

NBC experiences 120 percent ROI within four months, following rollout of highly available SD-WAN with eNetworks

NBC Holdings, the first black-owned and managed employee benefits company in South Africa, has seen a 60 percent saving on connectivity costs – with double the amount of connectivity links – since moving and upgrading its national wide area network (WAN) with Datacentrix company, eNetworks, the Group's internet service provider and network specialist business.

The new software-defined networking (SD-WAN) project has also resulted in a 120 percent return on investment for NBC, within just 16 weeks. Its scope incorporated the installation of a new nation-wide, highly redundant WAN, including SD-WAN devices, microwave and fibre connectivity links, a local area network (LAN), access layer switches, security and more.

Tyrone Lutchmanen, NBC's divisional head of ICT infrastructure, explains that he joined NBC at a time when the company was about to relocate its head office from Braamfontein to Parktown and needed to facilitate the move of its data centre within a short space of time. "We had a two-month period within which to move the NBC data centre from Braamfontein to the new building in Parktown while, at the same time, replacing ageing infrastructure. This meant that taking a 'big bang' approach was the only way to meet these deadlines.

"Having worked with Datacentrix previously over several years and experienced the company's proven track record first-hand, it was a natural step to bring the Group's ISP eNetworks team on board at NBC to assist us in rolling out the wide area network."



Frederik van Staden, eNetworks' Senior Consultant: WAN and ISP Services; Tyrone Lutchmanen, Divisional Head: ICT Infrastructure at NBC and Sanjay Rabeenunun, Senior Account Manager at Datacentrix



Despite the tight timeframes, eNetworks worked closely with NBC to ensure that the new highly available, redundant, enterprise-grade connectivity was implemented on schedule, and with no unexpected downtime.

“The Datacentrix eNetworks team has been brilliant,” says Lutchmanen. “Our experience with them has been consistently great; they are quick to respond, and promised services are always delivered.”

“Since the rollout earlier this year, we’ve already seen huge benefits. As a financial services company, NBC cannot compromise on uptime, and since the implementation of this highly available, fully redundant solution, we have not experienced any downtime since the move.”

“Our bandwidth gains for both head office and our 10 other sites nationwide have led to a network performance improvement of around 300 percent, while also future-proofing the business,” he adds. “In addition, the bandwidth increase has allowed NBC to centralise its data, helping to lower business risk, simplify maintenance, and bring down the total cost of ownership.”

A number of business units across Datacentrix worked together to ensure that NBC’s strict time frames were adhered to, aligning all elements of this project, says eNetworks’ senior consultant: WAN and ISP services, Frederik van Staden. “Together as a unified team, we were able to move NBC forward from a legacy wide area network to one that is fully redundant. While

previously the organisation’s biggest link was 6mbps, the entire business now runs on a total WAN capacity of 860mbps – and still at a 60 percent cost saving.”

Looking ahead, aside from its operations within all major centres in South Africa, NBC is swiftly expanding its African footprint. The organisation currently has an additional 10 sites outside South African borders, including Ghana, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Mozambique, and is looking at further growth within the continent, according to Lutchmanen.

“Unfortunately connectivity up into Africa is challenging, and addressing this point is key as the next step in our roadmap,” he states. “As a trusted supplier with an existing offering within Africa, NBC will look to eNetworks as a strategic partner beyond South Africa.”



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