

## Local automotive company drives down ICT costs by almost R1 million in one year

The South African operations of a leading manufacturer of trucks, buses and coaches has seen huge ICT-related cost reductions since the rollout of a dual connectivity WAN country-wide by Datacentrix company, eNetworks.

The project has seen the company save almost 50 percent on data service costs alone, while also increasing bandwidth.

“As an automotive organisation, IT is not our core focus but we're under continual pressure to keep our systems as cost effective, and yet as value-driven, as possible,” explains Moosa Jogee, head of IT at the company. “Around a year ago, the decision was taken to put out a tender to take our WAN to the next level – with the requirement to utilise multiple, vendor-agnostic technologies and dual connectivity for greater efficiencies, redundancy and stability. Additionally, we needed a strict service level agreement (SLA) to be put in place.

“Pricing played a critical point in our decision-making process, as did the need for a service provider that could provide strong account management, not only to forge a more personal partnership, but also for faster decision making.”

Datacentrix' Group internet service provider and network specialist company, eNetworks, was awarded the tender based on its competitive pricing and Level One B-BBEE status.

“As mentioned, one of the key reasons for this particular tender was to bring down IT costs, and eNetworks demonstrated a true willingness to meet this requirement. The company's B-BBEE credentials have also had a positive impact on our procurement needs,” Jogee adds.

“When we responded to the tender bid, key focus points in our submission were to design a highly resilient network by applying best practice principles in the architectural layout of the wide area network,” says eNetworks' senior consultant: WAN and ISP services, Frederik van Staden. “We also needed to remain cognisant of cost savings – without compromising on deploying a quality national network for our client.”

The network design put forward by eNetworks included microwave and fibre connectivity to each site across the national WAN, which is now running at a 99,99 percent uptime, states Ahmed Dawjee, IT infrastructure manager at the business.

“Our needs for different technologies, an improved, more stable infrastructure and greater redundancy – with management via a single point of contact – have all been met by eNetworks. In fact, we have not experienced any downtime since the WAN rollout in March 2018.

“Most importantly, we've not only managed to better utilise bandwidth, but have also saved close to R1 million on links and hosting over the past year.”

The automotive firm's widespread national sales, service and parts dealer network includes several retail workshops, situated in Centurion, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, George and Pietermaritzburg, as well as a network of private capital dealers (PCDs) across the country.

According to Dawjee, the business has moved its head office and six company 'owned' sites across South Africa onto the eNetworks WAN. "The impact on our ERP uptime has been extremely positive – previously, should the lines have gone down, we found ourselves unsure as to where to start.

"With this new, highly resilient WAN, we felt confident enough to move our data centre to our head office, and operate all IT systems from there. We are currently in the process of moving our disaster recovery system too."

"Had we not moved the network and cancelled the existing lines, we would never have realised these cost savings," confirms Jogee.

"Feedback from users has been excellent; our connectivity is much faster, and access to the ERP system has been greatly improved. Essentially, the user experience has changed dramatically. Our helpdesk experience with Datacentrix and eNetworks has been exceptional, and the networking team has forged a real partnership with us, always being very proactive and in constant communication," he continues.

"Furthermore, the scope of work being executed by Datacentrix over the past year has changed, increasing to include cloud-based e-mail management, network cabling and more, due to the excellent service levels received."

The automotive company is currently planning to deploy Software-Defined Wide Area Networking (SD-WAN) technology as a service with eNetworks, for additional optimisation and capacity wins, says Van Staden.

"SD-WAN is a logical next-step for our client's new business requirements. The introduction of this type of solution will allow the company to optimise



**Moosa Jogee, Head of IT at the company and Frederik van Staden, eNetworks Senior Consultant: WAN and ISP Services**

its dual-connectivity by utilising its primary and secondary links at the same time. This fits in well with the organisation's plans to introduce, amongst other services, video over the network lines, with Skype for Business, and also for improved network utilisation," he adds.



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