

# Datacentrix Forum focuses on the essence of digital transformation

Datacentrix held an interactive virtual forum with technology partner Dell Technologies. Hosted by veteran presenter and self-admitted technophile, Aki Anastasiou, the full day agenda included a keynote address on 'digimanity' by Rudie Raath, Chief Digital Officer at Datacentrix, as well as a panel discussion addressing digital transformation and how it is having an impact on business.

In his welcome talk, Datacentrix CEO Ahmed Mahomed touched on how the business landscape has shifted significantly this year, stating that a mere 12 months ago, many of us would not believe that we are where we are today. "Technology saved the day early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, as companies were trying to get their employees mobile as quickly as possible.

"I don't believe we've gone through the process of strategically responding to a permanent remote workforce environment. There are many issues still to be dealt with on this level, such as access to the corporate network and the extension of its boundaries into the homes of staff members. Questions remain, such as how do you secure this network; how do you deliver consistent performance to the remote user; how do you measure productivity; and how do you manage people working outside the traditional corporate environment?"

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According to Mahomed, from a business perspective, it is critical to understand that digital transformation is not about the technology. "Its strategic, we need to grasp how an organisation will be able to gain business value, and this is something that is underpinned by technology," he explains. "There's no question as to whether the digital disruption we're seeing will impact on your industry – be it finance, retail, mining or manufacturing – and your business: it is a question of how and when. And if you are not strategically evaluating this, you may very well be disrupted.

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“Part of the challenge is that the transformation now needs to be done at an accelerated pace. There's no longer a territorial advantage that companies in various sectors may have had historically – like financial services companies only competing with one another – now your competitors fall within different sectors too. With the use of technology, businesses have to become more effective and agile.”

Raath continued the digitalisation discussion in light of COVID-19, stating that suddenly, connectivity is enabling a corporate DNA transformation. “Over time, technology will play a significant role in developing a new, more evolved level of humanity, with the building blocks of this process being data and connectivity.”

Diving into where organisations could start to better understand the role of data and connectivity within this process, Raath provided practical advice on starting points, and looked at trends for 2020 and beyond that would enable this networking era.

The in-depth panel discussion focused on digital transformation and its impact on how we interact with our world, featuring input from Mahomed; Chipo Msimanga, Partner Account Manager from Dell Technologies; Greg McDonald, Director for Systems Engineering at Dell Technologies; Given Ramadzanga, Senior Manager Media and Network Architecture at MultiChoice; and Johann Coetzee, Managing Director: Commercial and Technology Solutions at Datacentrix. The conversation looked at how digital transformation is more than just a technology stack, but involves driving business outcomes – efficiencies, growth, new business models and more – and how companies can develop this approach to stay at the forefront and continue to grow.

A practical example was provided by MultiChoice's Ramadzanga, who also covered the measures taken by the media organisation to keep the proverbial lights on during COVID-19. This included redesigning media and engineering network architectures and fast-tracking the organisation's remote operations plans to suit the work-from-home environment.