de Sousa adds. In addition to the five partner awards, Datacentrix received an individual award, the Aruba Distinguished Engineer of the Year through a unanimous vote from HPE's technical and channel team.

# Two Rivers Platinum Mine sees major breakthrough in underground communications

Two Rivers Platinum, a large underground platinum mine located in Steelpoort, Limpopo, has made great strides in setting up a reliable underground Wi-Fi network, providing wireless services to the rock face and full wireless coverage from the face to the tipping area.

This marks the first time in 15 years that the organisation has seen consistent communications from deep within the mine, while realising the benefits to be gained via location-based services, such as the remote monitoring of its underground fleet and real-time location data, as well as information on the health status of these vehicles.

## Overcoming unique underground challenges

A fully mechanised underground platinum mining operation that employs over 3,200 employees, Two Rivers is a joint venture between African Rainbow Minerals (ARM) (54

percent) and Impala Platinum (46 percent), which is managed by ARM.

According to Two Rivers' Business Leader, JJ Joubert, one of the mine's overriding strategic objectives is to achieve efficient operations, underpinned by the support of technology. However, due to the complex environment, where challenges include the density of the rock, establishing a stable underground communication network at Two Rivers has been difficult.

“The use of Wi-Fi communications underground is not new in terms of large mining setups, but our mine specifically is comprised of narrow, dense tabular rock. This posed a unique obstacle for Two Rivers, since many communications networks, like radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology, require line of sight to be effective. This lack of visibility meant that eLTE connectivity was not a viable option either.”

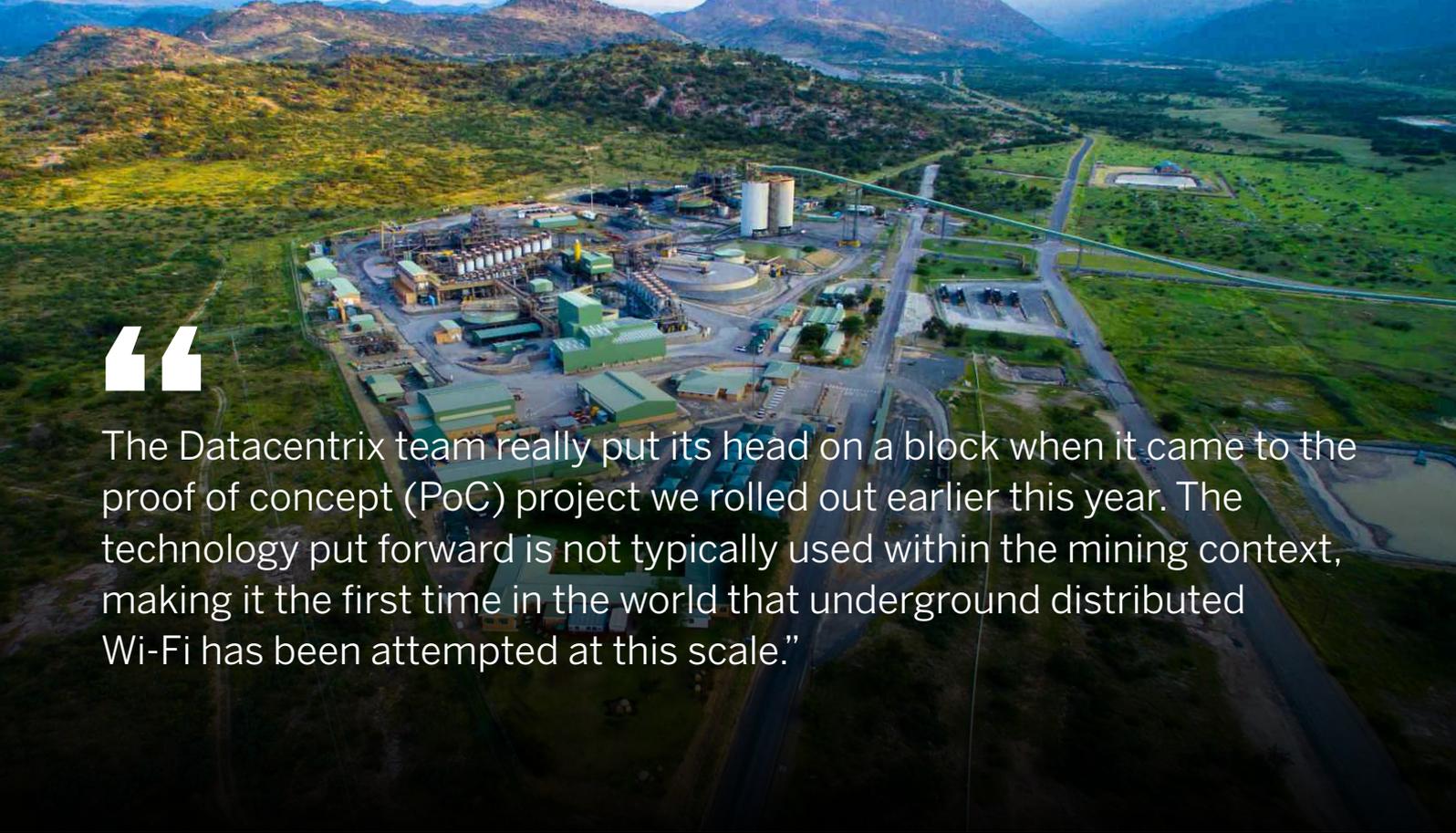
From a safety perspective, Two Rivers already had several underground communications measures in place, such as two-way radios and Bluetooth tracking, enabling early communication in the case of an emergency, but the previous system's setup was at a fixed point, some distance away from the operating face of the mine. This meant that to make a simple emergency call, an employee might have had to walk back quite a distance to reach the comms point to inform mine management of any urgent issues or specific needs.

Furthermore, administration within the mine was historically heavily paper-based, adds Reynard Cronje, IT Coordinator at Two Rivers. “The miner would go underground and complete the paper requisite forms, which were then only returned to the surface at the end of the shift. This meant that the mine could only respond to information after the shift had been completed. And with our equipment upgrades over time to smart machinery, with the ability to communicate, we needed a network that could facilitate this close to the face.”

## Better use of data, improved decision making

“Data is power,” Joubert continues. “And access to data empowers you to make immediate decisions based on real-time information. This has a significant impact on costs for a





The Datacentrix team really put its head on a block when it came to the proof of concept (PoC) project we rolled out earlier this year. The technology put forward is not typically used within the mining context, making it the first time in the world that underground distributed Wi-Fi has been attempted at this scale.”

mining operation, and provides endless opportunities in terms of automation with other equipment throughout the business.

“Live condition monitoring is critical for mining operations. If you can access real-time data on operations, equipment and machinery and respond timeously to this, you can make informed decisions based on the trends uncovered by this data. Therefore, it was important that we introduce live condition monitoring and a live information feed from our smart machines and people underground.”

**A world Wi-Fi first**

“Our Wi-Fi dialogue with Datacentrix, an established preferred IT partner of Two Rivers, started as a casual conversation,” Joubert explains. “The Datacentrix team really put its head on a block when it came to the proof of concept (PoC) project we rolled out earlier this year. The technology put forward is not typically used within the mining context, making it the first time in the world that underground distributed Wi-Fi has been attempted at this scale.”

Says Shawn Marx, Business Unit Manager: Converged Solutions at Datacentrix: “The technology proposed to Two Rivers had to be 'ruggedised' to withstand the harsh mining environment, including blasting taking place underground. It also needed to be customised to meet the client's specific requirements, so an off-the-shelf type product was out of the question.

“Mines are dynamic environments that are always changing, and the solution needed to be able to adapt as the mine evolves and, as the face moves forward, so does the infrastructure.”

After testing several potential scenarios, the most effective solution comprised the use of Wi-Fi. “This particular PoC leverages the cost effectiveness and ease of integration of Wi-Fi,” Marx adds.

The distributed architecture installed at Two Rivers Platinum incorporates a central access point capable of connecting up to 48 easily installable remote antennas. The benefit of this technology is that it makes use of a single frequency network, so all antennas and end points connect on the same channel, therefore reducing interference.

The smart antennas provide for Wi-Fi 6, the great enabler for convergence between information technology (IT) and operational technology (OT) networks, while enhancing signal strength and coverage area within specific spaces. They are also equipped with Bluetooth 5, used for location-based services.

**Enabling a major comms advancement**

“This proof of concept with Datacentrix was the first time in 10 years in the board and pillar mining industry that we've made a breakthrough with underground communications,” states Joubert. “While previously we have not been able to achieve a stable network, we're now seeing very reliable communication coming from underground.

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Two Rivers Mine panel discussion at the Datacentrix Mining Indaba. Leanne Manas, TV personality; JJ Joubert, Business Leader at Two Rivers; Reynard Cronje, IT Coordinator at Two Rivers; Gys Malan, Data and Communications Network Solutions Architect at Huawei and Brian Lendrum, the then Business Unit Manager: Huawei at Datacentrix



Datacentrix' strong relationship focus and its willingness to engage have again been brought to the fore. The company spent time learning about our particular challenges to find the right technology for Two Rivers and adapt it according to our unique needs. They really listened to us, understood the ecosystem, and were interested in what we wanted to achieve.

"It's live, immediate and working – to the extent that we can now even run virtual meetings underground."

One of the major values realised via the PoC to date is the enablement of location-based services. The project incorporates a service engine that provides location tracking as well as triangulation, which is able to distinguish between machine, man, and other assets within the mine. The tracking function used can display patterns, such as employee routines for specific days, heat mapping for certain times, and also extensive contact tracing functionality for added health and safety benefits.

"Communications are immediate, and technicians are empowered to carry out faster fault finding and closing out. Equipment, such as our underground mining load haul dump (LHD) loader, boom drill rig and utility vehicles, is also feeding live data, so the status of each machine is available for proactive maintenance purposes, from diesel running low to an engine over-heating.

"In addition, emergencies can now be fast tracked via the Wi-Fi network. Where previously the control room may not have been able to envisage the issue, now both video

footage and photos can be communicated, accelerating the right response.

"We believe that these advantages will completely set Two Rivers Platinum apart going forward, as our improved ability to react to challenges makes fully autonomous mining a possibility, as well as providing us with access to even greater innovation. This technology is set to take mining into the future," says Joubert.

"Datacentrix' strong relationship focus and its willingness to engage have again been brought to the fore. The company spent time learning about our particular challenges to find the right technology for Two Rivers and adapted it according to our unique needs. They really listened to us, understood the ecosystem, and were interested in what we wanted to achieve," he concludes.

As a Huawei Gold Partner, Datacentrix provides Huawei's portfolio of enterprise wireless solutions. Datacentrix has achieved its IT Certified Service Partner (CSP) 3-Stars certification from the global ICT infrastructure provider, further qualifying the company to better solve the challenges of digital transformation through the partnership.

# Datacentrix recognised for security controls, boosts non-technical certification levels

Maintaining the highest levels of accreditation and certification has long been a point of pride for Datacentrix, and both 2020 and 2021 have been no exception.

The organisation, which received the international Information Security Standard ISO 27001 certification of its information security management system (ISMS) in 2019, is pleased to announce that it has been re-certified. The globally recognised certification is a framework that offers a structured and comprehensive approach to managing information security risks, ensuring the security of confidential information in all forms, whether it be within the cloud, in digital format or paper based.

Says Datacentrix Chief Financial Officer, Elizabeth Naidoo: "Our successful re-certification of ISO 27001 means that Datacentrix clients can maintain their confidence in our ability to manage risk, as well as our resilience to cyberattacks. The re-certification process verifies the existence and effectiveness of the information security controls that we have in place."

This re-certification follows on from the company's attainment of Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) accreditation, which also reinforces Datacentrix' commitment to effective information security.

"Both of these certifications, as well as the formal endorsement received from the governing body and regulatory authority for the private security industry in South Africa, namely the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSiRA) in 2020, help position Datacentrix as adding significant value and peace-of-mind to our clients," Naidoo adds.

Furthermore, Datacentrix has received recertification for ISO 45001:2018 (occupational health and safety (OHS) management systems); ISO 14001:2015 (environmental



The hard work by our Datacentrix team has been rewarded through the recognition of our technology and services business excellence. We look forward to seeing this as a continuing trend well into the future.

management systems); ISO 9001:2015 (quality management system); as well as Level 6 CIDB (Electrical Engineering Works and Mechanical Engineering); and Level 1 CIDB (General Building; and Civil Engineering) via Infracol, a wholly owned Datacentrix subsidiary.

"In addition, the company maintained its Level one broad-based black economic empowerment (B-BBEE) status for the fourth consecutive year, and has received a host of awards from our technology partners," Naidoo continues.

"The hard work by our Datacentrix team has been rewarded through the recognition of our technology and services business excellence. We look forward to seeing this as a continuing trend well into the future."



# Turning video into actionable intelligence

The role of the camera has changed completely, moving away from traditional security usage only, to become a multi-purpose, centralised device that can help organisations deal with operational, manufacturing and health and safety challenges, among others.

This is according to Stephanie Rosenmayer, Business Unit Manager at Datacentrix, who explains that there have been four major trends unfolding within the surveillance space over the past year.

### Artificial intelligence (AI) on the edge

The first trend, according to Rosenmayer, is the slow but steady progression of AI – which started off as a centralised solution – to the edge. “We’ve certainly seen a recent uptick in the number of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) that have developed AI solutions specifically linked to smart cameras that can be deployed at the edge.

“This has had a major impact on the way that the edge is architected.”

### The AI explosion

The next trend referenced by Rosenmayer is the continued explosion of AI.

“A serious driver for the Open Security & Safety Alliance (OSSA), a non-profit, non-stock corporation working to create a framework outlining a common standardised platform for security and safety solutions accessible for everyone, is the development of an open source operating system for the safety and security industry.

“Some of you may recall the fate of BlackBerry-specific applications when standard Android and Apple platforms

were developed, and consumers suddenly had access to thousands and thousands of new apps.

We are expecting the same type of scenario for surveillance and AI. Once an open platform has been established, we believe that the barriers to entry will disappear, opening up countless applications that will run independently of the manufacturers.”

For business purposes, states Rosenmayer, this will be incredibly important, as organisations that have already made the capital investments to establish a physical infrastructure will be able to ‘chop and change’ the apps running on top of it, enabling customisation for specific environments, or even specific areas within the company.

### The move to the cloud

“Several of the larger cloud providers have been eyeing the surveillance sector, and while this move is still in its infancy, there are a number of commercial models currently being tested in the market. However, there is quite a bit of work still to be done before we have mature commercial models that can be used.”

### Security and IT convergence

Finally, she adds, the convergence of security and the IT industry has become a reality.

“Historically, security was a separate division often situated within the facilities side. Today, we are seeing much more engagement between IT and security, addressing endpoint security, vulnerabilities, networking, bandwidth optimisation, the evaluation of which parts of the workload to move to the cloud, and more. It is anticipated that this organisational model will change over time.”



### Important IOT decisions to be made

Many companies, says Rosenmayer, have made a massive capital investment in terms of establishing networks, storage and compute. "They've outlaid spend on devices, access control, fire detection and many other components that need to ultimately integrate into a video/data management system. In fact, in most of the implementations Datacentrix has done, we have seen that this 'infrastructure readiness' portion of the surveillance portfolio makes up approximately 80% of solution deployment costs, while the application layer represents only 20%, despite having the potential to generate 80% of the value going forward."

When looking at IOT, she explains, the decision around a video data management system will be the most important one a business will make for the next five years.

"Here, integration is key – and no longer just with cameras. Now, we need to look at the integration of IOT devices, with a specific view to creating meta data. Why is this important? The meta data generated by devices can be extracted for analysis and turned into actionable intelligence. So, we can take the same camera, but generate valuable information for sales, marketing, production, operations and more."



**Stephanie Rosenmayer,**  
Business Unit Manager at Datacentrix



Datacentrix provides certified, in-depth training on intelligent information management in conjunction with AIIM, the Association for Intelligent Information Management that:

- Is available on a virtual, in-house, and online basis
- Is designed for end users, suppliers, and the channel
- Provides Specialist and Master levels of certification

#### Training objectives

We help our customers overcome business challenges associated with managing business information such as:

- Managing documents
- Managing content
- Maintaining records
- Compliance
- Business processes

For more information visit <https://www.datacentrix.co.za/aiim-training.html>



# Aruba ESP allows you to deliver innovative network management services quickly and easily

With today's distributed enterprises increasingly transitioning to mobile and cloud solutions, many are also looking for more efficient ways to acquire, manage and maintain their growing IT environments. This is largely due to shrinking budgets and fewer human resources available to meet growing business expectations.

Cloud-based management services are gaining momentum as customers look to offset budget and resource constraints, while maintaining the ability to implement the technology solutions needed to keep their businesses competitive.

By changing their consumption model to a managed service, customers not only shift from a large up-front technology investment to a monthly operational expense, but they also eliminate the day-to-day network management tasks that dominate up to 70% of their IT team's attention.

## Focus on strategic activities

This allows management to focus on strategic activities that will create value for their core business. A recent Aruba survey of 2,400 IT decision makers validated this trend, wherein only 8% said they would continue with capex investments only. By contrast, 55% said they would explore a subscription (as a service) model for either hardware or software, 53% would consider a managed service for turnkey hardware or software and 30% financial leasing.

This shift in customer buying behaviour is creating tremendous opportunities for partners that are ready to build a managed service practice. Beyond selling professional services and hardware, typically delivered in resell engagements, managed service partners (MSPs) can increase their customer value. They are also able to improve competitive differentiation and overall margin by delivering Network-as-a-Service (NaaS) solutions built on Aruba's Edge Services Platform (ESP).

Additionally, partners can insulate their business from quarterly performance variability and maintain account control by establishing a consistent revenue stream, based on multi-annual contracts and periodic billing.

## Industry first

Aruba ESP is the industry's first cloud-based AI-powered platform designed to unify, automate and secure the edge. Aruba ESP combines Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations (AIOps), zero trust security and a unified infrastructure for wired, wireless, and WAN management. This provides MSPs a single pane of glass to all customers in their environment.

With enterprise-class network hardware, a comprehensive set of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), integration with hundreds of solutions offered by Aruba's technology partners and flexible financing options, Aruba's ESP platform enables partners to quickly build and deliver a wide variety of managed service offerings that meet their customers' specific needs.

Aruba ESP leverages Aruba Central's simplified onboarding, integrated installer and mobile app and zero-touch provisioning to reduce the time required to provision and deploy solutions. This effectively minimises staff travel time to remote locations and greatly reduces the time to value for customer deployments – particularly those with distributed sites.



# XDR: Future-ready extended detection and response



Sam Curry, Chief Security Officer at Cybereason

We operate in a new world and over the past year the dynamics of your company network have likely experienced massive changes. Recent surveys estimate that nearly half of the participating employers intend to allow employees to work remotely from home on a permanent basis.

This means that employees need anywhere, anytime access while at the same time the quantity and complexity of the cyber attacks we face have ramped up.

If you're dealing with a single attack on a single asset, today's Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) tools are all up to task. But can your endpoint technology or SIEM correlate attacks – and more importantly stop those attacks – across all user identities, devices and endpoints?

XDR technologies for Extended Detection and Response should allow organisations to be able to readily detect, correlate and end sophisticated attacks wherever they start on the network. By fusing together endpoint telemetry with behavioral analytics for XDR, security teams can protect users and assets wherever they are in the world.

While traditional solutions provide alerting that may identify various aspects of an attack operation, alerting alone only reveals aspects of the whole attack sequence. This alert-centric, siloed approach to securing complicated network infrastructure across on-prem, hybrid, cloud and mobile assets gives attackers ample opportunity to hide in the seams, which makes hunting and eliminating attackers all but impossible.

The focus for XDR technologies is to detect, expose and end persistent malicious operations (Malops™) while eliminating false positives, to enable security teams to investigate threat indicators faster, and affect complete eradication of any Malop with a lower mean time to remediate.

Key to the proficiency of an XDR solution is that it needs to be operation-centric instead of alert-centric. This means the solution can correlate disparate attack indicators from across the whole of the network as opposed to simply generating alerts or alarms that lack the necessary context to uncover a Malop.

Important XDR solution characteristics:

**Understanding Threats Beyond the Endpoint:** Security begins with knowing what to protect. An XDR solution should empower analysts of all skill levels to quickly dig into the details of an attack without the need to craft complicated queries. XDR is intended to extend traditional detection and response capabilities from the endpoint out to critical Software as a Service (SaaS) services, email and cloud infrastructure.

**Detections Extensible to Tomorrow's Threats:** XDR solutions should deliver superior visibility and enhanced correlations across both Indicators of Compromise (IOCs) and key Indicators of Behavior (IOBs), the more subtle signs of network compromise. XDR detections also need to identify suspicious user access and insider threats.

**Automated and Guided Response Options:** XDR solutions should make it simple for analysts to understand the full attack story immediately, and remediation actions such as kill process, quarantine asset and remote shell should be automated or accomplished remotely with a simple click. A solution should also offer automation options for immediate remediation of threats and continuous threat hunting.

XDR is a promising approach that can reverse the attacker advantage and return the high ground to the defenders by extending detection and response capabilities across the broader IT ecosystem that makes up modern enterprise environments. This unified detection and response capability can automatically surface Malops across the entire IT stack including endpoint, network and cloud deployments.



# Is your company's head stuck in the cloud?

Technology today probably already includes the cloud, but it is not just about the cloud. So says Jaap Scholten, Head: Group Hybrid IT Strategy at Datacentrix. What is needed is a Hybrid approach for companies to unlock the real business value of their data.

### To cloud or not to cloud?

“Many older-school businesses moved their servers into the cloud after comparing technologies on a like-for-like basis. Not only are the costs associated with this method prohibitive, but the underlying technologies themselves are vastly different. And so, companies in their droves moved business-critical applications back to on-premises datacentres. The bigger issue here is that these cloud

decisions were made without a clear business strategy in place. It was a case of moving to the cloud for the sake of being in the cloud, and then finding, at a great cost, that it didn't meet all the business' needs,” Scholten discloses.

Gartner Inc.'s 2021 cloud computing forecast confirms this opinion, with the organisation's research vice president, Sid Nag, stating that 'initial lift-and-shift approaches for applications such as complex ERP systems failed to pay the dividends businesses had hoped for. People in the past ... used the cloud as a parking lot for legacy applications. They then realised the cost numbers were not lining up.'

### Data is the bottom line

Says Scholten: “A good cloud implementation requires a strategic evaluation of the business to better understand the business activities, the role of IT, how connected you are with your clients, the level of data analytics applied, the business-forward view, and more. This intelligence lies within your data – making data a company's biggest asset and the essential focus point of a successful Hybrid IT strategy.”

Data, however, no longer resides on campus; but rather, it moves freely between clouds, homes, satellite offices, coffee shops and headquarters.

### Changing CIO challenges

“The pain points of today's CIO are changing,” states Datacentrix CEO, Ahmed Mahomed, “as data essentially lives everywhere since companies have enabled a remote workforce.”

A company's network can no longer comprise of point-to-point links, for instance, and company firewalls are not sufficient for data protection anymore.

“What is needed is a longer-term strategy – typically three to five years – strongly focusing on what technology is going to do for the business, addressing how you steer your IT to align with business outcomes. This is a fundamental shift, and one that must be based on a broader hybrid model.



**Jaap Scholten, Head: Group Hybrid IT Strategy at Datacentrix**



A good cloud implementation requires a strategic evaluation of the business to better understand the business activities, the role of IT, how connected you are with your clients, the level of data analytics applied, the business-forward view, and more.

#### What makes for a solid Hybrid IT strategy?

“It’s a fact, companies that are able to access their data quickly and safely from anywhere off any device can conduct their business faster and smarter,” comments Mahomed. “This new way of working necessitates a modern strategy.”

Hybrid IT covers three fundamental pillars:

1. Where your data lives;
2. How your data is transported and accessed; and
3. How your data is secured.

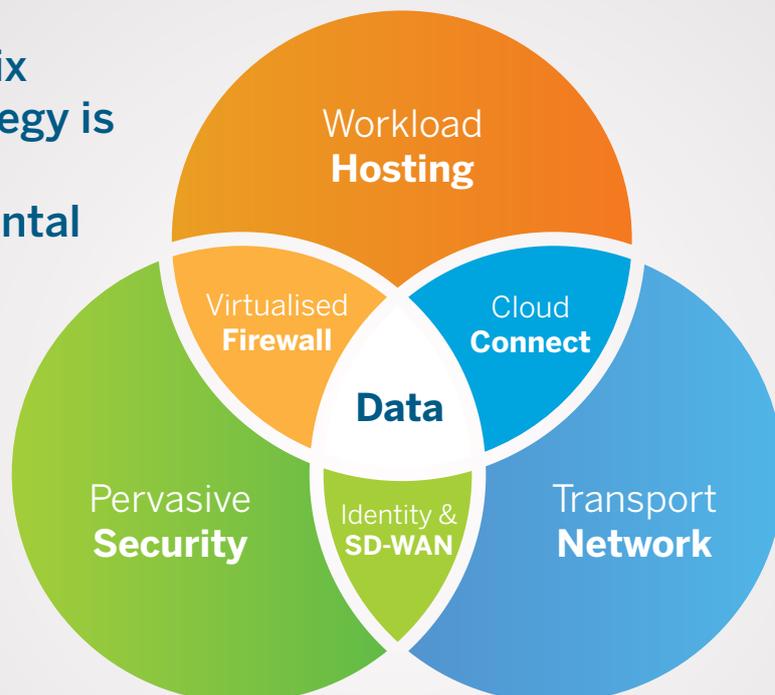
“The Datacentrix Hybrid IT strategy is built around these three data pillars and provides a comprehensive, bottom-up approach that assesses the ideal data centre environment and applies modern building blocks to construct a successful digitalisation roadmap, from reliable connectivity

and software-defined networking, through pervasive security, to data management solutions, and more.

“We have built a Hybrid IT environment according to the best global practices, which touches on every point of the cloud journey. It incorporates an in-depth consultative process, a mature service catalogue and continuous management. Clients can now enjoy optimum performance at the lowest rand cost while delivering excellent user experience with minimal resources. The Hybrid IT offering combines the deep knowledge and expertise of our people with excellent technology partners.

“There’s no one-size-fits-all offering; this is a story that will unfold individually for each client and will allow organisations to unlock true business value from their data,” he concludes.

**The Datacentrix Hybrid IT strategy is built around three fundamental data pillars.**



# Vox Telecom delivers impressive business benefits with the InfiniBox enterprise storage system from Infinidat

Technology and telecommunication solutions have become key to business operations today, and service providers need a stable, available and high-capacity storage platform to deliver an excellent Customer Experience (CX). Vox Telecom (Vox) is a leading South African ICT and telecoms operator delivering a variety of services and solutions to the southern African market.

They rely on the cost effective, high performance, high capacity and 100% availability of the InfiniBox enterprise storage solution from Infinidat, which plays a central role in supporting the entire Vox offering and has improved the performance of all services across the business.

## The Challenge

At the start of 2019, Vox faced two significant difficulties around its existing storage platform. Firstly, the five-year maintenance period was coming to an end, and secondly, the company was running out of capacity much faster than anticipated. Adding to these issues, Vox was unable to utilise

the full capacity of its existing storage solution, as some 40TB needed to remain 'unused' for the system to function.

"We reached the capacity limit of the system faster than anticipated. Coupled with the prohibitively expensive maintenance extension option, we made the decision to perform a technology refresh and replace the platform with a completely new solution," explained Keith Laaks, Executive Head for Technology, at Vox.

## The Solution

Vox needed a cost-effective, high-performance storage array for its hosting environment to assist the business to meet customer demands and rampant data growth. An agile partner, who would be able to deliver quickly, was also a necessity. After evaluating 12 different storage arrays on criteria such as performance, Inputs/Outputs Per Second (IOPS), storage efficiencies, compression, deduplication and redundancy, Vox selected the InfiniBox solution from Infinidat, supplied by local partner and solutions integrator, Datacentrix.



Keith Laaks, Executive Head for Technology at Vox



The training and support throughout the journey ensured we got it right the first time. The proof of our success came from our customers' users, who noticed performance improvements without being aware that a storage upgrade had been performed.

Two InfiniBox F4304 arrays were deployed, one at each of Vox's data centres in Johannesburg within the production and Disaster Recovery (DR) environments respectively. For workloads with low Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO), Vox makes use of VMware's vSphere replication feature.

"These arrays primarily service our virtual servers, database and voice infrastructure, and also play a key role in our data protection strategy. The solution allows seamless integration with our data protection vendor," said

Selby Maake, Cloud Storage and Virtualisation Engineer at Vox. "Each array delivers 1.7 Petabytes (PB) of virtual capacity with the actual available capacity variable depending on the compression ratio. This gives us far more storage for an extremely cost-effective rate per terabyte."

#### The Result

Implementation of the solution took one month to complete. Local Infinidat partner, Datacentrix, worked closely with Vox on the installation, helping Vox take the project from racking, stacking and initialisation, through to switching, provisioning, testing, and finally into the production environment.

Infinidat also provided certified administration training through Datacentrix, flying in experts from its head office in Israel to South Africa. This was to ensure the data migration was seamless.

"Thanks to excellent relationships, solid teams and effective planning from the outset, the implementation went smoothly and no challenges were experienced. The training and support provided by Infinidat throughout the journey ensured we got it right the first time. The proof of our success came from our customers' users, who noticed performance improvements without being aware that a storage upgrade had been performed, said Laaks.

The InfiniBox arrays offer flexibility when it comes to scale and ease-of-use for critical workloads. Also, they deliver superior performance with a low total cost of ownership (TCO) without compromising the CX. The InfiniBox ultimately empowered Vox with a data-driven competitive advantage at petabyte scale.

"One of the key benefits we have realised, results from the low-touch configuration and administration of the InfiniBox arrays. This has allowed us to provision new services and solutions seamlessly and with minimum manual interaction. Our previous solution was laborious to configure, taking up to an hour with multiple steps, increased complexity and room for error. The Infinidat solution takes less than a minute, improving our customer service, while freeing up time for our teams to attend to other business needs," Maake added.



## Solution Advantages



**95% minimum  
cache hit ratio**



**Enhanced  
performance and  
guaranteed uptime**



**Seamless  
provisioning of  
new services and  
solutions**

Redundancy is another critical feature of Vox's operations. Previously, the company experienced some issues with failures, so a robust solution was required. InfiniBox's triple redundancy controllers guarantee uptime, ensuring Vox can always deliver an uninterrupted service to both internal and external customers.

#### Future plans

"Aside from our connectivity, broadband access and voice solutions, our cloud offering is a growing element of our business, with impressive market penetration figures. We needed the right platform to support our growth goals and storage is the key ingredient. The InfiniBox solution supports our requirements by delivering the right blend of cost-effective storage and high performance, coupled with the ability to slot seamlessly into our existing infrastructure," said Laaks.

"Infinidat also provides excellent proactive monitoring and local support through Datacentrix to ensure constant uptime and availability. This is critical to Vox from an operations perspective. Based on our forecasts, we will require additional capacity by the end of 2021. We are extremely happy with the platform and will likely expand our storage with additional InfiniBox arrays, when the time comes," he concluded.

# Secure private cloud storage for the remote workforce

As more employees work from home or from remote locations, securing your data becomes more critical.

With Geodrive 2.0, users can upload information from anywhere and share it with their colleagues with the cloud copy residing safely inside private cloud storage.

Geodrive provides enhanced productivity and collaboration from anywhere without cumbersome VPN requirements or relying on public cloud providers with limited security, SLAs and data protection; with Geodrive the information is in your control.

With extensive metadata search capabilities, it is easy to track and find the right information and with S3 versioning, users can easily restore previous versions of a file from their own device.

With Geodrive you gain granular control over files stored in the cloud, allowing company policy to dictate “who” can perform “what” actions on “which” resources under “what conditions”.

What's more Geodrive looks and feels just like a normal Windows Drive in Explorer and is easy to use with no user training required, just drag and drop files to your private “cloud”.

<https://datacentrix.marketinghub.co.za/datacentrix-dell-geodrive>



## Some Geodrive use case examples



### Mining

Geological surveys/engineers' reports can be uploaded from the field with full metadata attached e.g. location, project details, weather conditions, all time stamped.



### Financial Institutions

POPI compliance, use metadata search to easily find and delete all files related to an individual from a central location.



### Bid Office

Bid publications and RFP responses through a shareable link to the document, bid responses with searchable metadata like responder name, date/time, submitted, approved vendor, blacklisted supplier Y/N, etc.



### App Developers

Reduce time to market and assist developers to get to market faster by using GeoDrive as the target for an application, developers eliminate the need for developing to an API once installed, GeoDrive behaves like local storage.

# Datacentrix bolsters collaboration with IBM by deepening competencies in data management and integration skills

The Digital Business Solutions division at Datacentrix, an IBM PartnerWorld participant, announced that it is bolstering its IBM certifications. This recognises that Datacentrix demonstrated technical proficiency and expertise in delivering high-value hybrid cloud and AI solutions and services to customers. The company matured from a reseller of IBM technology towards that of a Hybrid Cloud and Data AI solution provider.

Datacentrix's Digital Business Solutions division will now gain critical expertise in working across open hybrid cloud environments infused with AI through new certifications in IBM Cloud Pak for Data, a fully integrated data and artificial intelligence (AI) platform that modernises how businesses collect, organise, and analyse data to infuse AI throughout their organisations.

"Datacentrix enables organisations to unlock the maximum value of their data by employing a Hybrid IT strategy. The blueprint applies our data management, integration, automation, and optimisation expertise while leveraging a mature catalogue of hosting, connectivity, and security services to create a forward-looking strategy that is uniquely developed for each client," comments Datacentrix CEO, Ahmed Mahomed.

In line with this, Datacentrix has added a number of senior resources to both the Digital Business Solutions division and the Hybrid IT business to increase its existing data and AI expertise.

Says Shakeel Jhazbhay, General Manager of Digital Business Solutions at Datacentrix: "The key to developing a roadmap to digital transformation involves addressing unique business priorities, and building capabilities that deliver the right outcomes. These certifications provide our team with a complete set of integration capabilities that supports organisations to becoming data-driven. By connecting applications and data securely wherever they reside, we're able to provide business insight through a single view, enabling a smarter, safer and more effective digital business.



The blueprint applies our data management, integration, automation, and optimisation expertise while leveraging a mature catalogue of hosting, connectivity, and security services to create a forward-looking strategy that is uniquely developed for each client.

"These achievements not only intensify our relationship with IBM and elevate the digital transformation power of Datacentrix, but they go a long way in solidifying Datacentrix as a strategic business partner." Jhazbhay adds.

Datacentrix is recognised as an IBM partner in IBM Storage, IBM Power Systems and IBM Security solutions, as well as for a range of additional IBM offerings. In 2020, Datacentrix introduced a virtual Competency Centre, connecting clients directly with solution experts from both Datacentrix and IBM.

"Datacentrix uses the IBM Security portfolio both in the management of their SOC and in a number of security offerings they provide to their clients," explains Craig Holmes, Technology Executive IBM Southern Africa.

He adds that, "Datacentrix intends to build hybrid cloud, data, and automation solutions, allowing the business to modernise, build, deploy and manage applications on-premise or in private cloud or public cloud environments. This approach provides customers the ultimate choice in how and where they want to run their application workloads, leveraging data and automation opportunities secured across all environments."



# Datacentrix renews Trend Micro Platinum Partner status, retains position as a leading security expert

Datacentrix has secured the level of Platinum Partner with Trend Micro, global leader in cybersecurity solutions, once again. The company was the second local organisation to reach Platinum status initially in 2018.

Says Rudie Raath, who heads up the security portfolio at Datacentrix: "Datacentrix has worked hard at upholding the required revenue goals, as well as the sales and technical skills to retain the Trend Micro Platinum Partner certification.

"In terms of the value we bring to the table, Datacentrix has a dedicated security team in place. Our industry-leading Security Operations Centre (SOC), used to monitor and defend customer ICT environments in real time against any potential security threats, provides additional in-depth insight.

"Datacentrix is committed to safeguarding South African organisations. To work so closely with a company that has been a cybersecurity leader, as identified by both Gartner and IDC, for more than 20 years, is a highly strategic component for our security business," he adds. "Using Trend Micro's leading security solutions coupled with our engineers' core expertise and integration specialisation, Datacentrix provides expert security services, delivering the very best protection for our clients' environments – wherever their data resides. These services are complemented by our optimised virtualisation and cloud solutions, converged infrastructure solutions and complementary security solutions."

"Trend Micro's Platinum status is attainable only by our most productive partners, and is by invitation only," explains Gareth Redelinghuys, Sales Lead for Southern Africa and IOI (Indian



Using Trend Micro's leading security solutions coupled with our engineers' core expertise and integration specialisation, Datacentrix provides expert security services, delivering the very best protection for our clients' environments – wherever their data resides.

Ocean Islands) at Trend Micro. "Datacentrix is a highly valued local partner that has made a serious investment in its relationship with Trend Micro and, as such, we are most pleased to continue our relationship at the highest tier in our partner programme.

As a Platinum Partner, Datacentrix offers Trend Micro hybrid cloud security, network security and end user protection solutions.

# INFINIDAT

## Datacentrix named as only South African Tier One Infinidat reseller and services partner

ADVERTORIAL



Datacentrix has officially been given the title of South Africa's only Tier One authorised reseller and service partner by global provider of multi-petabyte data storage solutions, Infinidat.

According to Graeme Dendy, Services Manager for the Converged Solutions team at Datacentrix, the Infinidat high performance enterprise solutions are an excellent addition to Datacentrix' storage offering. "Infinidat has been recognised for its high performing, quality solutions and excellent customer experience by world-leading research and advisory company, Gartner, in its January 2020 Gartner Peer Insights Customers' Choice for Primary Storage, and also as a Leader in the 2020 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Primary Storage Arrays.

"As a company that aims to provide clients with a more cost-effective, on-premises and cloud storage-as-a-service (STaaS) experience, we can certainly attest to the reliability of Infinidat's solutions, having not seen a single outage over the local installed base since our partnership kicked off early last year.

"Infinidat provides an excellent offering, and is well placed in the marketplace, particularly at the mid-sized to enterprise level," Dendy adds. "Not only is the product set straightforward for our technical engineers to work on, our clients are also finding it extremely easy to use."

At a Tier One level, Datacentrix enjoys a direct partnership with Infinidat, and has been trained to install and perform break/fix and warranty services.

"As our designated Tier One Reseller and services partner locally, Datacentrix has been endorsed by Infinidat to provide critical implementation, support and maintenance for our offering in the South African market," states Hayden Sadler, Country Manager for South Africa at Infinidat.

"Datacentrix provides us with end-to-end services across the country, thanks to its national footprint. The organisation retains excellent technical skills and resources, and we see this strategic partnership growing from strength to strength as we jointly deliver Infinidat's innovative data storage solutions to South African businesses," he concludes.



**Conrad Dellar, Pre-sales Specialist at Datacentrix; Shawn Marx, Datacentrix Business Unit Manager for Converged Solutions; Adele Wood, Infinidat Business Development Manager at Pinnacle and Lourens Sanders, Solution Architect at Infinidat**

# A focus on POPIA compliance, data mobility and integrity is key in an always-on world with a remote workforce

As South Africa heads into the new financial year, C-suites would do well to ensure their digital transformation strategies are sound, well-resourced and implemented appropriately. This is because the modern business has had to evolve at breakneck speed on two fronts: it needs to ensure that data is available all the time to stay relevant for the modern consumer, and it has had to shift rapidly to accommodate remote working on a broader scale as a direct result of the pandemic.

While businesses are under pressure to reduce or mitigate downtime, there is the parallel risk of a cyber attack or breach, which could result in massive financial and reputational damage for an organisation. The Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) will finally come into force in 2021, adding to the layered complexities and pressing need for a sound cloud data management strategy.

## How to plan for uncertainty

Enterprises must plan a fluid data mobility strategy to allow for a hybrid workforce with remote users as well as the possibility of an increased percentage of in-office users.

We are finding that many companies are planning for a situation where they will never again have a full staff contingent working from the office. Not only will this reality change the way employees behave, but it will ensure that IT departments need to evolve to serve users in 2021 and beyond.

This means we are likely to see a big shift towards platform-agnostic solutions and data mobility.

Every IT department in 2021 and beyond should have full control of their data and the ability to move this data across platforms with ease. Data should be able to go from on-premises to the cloud and back again, as well as migrate easily between different cloud providers. This will only be achieved by IT departments if they move away from any vendor platform lock-ins. They need to be able to decide where and when data should move to suit their real-time needs.



**Ian Engelbrecht, Africa Lead, Systems Engineer at Veeam**

POPIA's enforcement will mean that companies will need to allow data subjects to object to their data being processed, as well as being able to withdraw previously given consent at any time. This means that as soon as the objection or withdrawal of consent has been received, a business must stop processing that subject's data immediately.

POPIA compliant management of data requires that once a company no longer needs the information for processing purposes, it loses the right to keep that data unless required by law. This means that any data that reaches the end of its life during downtime, or even during an IT freeze over holiday periods, may no longer be processed once the systems are up and running.

Underpinning all of this, enterprises need to ensure integrity of their data when it moves across platforms. They need to ensure that the Veeam 3-2-1 rule is followed, meaning that there are three copies of data, two of which are on separate storage mediums, with one being offsite. At Veeam, we always recommend taking this one step further: we advocate for the 3-2-1-0 rule. This means zero errors on all three copies.

As companies start the new financial year and contemplate the uncertain times ahead, they would do very well to ensure that data management, mobility and integrity form a key part of their strategies.

# Datacentrix wins top Veeam cloud subscription partner award for second year running

Datacentrix has been named as Veeam Software's Best Subscription Reselling Partner for the second consecutive year, receiving the award at the 2020 Veeam Partner Awards, held during its online Partner Summits for Africa in March 2021.

As the leader in backup solutions that deliver cloud data management, Veeam's annual awards acknowledge the success and dedication of its Veeam ProPartner Value-Added Resellers (VAR) and Veeam Cloud & Service Providers (VCSP) partners, recognising those that have successfully assisted local businesses in their accelerated digital transformation journeys.

"As Veeam's Best Subscription Reselling Partner of 2020 for Africa, Datacentrix has been distinguished once again as successfully closing the most cloud subscription deals in South Africa," explains Tony de Sousa, Enterprise Business Unit Manager at Datacentrix.

"As a Silver Service Provider and one of Veeam's first Platinum Resellers, Datacentrix is thrilled to have maintained this consistent recognition from Veeam over the years, having also taken the title of the Veeam Most Significant Project of the Year in 2018 for identifying, managing and successfully closing the largest project.

"Veeam and its offering has become an integral part of Datacentrix' DNA," he continues. "Not only does the organisation provide an excellent solution, as a trusted



Veeam and its offering has become an integral part of Datacentrix' DNA. Not only does the organisation provide an excellent solution, as a trusted provider of backup solutions for cloud data management and proven leader in this space, but we've forged an extremely close partnership together.

provider of backup solutions for cloud data management and proven leader in this space, but we've forged an extremely close partnership together.

"Datacentrix is delighted to have received our 2020 Veeam award, and we will continue to make every effort to build on our partnership for the coming years," he concludes.

# The risk of underestimating cyber threats

Cybercrimes have been on the increase at a global level, with 2020 breaking all previous records for data breaches and cyberattacks. And the African continent has not escaped this unscathed, with South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria seeing the biggest increases in cybercrime locally.

South Africa has, in particular, experienced a surge of ransomware incidents more recently. The real fact is that many companies face the fear of data encryption by cyber attackers, who are able to purchase the software, and an instruction guide on how to use it, via the dark web for a paltry amount, as little as R2,000 in some instances.

These attacks are not focused on any specific industry, but more on companies where data is critical to running operations. This is due to the fact that a Bitcoin payout for decryption keys is far more likely if the organisation under attack is unable to operate without those systems.

The unfortunate truth is that no company is safe from these attacks – even if you spend all the money in the world.



Rudie Raath heads up the security portfolio at Datacentrix

The protection of the infrastructure is no longer the focus for businesses today; it is all about the data. Cybersecurity is now closely intertwined with the application and infrastructure and, in particular, the actual data. Therefore, a multi-disciplined approach is required, one that understands the system architecture, its dependencies, and the location of all the data. Many companies to date are still blissfully unaware of the location and validity of their backups until the day they are required, only to find that it does not work.

Protecting the data must take priority, and with the technologies available in the market today, it is possible to secure your data copies through regular, immutable backups. Some of these solutions are even able to scan backups for possible ransomware scripts, or processes timed to trigger at a point in time.

The question posed here then is, if backup tapes are dead, could they not be considered as the potential safety net that protects companies? Could this legacy technology be the answer?

An area of concern would be that, should an organisation be targeted and its data encrypted, how long would it take to restore systems – are you prepared to pay the price of this downtime? Or worse, are you prepared for loss of data? How would this affect your business operations and customers? Would you be liable to pay fines or penalties?

These are the difficult facts that every organisation must consider when assigning budgets to IT operations and innovation. The mitigation measures against cyber threats requires a higher level of discussion within the business and can no longer be isolated between engineers around the water cooler.

An important facet of this process is choosing the right partner to support you on this journey – one that understands technology integration, infrastructure monitoring, cybersecurity threat mitigation technologies, data protection, governance and risk frameworks – and making the decision to do this quickly. Time is not on the side of the unprotected company.

# Closing the gaps – overcoming cyber risk in the OT space

Counting on traditional air gaps is no longer enough to protect critical operational technology (OT). We spoke to Joe Sarno, Senior Vice President of Sales for International and Emerging Markets at Fortinet to find out why.

## Q: Why is it important to secure an OT environment?

The days are long gone since industrial control systems (ICS), utility controls, health-monitoring equipment, or building environment controls were considered protected because they were isolated. IT/OT convergence is being forced at a rapid pace and while Industrial IoT (IIoT) and 5G are providing new capabilities, they also give cyber criminals new targets and attack vectors.

## Q: Is it necessary to segment the OT network from your IT network?

The traditional separation was what is known as the “air gap” with no connection at all between the industrial control network and IT. That has become impossible to maintain; as OT and IT converge, cyber criminals and even nation-state actors frequently obtain access first through the IT environment, then laterally into the unprotected OT network. Fortinet strongly recommends segmentation, resulting in sub-networks. This provides boosted visibility and improves control, while enforcing security.

## Q: Does Fortinet make provision for solving compliance challenges and if so, how?

Companies need to demonstrate a strong security posture to regulatory authorities. Several Fortinet products can help here. FortiAnalyzer provides hundreds of pre-built reports and templates that are regulation-specific to make proving compliance easy. FortiSIEM has an integrated configuration management database to build and maintain infrastructure assets, supporting risk assessments and ongoing operations. With centralised log management, it gives insight into overall trends that are useful in compliance areas.

## Q: How does Fortinet help limit OT risk exposure?

Fortinet provides a proactive and transformative approach to OT security with the Fortinet Security Fabric. Instead of disparate point products operating in silos, the Fortinet Security Fabric enables multiple OT security technologies to work together across IT and OT environments. With full



**Joe Sarno, Senior Vice President of Sales for International and Emerging Markets at Fortinet**

integration and shared threat intelligence, operational technology organisations gain fast, automated responses to attacks in any vector. One solution covers the entire converged IT/OT network to close OT security gaps, deliver full visibility and provide simplified management.

In addition, Fortinet has a strong track record protecting critical infrastructure, and ruggedised FortiGate NGFWs are built to secure sites with extreme heat, cold, vibration and electrical interference.

## Q: What are the benefits of a Security Fabric in OT security?

Securing converged OT/IT networks with a security fabric helps security leaders achieve the necessary visibility, control and behavioral analytics they require. Since OT equipment and IIoT devices typically rely on traditional security, the network must be secured in a manner that ensures cyberthreats do not gain access to these devices. To achieve consistent, effective IT and OT security, a security fabric delivers visibility, control and continuous monitoring.

**FORTINET**®

# Datacentrix earns Sage Intacct multi-tenant cloud solution provider status

Datacentrix has extended its partnership with Sage, the market leader for cloud business management solutions, earning its status as an official local solution provider for Sage Intacct, the organisation's cloud-based financial management and accounting software.

An existing Certified Sage ERP X3 Partner and Sage 300 Partner; this latest achievement will allow Datacentrix to help small to mid-sized enterprises (of between 20 and 2,500 employees), gain the benefits of a true multi-tenant cloud financial management solution. These include a lower total cost of ownership, the ability to scale as needed, easy integration with existing solutions, and the ability for real-time decision making.

"Sage Intacct has been recognised by research and advisory company, Gartner, as a Visionary for the fourth year running, in its 2020 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Cloud Core Financial Management Suites for Midsize, Large and Global Enterprises report," says Shakeel Jhazbhay, General Manager: Digital Business Solutions at Datacentrix.

"The report says that companies within the Visionary category 'understand how the office of finance is changing as core financial management applications move to the cloud', and it is clear that Sage Intacct is playing an important role in helping businesses to streamline and automate complex financial processes."

In addition, Sage Intacct was named a Leader in the IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Subscription Management Applications 2019 – 2020 report, receiving recognition for customer value delivered, its onboarding and implementation process, track record for customer success, and product roadmap.

"This approach aligns well with Datacentrix' aim to assist its clients to achieve digital transformation and secure



Based on our strong existing relationship, we are confident that Datacentrix is well positioned to help clients optimise the value of Sage Intacct for multi-dimensional accounting and real-time decision making.

connectivity from desk to cloud," he continues. "The Sage Intacct cloud-based platform is particularly well suited to solving challenges within the non-profit, business services, wholesale distribution, healthcare, hospitality, software and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), and financial services sectors.

"It already has an excellent track record for helping to do away with long, expensive audits, speed up monthly close times, manage multiple entities and improve financial visibility, delivering the automation and controls around billing, accounting and reporting that finance needs to reduce errors, stay audit-ready and scale the business," Jhazbhay adds.

Gerhard Hartman, Vice-President: Medium Business, Sage Africa and Middle East, says "Business partners like Datacentrix play an essential role in helping clients to unlock rapid return on their investment in Sage Intacct. Based on our strong existing relationship, we are confident that Datacentrix is well positioned to help clients optimise the value of Sage Intacct for multi-dimensional accounting and real-time decision making."

# Introducing Rubrik Protection for Microsoft 365 SharePoint and Teams

If your most mission-critical work today takes place in cloud-based applications, you're not alone. For IT organisations everywhere, COVID-19 has pushed on-premises applications to the cloud and kicked migration journeys into high gear.

Microsoft 365 is one of those applications that is seeing exponential growth as enterprises invest in tools to help facilitate remote collaboration. Microsoft Teams alone saw significant growth last year, reaching 115 million daily active users in October 2020.

The pandemic hasn't only encouraged organisations to re-examine their cloud strategy, but also the security of that data once it's there. Ransomware and phishing attempts thrive among heightened anxiety, and many attempts are relying on email through which to gain access to secure data – Google Cloud reported 18 million malware and phishing emails related to COVID-19 over the span of one week. The adoption of new SaaS applications comes with the necessary plan to back up and secure that native cloud data and mitigate the risk of data loss, should the need arise.

With shared responsibility models from cloud vendors alike stating that application data is the responsibility of the customer to protect, it's integral for organisations to integrate their approach to SaaS data protection into their overall data management strategy. That's why we're thrilled to announce that Rubrik has extended our protection of the Microsoft 365 suite to SharePoint and Teams, which is now generally available!

With Rubrik's protection for Microsoft 365, you can start seeing immediate benefits to help alleviate management's burden:

- **Secure Backups:** Safeguard data with unprecedented simplicity across Exchange Online, OneDrive, SharePoint, and Teams. Easily maintain offline backups to ensure critical data is secure, easily discoverable and always accessible.
- **Turbocharge Recovery:** Quickly restore individual emails or entire OneDrive folders to any destination in just three clicks. Easily locate your data with global predictive, file-level search to quickly recover from data loss and ensure business continuity.



- **Automate Management at Scale:** Streamline and automate management at enterprise scale. Centralise management and reporting across on-prem and cloud with a single software platform. Automate policy assignment with a powerful SLA engine to meet RPOs for large-scale Microsoft 365 environments.

Managing protection of your Microsoft 365 data doesn't have to be another complicated management burden. Using a modern data management platform like Rubrik Polaris provides peace of mind that your critical data is secure and always accessible.



To learn more about Rubrik's Microsoft 365 offering, check out our solution data sheet >>

Watch our video: How to Protect Microsoft 365 SharePoint with Rubrik Polaris >>

# Why 'castle-and-moat' protection is no fairy tale

Our changing world, with its more distributed infrastructure and new applications and workloads exposing a larger attack surface, means that perimeter security, while still an important element within an enterprise's cybersecurity arsenal, is simply no longer enough.

This traditional 'castle-and-moat' principle, which assumes that all security threats come from outside an organisation, has become increasingly problematic. Consequently, many organisations are shifting their focus away from perimeter-based firewalls, and looking instead at the protection of their application workloads, wherever they may reside.

### Protecting the changing landscape

The combination of evolving app development and infrastructure that is now distributed on-premises and across multiple clouds – both public and private – calls for a more flexible approach to security. Add to this the fact that the threat environment is on the up, with skyrocketing numbers of increasingly sophisticated threats, and it is clear that identities, endpoints and workloads can no longer be trusted based just on the fact that they are internal to an organisation.

The time to extend perimeter protection to the workload level is now, and importantly, it starts with embracing the Zero Trust model.

A phrase first coined by former Forrester Research analyst, John Kindervag, in the paper entitled, 'Build Security Into Your Network's DNA: The Zero Trust Network Architecture', Kindervag described the concept of Zero Trust as having a straightforward philosophy at its core, saying that 'Security professionals must stop trusting packets as if they were people. Instead, they must eliminate the idea of a trusted network (usually the internal network) and an untrusted network (external networks). In Zero Trust, all network traffic



Simply put, Zero Trust allows for the visibility and security controls needed to secure, manage and monitor every user, device, application and network. Within this model, no traffic may be trusted – unless policy proves otherwise.

is untrusted. And so, security professionals must verify and secure all resources, limit and strictly enforce access control, and inspect and log all network traffic.

Simply put, Zero Trust allows for the visibility and security controls needed to secure, manage and monitor every user, device, application and network. Within this model, no traffic may be trusted – unless policy proves otherwise.

The Zero Trust approach calls for the monitoring and protection of east-west traffic also, described as the flow of traffic within a datacentre, which has increased as a result of the adoption of converged and hyperconverged infrastructure, virtualisation and the private cloud.

**Micro-segmentation: controlling who accesses what**

A key part of the Zero Trust philosophy is micro-segmentation. Here, workloads are isolated from one another and individually secured, improving control of lateral east-west traffic within the datacentre. This is of particular importance with the recent growth in remote working, as micro-segmentation must cover all users – regardless of location – as well as all of a company's resources, be they on the cloud or within the datacentre.

Reducing lateral movement is not the only benefit of workload protection. It also facilitates the identification of workload behaviour deviations due to the faster detection of malware execution patterns, exposes vulnerabilities within software packages and promotes compliance. This includes compliance not only to the applicable laws and mandates, for example the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) and the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, but also to internal company rules and regulations.

**Creating consistent, layered security**

The adoption of a Zero Trust policy means that companies are able to approach security-related challenges in a new way. By ensuring the security moves everywhere the



**Hardus Dippenaar, Senior Network Architect at Datacentrix**

workload does, it provides a consistent, layered security approach right across the multi-cloud environment, allowing for improved visibility and automation, reduced risk, and a reduced attack surface.

A large graphic showing a network of people. Numerous small human figures are scattered across the space, connected by a web of thin, light-colored lines, representing a global or multi-site network. The background is white with a subtle grid pattern.

**Does your network cater for the unpredictable shifts in bandwidth and connectivity?**

- Rapid deployment of fast connections
- Centralised policy management
- Capacity management based on trend predictions
- Fast fault diagnosis response and granular analytics
- Security extend into home-based workplaces and hyperscalers
- Cost-effective connectivity with high performance

**POWERING THE HUMAN CONNECTION**

**Datacentrix addresses the vital role that connectivity plays in keeping cloud workloads, remote workers, and corporate offices working efficiently. Contact us for more.**

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