

# TechSmart **Business**

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May / June 2014



## **Hitachi Data Systems**

Next-gen storage solutions are here

**IT Outsourcing:  
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## Buy, buy, buy!

If all goes ahead as planned, it seems like the local telecommunications market is set for a bit of a shake-up. Vodacom wants to buy Neotel for an estimated R7 billion, for which it would get its hands on some delectable fibre networks. On the other side, Telkom is trying for a second time to lay claim to Business Connexion, putting in a bid of R6.60 per share (R2.67 billion) in order to own some of the best ICT skills and services in the country. At the time of going to print, neither deal has gone through, and both will most probably swing by the Competition Commission.

Locally though we are playing for chump change, if you were to look at Apple's decision to dance to the beat of Dr Dre's Beats Electronics, set to drop for \$3 billion. For Apple this is hardly a dent though, since the company is sitting on a cash reserve placed at a gulp-inducing \$159 billion.

All these attempted purchases made me think about the following scenario happening in the near-future. Apple lawyers and executives, fresh from their recent acquisitions of content behemoth Facebook and the world's number one car manufacturer Tesla, stare unflinching into the eyes of Google's stern-faced lawyers and executives. Google recently made the long expected purchase of Microsoft, having the previous year swallowed up Amazon, which valiantly held out as long as it could. Here around this table, ladies and gentleman, are the rulers of men, the two biggest, and only, companies left in the world. They are struggling with the final question: What can we buy next?

Enjoy the issue,

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# HITACHI

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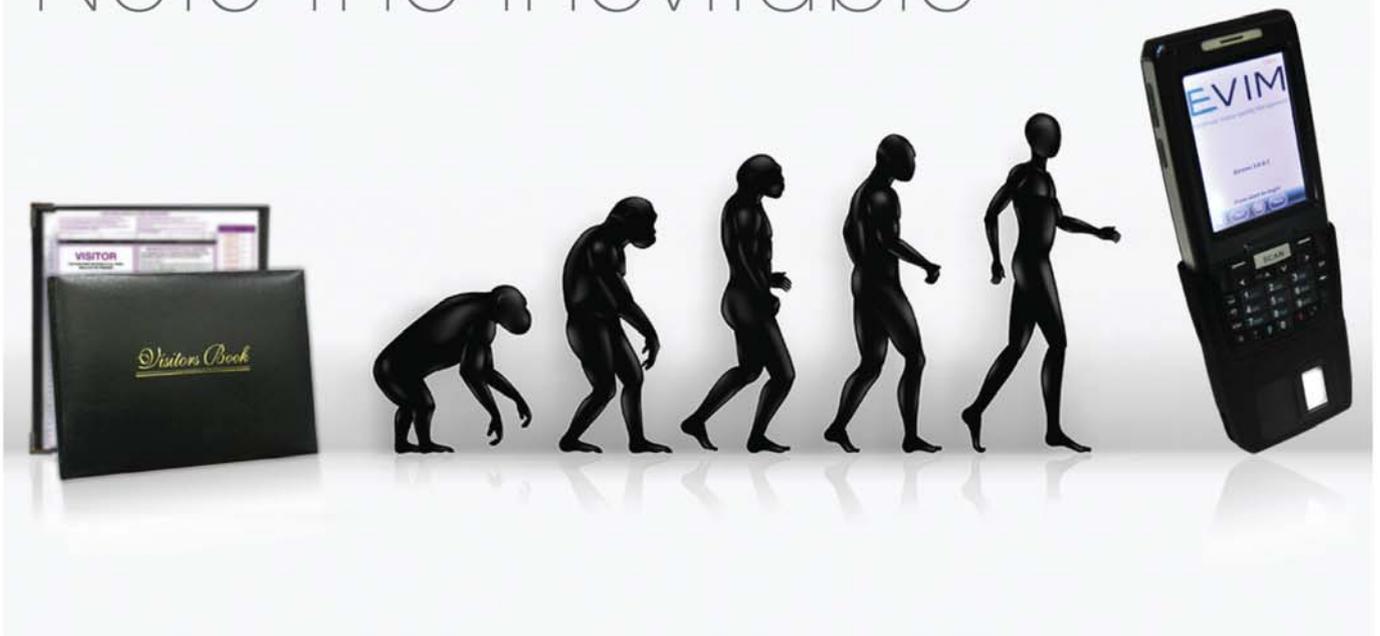
SMEs look to the cloud for flexibility and cost-saving



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Citrix Synergy touts new era for enterprise workspace

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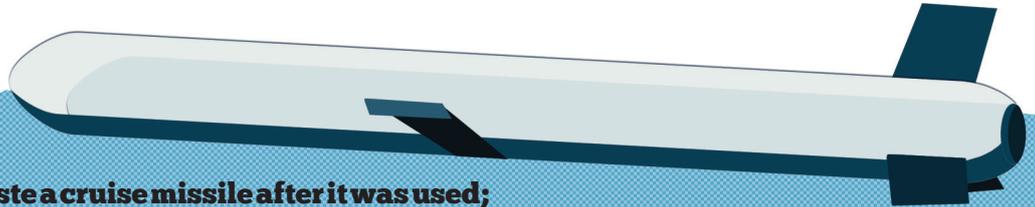
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# SAY WHAT?



**“It's not possible to copy-paste a cruise missile after it was used;** even if you have the cruise missile in your hands, not every nation could reverse engineer it and produce the same. But software is software.”  
*Kaspersky Lab founder, Eugene Kaspersky, on Stuxnet and other cyber weapons that can be easily transformed by terrorists and turned against governments.*  
[bit.ly/1szrgkh](http://bit.ly/1szrgkh)

**“A simple way of understanding what happened here is that you have a collision between A RIGHT TO BE FORGOTTEN and a right to know.**

From Google's perspective that's a balance. Google believes, having looked at the decision which is binding, that the balance that was struck was wrong.”

*Google's executive chairman, Eric Schmidt, on a European court of justice ruling in favour of the “right to be forgotten”.*

[bit.ly/1n0uuQQ](http://bit.ly/1n0uuQQ)



**“Governance, management and operations of security functions will need to change to accommodate expanded responsibilities,**

similar to the ways that bring your own device, mobile and cloud computing delivery have required changes — but on a much larger scale and in greater breadth.”

*Earl Perkins, research vice president at Gartner, on the security changes needed for objects in the Internet of Things that have the ability to change the state of their environments.*

[gtnr.it/RYmIhT](http://gtnr.it/RYmIhT)



100 BILLION DOLLARS

**“ We are transforming this company for the next decade.**

That is not a one-year job, not when you are a hundred billion-dollar company.”

*Virginia Rometty, chief executive of IBM, on the future of the company.*

[nyti.ms/1szrl0f](http://nyti.ms/1szrl0f)

**“The PC is very much alive - it just looks different.”**

*Graham Braum, general manager at Lenovo Africa, noting how PC form factors are changing.*

[bit.ly/1ows7EU](http://bit.ly/1ows7EU)



## 185 Terabytes:

Record storage capacity on a new cassette tape (yes, you read right) created by Sony. The same amount as 11 840 16 GB Samsung Galaxy S5s.

**“I actually have two computers. I have the computer that I browse the internet with, that I get my email on and I do my taxes on. Then I have my writing computer, which is a DOS machine not connected to the internet. Remember DOS? I use WordStar 4.0 as my word-processing system.”**

*Game of Thrones author George RR Martin, saying that he does not like a modern PC that corrects his spelling or that can get infected.*  
[bbc.in/1mzj1or](http://bbc.in/1mzj1or)



## INFECTION DID YOU KNOW?



Every 1 min a host accesses a malicious website



Every 9 mins a High Risk application is being used



Every 27 mins unknown malware is downloaded



Every 49 mins sensitive data is sent outside the organisation



Every 24 h a host is infected with a bot

Source: Check Point 2014 Security Report



# Vodacom set to purchase Neotel for R7 Billion



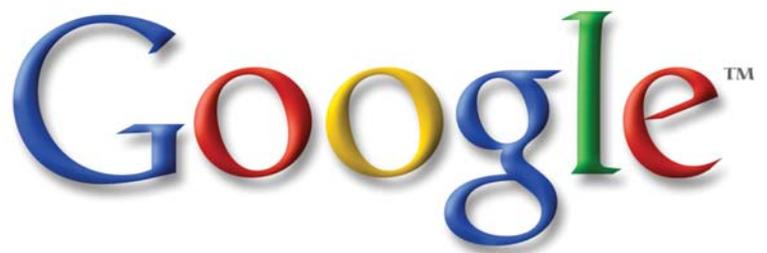
Local mobile service provider Vodacom has announced a proposed deal to purchase telecoms company Neotel for an estimated R7 billion. This deal carries the further stipulation that Vodacom will not be taking on any of Neotel's debt, which is said to be more than R4 billion, according to its largest stakeholder Tata Communications.

The finer details regarding the structure of this deal, as well as its commercial implications, are still subject to regulatory and competition authorities approval. Once this aspect is finalised, both parties are set to complete the acquisition. Shameel Joosub, Vodacom CEO, says: "Through the combination of these two businesses, the provision of a wider range of business services and much needed consumer services like fibre-to-the-business and fibre-to-the-home becomes a concrete reality – it will be good for the consumer, good for business and good for the country."

European Union courts have ruled in favour of the "right to be forgotten", and ordered Google to delete irrelevant information on any individual, when a member of the public requests so. This ruling came about after a Spaniard, Mario Costeja González' failed attempts to have an auction notice on a since repossessed house from 1998 removed in search results.

Google deemed itself void of any responsibility in this matter, and stated that it is not held accountable for controlling personal data and acting as a censor. The EU region courts however had a different interpretation and established that a search engine must be regarded as a data controller under the Data Protection Act. This case is one of a further 200 more that Google must deal with, as the IT company is now forced to adhere to any requests made by the public.

## European courts back "right to be forgotten"



## Apple to purchase Beats for \$3.2 Billion



Apple has confirmed its intent to purchase Beats Electronics, stating that it is currently in the works to purchase the headphone and speaker manufacturer for an estimated \$3.2 billion. Upon completion, this deal will be the biggest acquisition in Apple's history.

Beats by Dre, co-founded by Dr. Dre and Jimmy Iovine, first entered the market in 2008 with a range of high-priced headphones and since then has commanded an impressive 59% market share in the US. Apart from earphone, headphone and speaker offerings, there is the addition of Beats Music, an on-demand all-access music application which launched in January of this year.

## HP stakes \$1 Billion in Open Cloud solution

Hewlett-Packard has major plans for open cloud solutions over the next two years, as the American IT company injected an estimated \$1 billion in its own open source alternative to Google and Amazon. This new project is named HP Helion and built around the open source cloud computing software known as OpenStack. HP is set to offer its own free version of this open cloud software, as well as all of its existing cloud services including workload management and software development.

This move is prompted by a desire to offer users a means of creating their own private cloud systems under the HP Helion solution and ultimately challenge the systems of Google Engine Compute and Amazon Web Services.



## Symantec declare antivirus software dead



**Symantec™**

Antivirus software manufacturer Symantec is adopting a new tactic, revealing that conventional methods of protection against threats are ultimately doomed to failure. Symantec senior vice president, Brian Dye believes "antivirus software is dead", since it's not as effective at keeping would-be hackers from infiltrating computers as one might think.

This has prompted a shift in focus throughout the company, and Dye wants the rest of the antivirus software industry to follow suit. The company is now developing software to look for highly advanced malicious threats that may have bypassed one's initial lines of defence, by identifying suspicious looking code embedded within your computer system. This is not to say that Symantec will halt production of its Norton program, which accounts for 40% of the company's total revenue; this new direction is instead aimed to offer clients an enhanced layer of protection.

## Samsung stops notebooks in SA

Samsung South Africa has announced that it will no longer be supplying notebooks in the region. The Korean company is now focusing its efforts towards solutions that are aligned with the evolution of the technology market and the changing end-user demands, which it believes lies in mobile-based solutions, services and products. Samsung notebook product warranties and service support will remain available throughout Samsung Smart Care Centres, nationwide.

There has been a marked shift in local consumer trends, with International Data Corporation (IDC) revealing that the PC market in South Africa declined by 18.8% in the final quarter of 2013, while shipments of tablets increased 107.1% year-on-year during the same period.



# Telkom makes second attempt at buying Business Connexion

Living by the maxim if at first you don't succeed, try again, Telkom has made a second attempt – eight years after its former attempt was quashed – to buy Business Connexion (BCX) for R6.60 a share. This places BCX in the enviable position of having a meaty R2.67 billion valuation. Furthermore, Telkom's offer is apparently part and parcel of the telecom's desire to make further inroads into offering information and communication services above and beyond its bread-and-butter business relating to fixed and mobile lines.



While BCX's shares jumped 7.5% on the news, to R6.41, it seems as though there is a fair amount of skepticism at the time of this writing about the deal actually going through. After all, the previous offer was muted by the Competition Commission, which haunts the deal and could well put a damper on Telkom's prospects.

# Google, Facebook and Twitter request net neutrality from FCC

Google, Facebook and Twitter, along with more than 100 other IT companies, have banded together to demand true net neutrality from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This move comes as a proposed plan to allow large corporations to transmit their content at a higher speed than smaller ones is currently in the works, which would essentially create a "two-tier internet". The result could mean that smaller entities as well as common internet users will have a diminished ability to communicate with desired recipients.



The letter itself, urged the FCC to delay the planned vote, stating that the FCC rules should not permit "individualised bargaining and discrimination" as the internet must remain "an open platform for speech and commerce". At this stage, the proposed plan for talks on this issue is still ongoing, as it polarises much of the online community.

# FBI springs a RAT trap, arrests 100 hackers



Some 100 hackers found themselves on the losing end of the cybercrime wars recently, when the FBI successfully launched a global crackdown on suspects responsible for distributing the Blackshades malware. Blackshades, which is a remote administration tool (RAT), apparently allowed hackers to gain control of users' Facebook accounts.

Furthermore, the backdoor malware enabled hackers to steal sensitive information, seize control of a users' computer, and even turn on their webcam without their knowledge. Additionally, the software apparently was responsible for a cybercriminal favourite – launching Denial of Service attacks as well. Interestingly, the majority of the raids were conducted in first world countries such as North America and Britain, as well as across Europe, Australia and Asia.



# Dimension Data acquires Nexus to expand US operations

Dimension Data announced that it has acquired 100% of Nexus, a US-based privately owned IT solutions provider, for an undisclosed sum. The acquisition of Nexus expands Dimension Data's operations in the US by 40%, and significantly increases the company's presence in the west, southwest and southeast regions of the country.

Nexus was founded in 2004, with headquarters located in Valencia, California, offering specially tailored services for enterprises, mid-sized business and public sector clients, with industry specialisations in education, retail, hospitality and healthcare. **TSB**

## Jose Dos Santos named Cell C CEO

Cell C has announced the appointment of its new chief executive officer, Jose Dos Santos, (pictured) who was appointed to the position following a five month long stay as the acting CEO in the absence of Alan Knott-Craig. Jose has more than twenty years of corporate and industry experience, as well as being quite familiar with the Cell C environment, having previously performed as its chief commercial officer.

Knott-Craig, who suffered a stroke in November 2013, has made a full recovery, returning to the company in an executive board member capacity. In his new role, Knott-Craig will consult and advise on matters not only relating to Cell C but also concerning the Oger Telecom Group at large.



## Canalys report shows 5" plus smartphones on the rise



In a recent report from research firm Canalys, the amount of smartphones shipped with a 5" or larger display grew by a staggering 369% during the first quarter of 2014. 5" or larger devices accounted for a third (34%) of all smartphones shipped during this period. This segment of the market is currently led by Samsung, which commands 44% of the market share with units like the Galaxy Note 3. Conspicuously absent is Apple, which has led Canalys to believe that this is an area of the market that Apple will soon be looking to target.

## Capital investment in network performance gives better returns

A new study commissioned by Ericsson shows that increased level of investments in network quality and performance create sustainable competitive advantages and improved financial returns for network operators. The study explored the relationship between capital investments in mobile telecom networks and the technical, commercial and financial performance of operators.

It found that a 10% increase in capital expenditure for a Brazilian operator resulted in increased market share, a significant boost to average revenue per unit, and reduced churn. Given this enhanced commercial performance, the operator should experience a 5.5% increase in service revenues, a 6.4 percentage point improvement in EBITDA margin, and a 6.7% increase in free cash flow from operations. These benefits are largely created before the competition has time to respond.



## ARM Holdings predicts R200 entry-level smartphones by year's end



UK-based semiconductor manufacturer, ARM Holdings, is predicting an even further decrease in entry-level smartphones prices, dropping to an estimated \$20 (R206) by the end of the year. ARM went on to say that it expects more than a billion sub-\$150 (R1 550) smartphones to be produced by 2018, which more than doubles the current figure for similarly specced devices. If this prediction comes to fruition, it's good news for consumers as it will lead to a range of smartphones being developed to target more specific price points, without losing any integral elements to the overall experience.

## Unesco report reveals growth for mobile reading in developing world

A new report from Unesco has revealed a growing trend in developing countries as more adults and children are turning to their phones as a reading tool. The year long study sourced information from more than 5000 people in countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan and Nigeria. The study found that 62% of individuals surveyed use their phone as a means to read books and stories, with one in three people stating that they read to their children as well. It also appears as this trend will continue to grow as 90% of people who were surveyed, said they would be reading more content via their phones in the future.



## iPhone 6 to debut a month earlier



According to reports, the iPhone 6 from Apple will be unveiled and available in stores by August - a full month earlier than initial expectations. This news was confirmed by Reuters, citing a handful of undisclosed insiders from the Asian manufacturing industry.

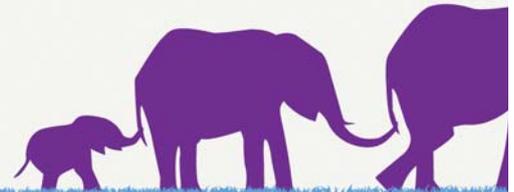
Apart from the revised release date, the same sources have also stated that consumers can look to two differently sized iPhone 6 models. The first will measure a reported 4.7 inches (diagonally), putting it par with the iPhone 5 model. The second model, which is arguably the more intriguing, is rumoured to measure in at 5.5" to 5.6", as Apple aims to regain some ground against larger display touting smartphones such as the Galaxy S5, Sony Xperia Z2 and Nokia Lumia 1520, all of which feature 5" and greater displays.

## Samsung to pay \$120 Million to Apple for patent infringement

An American jury has ordered Samsung to pay Apple the amount of \$119.6 million based on smartphone patent infringements made by the South Korean company. This case began in 2012, and centres around five Apple patents which were violated in the design of Samsung's Galaxy S3 device. The most notable of these is the slide to unlock feature and search functionality. This amount falls well short of the damages that Apple had originally claimed for, said to be close to \$2 billion. **TSB**



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# Hitachi Data Systems: Finding Storage Solutions

Many companies are finding themselves swamped in a quagmire of data, wondering how to manage this effectively. Hitachi Data Systems recently launched its Continues Cloud Infrastructure (see p14), which address a number of key issues surrounding storage. TechSmart Business sat down with Shaun Barendsen, the country manager for Hitachi Data Systems South Africa, to talk about the new system and the company's storage solutions.



Shaun Barendsen,  
Country Manager,  
Hitachi Data Systems,  
South Africa

**T**echSmart Business (TSB): It seems like companies are starting to see IT infrastructure not so much as a necessary back-end, but more and more as an important driver of business. This is echoed by Hitachi Data Systems's talk of Business Defined IT. Can you expand on this concept?

Shaun Barendsen (SB): Companies these days expect the infrastructure 'plumbing' to be in place in order to meet managerial and business requirements. That's the base on which all else can be built. What we are seeing now, with this interconnected world of ours, is that businesses have the ability to store, protect and, more importantly, mine data from a variety of different sources. Businesses now need to look at how they take these sources of information and turn them into insight in order to give the company a competitive advantage. But even this advantage can erode rapidly if they can't adapt quickly enough. This is why businesses are far more involved in IT discussions and solutions, which they need to make them more competitive. For CIOs this means finding the link between what technology can do, and what the business needs going forward.

**TSB: Are there any specific requirements you are hearing from your South African clients? How does this differ from, say, the States?**

SB: Much like America, South African companies are feeling the pressure of having to deal with large amounts of complex data. The challenge is finding the edge or differentiation in the market you are dealing with. While in the past connectivity was an issue, it's becoming less so depending on where you are situated. On a metro-distance we're seeing more and more businesses with fibre connectivity; prices are coming down and it's becoming easier to implement. But

**"Businesses now need to look at how they take these sources of information and turn them into insight in order to give them a competitive advantage."**

**"Migration of storage can sometimes take up to a month, we can now cut that down to basically nothing."**

connectivity does remain an issue especially in a high volume, high transaction environments – we need thick pipes to make sure we can create an active-active environment.

**TSB: Many companies are sweating their assets, seeing how long they can last and holding on to their money. Is this where the Hitachi Storage Virtualisation Operating System can play a role?**

SB: Absolutely. The benefits of storage virtualisation is much the same as that which server virtualisation brought to market. What Hitachi provides is the ability to cluster enterprise storage systems across different locations, allowing one to move workloads transparently across different enterprise storage systems. The virtualisation technology allows us to connect different types of storage from whatever manufacturer. With this we can extend the life of assets, since, for example, certain types of storage can be classed as aging technology and put to use in some lower-tier of storage pool.

Going forward we expect the life of this storage system to far exceed previous versions, purely because we can upgrade separate components into the Virtual Storage Platform G1000 depending on what the performance requirements are from the different business applications.

**TSB: Obviously more expensive flash storage has a place here too?**

SB: We are finding that in companies, typically 20% of the data is accessed 80% of the time. That is the data that you want in the fast access tier of storage, such as Solid State Drives, while the rest could sit on a lower, more cost effective tier.

The important thing is that this process needs to be automated. We can't have storage administrators using their time to analyse access patterns in order to move data around, we need the system to do it automatically and transparently too. This is done by Hitachi Dynamic Tiering which is part of the Storage Virtualisation operating system.



**TSB: The Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform is highly rated by Gartner, noting that it's one of two systems with the highest rating for every use case analysed. What does the new Virtual Storage Platform G1000 bring to the table?**

SB: To me, the most important benefit is being able to provide the active-active clustering, and the additional features to allow the customers to be more agile in the services they provide. Migration of storage can sometimes take up to a month, we can now cut that down to basically nothing. Finding downtime in an organisation to migrate storage is becoming really difficult, seeing that for most their IT is business critical and can't be taken out of service. With the active-active clustering on the VSPG1000 we don't need that downtime anymore because we'll always have the storage available in two places. Plus there's workload balancing involved since the system will automatically move workload from one to the other. This allows us to take one system out at a time without affecting the availability of the services.

**TSB: Ultimately, it's the analysis of data that is important here, correct?**

SB: Managing change is a challenge for many of our clients. It is here where the analytics of the data available to them is going to be critically important. In order for our clients to adapt to their changing market environments, they need to derive value from the data that they are storing, and turn it into insight, opportunity, and a real competitive edge. This holds true for all industries – telcos, finance, health care. Data is the currency that is going to make the difference. **TSB**

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## New Hitachi Data Systems Continues Cloud Infrastructure:

# A business defined approach for IT infrastructure

With Hitachi's new technology, customers gain the most available, automated and agile IT infrastructure for today's dynamic business needs. This is what Continuous Cloud Infrastructure offers businesses.

**H**itachi Data Systems Corporation has introduced new technology to accelerate customer success with Business Defined IT – a closer linking of a company's business and technology objectives that demands a more responsive IT foundation. Dubbed "Continuous Cloud Infrastructure", this foundation can drive IT efficiency through a responsive, software-rich architecture that can quickly react to changing needs without continual redesign and disruption.

With this goal in mind, Hitachi delivers the Hitachi Storage Virtualisation Operating System (SVOS); Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G1000; a new version of the Hitachi Command Suite management platform; and significant enhancements to its Hitachi Unified Compute Platform converged computing offerings. Together, these technologies provide the foundation of an IT infrastructure that can adapt to continuously changing business needs, without disruption.

"IT teams are looking to new infrastructure strategies to deploy more continuous, adaptable and scalable infrastructure. Businesses need solutions that don't require constant and disruptive changes to the technology they support. And that is what we are delivering today," said Wayne Dick, business development manager, Hitachi Data Systems for Sub-Saharan Africa.

### Deep Ecosystem Integration and Solution Readiness

Hitachi Data Systems' new class-leading technologies come to market with integration across virtualisation platforms, databases and a variety of clustering and operating systems platforms, and can be quickly adopted to support a variety of workloads.

In particular, deep work with strategic partners such as Microsoft, SAP and VMware ensures that SVOS and the VSP G1000 are certified in key initiatives like Microsoft Private Cloud deployments, the SAP HANA tailored data center integration and extended integration within VMware ecosystems.



### Hitachi Storage Virtualisation Operating System: Software-Defined Without Compromise

Hitachi Storage Virtualisation Operating System (SVOS) is the first stand-alone software implementation of best-in-class Hitachi storage virtualisation. This new storage operating system provides a common software architecture that will double the useful life of hardware architectures, span the breadth of the HDS infrastructure portfolio and enhance and amplify the benefits of server virtualisation.

As an evolution of the successful Hitachi enterprise storage operating systems, SVOS delivers the flexibility of software-defined architectures with the proven capabilities of Hitachi enterprise storage software. Primary features include flash optimisation, advanced storage virtualisation, automated tiering, non-disruptive data migration and a new native global active device feature that will provide multi-system and multi-datacentre active-active capabilities without the need for an appliance – an industry first.

### Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G1000: The Best Gets Better

The best software is best experienced on the best hardware, so Hitachi is also introducing the Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G1000, the first available system on which customers can natively deploy SVOS. Continuing Hitachi's leadership in high-performance, trusted infrastructure, the system can start small and scale block-storage throughput performance of well over 3M IOPS, over 48 GB/sec of usable bandwidth and NFS ops/sec performance of over 1.2M in unified configurations.

**Together, these technologies provide the foundation of an IT infrastructure that can adapt to continuously changing business needs, without disruption.**

This flexibility, along with planned data-in-place upgrades, mean customers can plan for a significantly longer useful life of this technology because of its ready adaptation to changing business needs, without the pain and expense of constant technology replacements.

For more information visit [www.hitachi.co.za](http://www.hitachi.co.za). **TSB**

## Vendors placed to bridge the IT-business gap

Stuart Cheverton from Hitachi Data Systems South Africa comments on the changing role of IT vendors.



Stuart Cheverton,  
Business Development Consultant,  
File and Content Solutions,  
Hitachi Data Systems South Africa

**I**T vendors are well placed to play a role in bridging the gap between business and IT, says Stuart Cheverton, business development consultant – File and Content Solutions, Hitachi Data Systems South Africa. “Never before has IT played such a crucial role in enterprise success,” says Cheverton, “yet, in many cases, the communication gap between IT and businesses is as large as ever.”

Cheverton, who returned to South Africa from the UK last year, sees a common need in South Africa, and globally, for businesses and IT to work more closely together. “There has been a lot of hype around emerging technologies that can drive better business results, such as advanced analytics, mobility and commercial-style applications. So businesses may turn to IT to deliver on the promises in the market.

“On the other hand, you may also find that IT departments are keen to embrace technologies they believe will improve their operations, but they are unable to present a strong business case for doing so,” he says.

There are several differences between the UK and South African approaches to IT innovation, notes Cheverton. “In the UK, you tend to find pockets of leadership and the rest will follow. In South Africa, IT tends to be more agile and less influenced by what others are doing. But you will find that, globally, the younger, less senior IT staff will lean towards the latest solutions, while the more senior staff consider IT from a commercial perspective.”

Cheverton notes: “The role of the CIO needs to become a more strategic one, but many still find themselves unable to articulate the business value that IT investments can deliver. This is where the vendor comes in. As a service provider, we find ourselves stepping in to bridge the gap between IT and business. We work with IT to quantify the monetary return on investment possible from IT investments.” This, he says, is of significant importance and value to both IT and businesses.

Until CIOs are fully absorbed into the strategic business mainstream, IT vendors are best placed to serve as the bridge between IT and business, due to their extensive research of the information solutions space and their ability to demonstrate actual returns on investment. **TSB**

# Microsoft focuses on enhanced mobility for local enterprises



Clifford de Wit,  
Developer Experience Director,  
Microsoft SA

**We recently sat down with Clifford de Wit, developer experience director at Microsoft South Africa, who provided insight on the company's approach to enterprise mobility and renewed efforts in the cloud services space. All of this is great news for local developers.**

**T**he current state of mobility is changing as the rise of effective cloud service solutions has placed a greater importance on accessibility to information on a consumer and corporate level. According to Clifford de Wit, developer experience director at Microsoft South Africa, this is achieved by providing skills and experience

to South African startups and developers through government incentivised initiatives as well as partnering them with trusted service providers to ensure Microsoft's local commitment.

## Development is key focus

For Microsoft, the first step in ensuring sustained growth within the South African ICT sector, is the maintenance of the local developer ecosystem from end-to-end. That's where De Wit and his Developer Experience (DX) team come in to play, as they are charged with taking local developers and startups through the entire lifecycle they would normally encounter, and provide them with the access to Microsoft specific tools and resources.

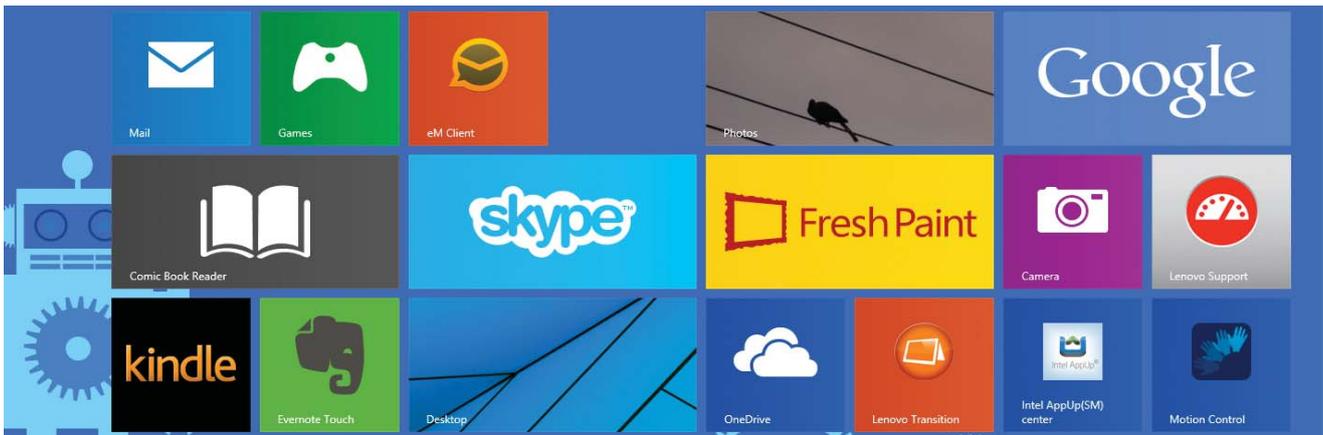
This mentoring process has two benefits, with fledgling developers gaining vital experience as far as their business acumen, technical skills and competency goes, while also helping Microsoft in fostering relationships and interconnected networks within the South African IT space. A good example of this is Microsoft's partnership with the Development Bank of South Africa and National Treasury, to provide the necessary capital (roughly R1 million) in order to effectively pair upcoming startups with the necessary incubators to help grow their business or concept.

## Cloud services for everyone, on every device

Another integral aspect in developing the local ICT sector is increasing user adoption; on this front the Microsoft DX team is actively targeting three key services - Windows Phone, Windows 8 and Azure cloud services. These areas are intrinsically linked to enterprise mobility and form part of Microsoft's "Cloud services for everyone, on every device" vision.

This approach to increasing both enterprise mobility, as well as Microsoft's status as a mobility service provider, is being targeted in two specific ways. The first is through consumer cloud services, which is already an area that Microsoft is well versed in, thanks to its OneDrive cloud application. **TSB**

**These areas are intrinsically linked to enterprise mobility and forms part of Microsoft's "Cloud services for everyone, on every device" vision.**



Based on recent acquisitions and the change in the mobility space as a whole, the next 18 months will prove to be vitally important for Microsoft.

In order to ensure the best possible level of mobility, these cloud services and solutions must be accessible across a range of form factors. Microsoft's Office 365 is another such application which is available across a variety of devices.

The second aspect, which presents a bigger challenge, is enabling developers to build their own solutions for the Microsoft cloud service range. In order to meet this objective, De Wit advocates a simple approach: make sure solutions work on every platform and that they offer value for users. He stressed that this concept may sound simple, but requires a greater deal of tact, as it is vitally important to give developers the capacity to create their own cloud services, "not only in a Microsoft specific way, but in a platform agnostic way."

De Wit notes that this is where Azure comes to the fore, as it affords developers the ability to bring their own language to the platform. Developers are then left to focus fully on creating "the business logic" of their solution, with ancillary concerns, like data storage, servers and latency issues, put in the hands of Microsoft.

### Local Commitment

Microsoft prides itself on being an IT company with a large presence in South Africa, as a result of maintaining close contact with its clients on an ongoing basis. This continuous dialogue from an enterprise standpoint means "you don't get a different experience here, than you would in Europe and the US", according to De Wit. He went on to say that Microsoft is not simply a business that sells software, but prides itself in ensuring that they invest in the local software economy. An illustration of this, is the Start Up, Small Business and Medium Business portal designed for the 4afrika investment programme, providing IT solutions and services to small and medium businesses within the African market.

However, one aspect where Microsoft is perceived to be lacking, is the absence of a dedicated data centre in the country. But De Wit is of the opinion that this will soon become a moot point, as Microsoft mitigates this issue through partnering with local data centre service providers like Global Micro Solutions.

Any growing concerns from Microsoft's end regarding a data centre presence in the country has been largely negated by virtue of the increased levels of connectedness taking place in the Southern African region, with certain Azure cloud service clients expressing that latency rates do not present a problem. De Wit noted that most of their customers who have moved to Azure hosting services, have said that their performance has in fact increased.

### Looking forward

Based on recent acquisitions and the change in the mobility space as a whole, the next 18 months will prove to be vitally important for Microsoft, and De Wit tends to agree, as he highlighted some key projects and initiatives piquing his interest. Firstly, on Microsoft's recent purchase of Nokia's mobile division, he was very excited to see what new devices will be released in the near future. More specifically the release of devices aimed at targeting certain price points, such as the Lumia 520 for entry-level smartphone users. Then, keeping with the focus of creating a greater level of mobility, Microsoft is making strides in designing applications catered specifically to the South African users experience, such as the voter app developed in conjunction with the IEC.

Lastly, De Wit mentioned Microsoft's efforts with developers to yield two things in particular. One being the capacity to target multiple platforms through applications such as Cordova and Xamarin, which allow users to design a single 'source code' and port it across all operating systems. The other is a renewed focus on the convergence of the client front end experience to ensure that all services and solutions work well on various form factors.

We walked away from our discussion with De Wit feeling assured that Microsoft is certainly keeping its attention firmly fixed on the local ICT market and ensuring the best measures are in place to develop it further at a grass roots level. [RC] **TSB**



# Apps for business: Getting on track

In the space of a few short years apps have gone from quirky, nice to have curiosities to essential business tools. There are, however, still growing pains being experienced around design and implementation and, as with all things, the process is still not perfect. Gavin Smith looks at how to approach the process.

**A**s many companies have experienced, when it comes to developing an app for business systems, there is no one size fits all solution, no magic bullet, and no shortcuts – it will take time, effort and commitment to stay the course. Adrian Frielinghaus, director at application development company Maxxor, says that with the incredible advances made in the mobile space, companies are presented with some tough challenges when it comes to development. “Getting in-house skills was, historically, a practical solution because you only

needed a single skill set. You could have one developer building a web application for you and that was all you needed. Today, however, you need to think across a variety of platforms – Android, iOS, Blackberry – which makes it far more difficult to maintain your own in-house team,” he says. There are, however, some

fundamental questions to answer. These include: What is the minimum cost of getting into the game? Which platform do you choose? How do you translate your service offering onto a mobile device? According to Frielinghaus, to keep costs down, starting slowly is the key and keeping things simple are a must. “The process that we have found which works best for our clients is scoping down the initial version onto a single platform and value proposition. Ultimately, you have to be on all the platforms, but you don’t want to start that way because fast tracking on a single platform is far easier than doing so simultaneously over four different ones. Coupled to that, the first version of the app will include some kind of database, web backend, etc., so once that is built it does not have to be redone once the migration cycle begins.”

## Create relationships

For small business, it is CEO at Realm Digital, Wesley Lynch’s opinion that outsourcing is key, especially if building a consumer application where the company doesn’t have control over the platform and wants broad access to markets. “You have to develop for so many platforms



Adrian Frielinghaus,  
Director, Maxxor

**“Today, however, you need to think across a variety of platforms, which makes it far more difficult to maintain your own in-house team.”**

nowadays that it is just not viable to have all the required disciplines in house. You cannot support an infrastructure where you have developers for all the different platforms and constantly have to upskill them and ensure they are all working toward a common goal. That said, when looking to outsource you have to look for a relationship that is more partner-centric rather than supplier-centric. This is a relationship that will go on for some time and the company needs to understand your needs and desired outcomes perfectly.”

One mistake is to base the purchase purely on price, since developing and maintaining an app is in essence a long term endeavour. It is not a simple box drop like traditional software and requires maintenance, upgrades and constant monitoring as technology changes and evolves, especially in the mobile space. “It is sometimes hard to get clients to understand the true cost of professional software development,” says Frielinghaus. “App development should, in fact, be seen as an Opex expense. The nature of the development cycle and long-term relationship one needs to build with the supplier means that it will not be a once-off Capex expenditure but an ongoing process.”

### Choosing the platform

When looking at where to start, platform wise, there are a number of factors to take into consideration. The choice is, however, not clear-cut and there are pros and cons to every platform. “This is a difficult question,” says Frielinghaus. “It depends largely on which market you are targeting. In South Africa there is not a massive difference between the Android and iPhone market. Android is bigger, of course, but iPhone penetration is significant. Taking this into consideration, if you are building an app that requires a lot of complicated hardware integration then often iPhone is a better place to start as it is a much cleaner eco-system. There is a limited range of devices available so it is easier to ensure your app works on all models and versions. Conversely, there are hundreds of Android devices, in various configurations, that take a lot of effort to cater to. That said, if the app is not



Wesley Lynch,  
CEO, Realm Digital

too complicated Android makes a lot of sense, as roll out, testing and versioning is quicker. You do not have to wait for the app store to vet and approve your app, you can create an app, put it on the store, and a few hours later people are downloading and using it. On the iStore you can wait a few weeks for approval every time you want launch a new version of your app.”

### Before starting

While app development is maturing as an industry, in relation to the IT environment it is still in its infancy, with lots of trial and error development going on. If companies can take some pearls of wisdom from the industry experts it would be to define what they want to achieve and consult the experts before getting the ball rolling. **TSB**

## Understanding the Platforms

According to Daniel Hall, country manager of platform development company Magic Software South Africa, there are three basic development methods to develop the mobile apps that enterprises are looking for:

**Native Development** (for native apps): Requires individual coding languages (such as Java, C++, etc) per operating system and platform (iOS, Android, BlackBerry, Windows, etc). This doesn't remove the necessity to develop the server-side of the app with server development technologies. This increases the overall cost and duration of the project and requires many different skilled resources.

**Web Development** (for web/hybrid/native apps): Requires HTML, JavaScript, and CSS technologies along with a variety of different tools to create native, web and hybrid clients. In addition, multiple developments on the server side are also needed to set up the required logic.

**Middleware development** (for hybrid and native apps): Uses end-to-end development platforms which cover client-side, server-side and the integration development. You would have only one development stream and the whole process is optimised for best quality, time-to-market and high flexibility.

# Making the Enterprise Mobile

Being mobile is no longer a luxury that only a few can afford to do. The competitive nature of the global economy means that executives need to be able to access corporate data wherever they are. But how have South African organisations embraced this new way of doing things? Or, perhaps more importantly, are they ready for this shift in focus? Iwan Pienaar investigates.

**A**ccording to a study done by American mobile solutions provider XCubeLabs, 67% of CIOs and other IT professionals surveyed believe mobility will impact their businesses as much as or more than the internet did in the 90s. Add to this the fact that Gartner notes that software as a service providers (think cloud computing) will represent more than 50% of profits in the customer relationship management (CRM) market by 2016. Going mobile therefore seems to be a no-brainer.

But why then is there still a sense of hesitancy from many South African decision-makers when it comes to adopting mobile strategies? Rick Parry, MD of technology distributor AIGS, says that there are conflicting ideas, ideals, and expectations around enterprise mobility. "Sitting in Johannesburg, we have world-class services considering what is available in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. There is no precedent for what we have here. And even though we are still a third world country, many of the technology and solutions around us are first world. But when it comes to mobile voice and data, the country remains hamstrung around the age-old issues of bandwidth and the high cost of accessing mobile data." Comparing us to Kenya, for example, Parry says that the people there cannot afford smartphones so apps are developed that work on feature phones. "The rest of Africa appears to be smarter than us as they are using cheaper devices that require less bandwidth. This is resulting in the development of more interesting apps for business and consumer use."

According to Kevin Jacobson, GM of enterprise marketing at MTN Business, more flexible mobile solutions at more affordable rates have to happen for companies to be competitive in the market. "It is not a case of being able to move large volumes of data but giving people the ability to unlock themselves from the office environment. With mobile technology and connectivity you can access all the systems and get the benefit you need irrespective of where you are."

## An app in your pocket

Daniel Hall, country manager of Magic Software South Africa, believes that the age of mobility is resulting in enterprise apps having a lot to take on. "This is especially the case since the consumerisation of IT has given employees the power to leverage their devices and apps of choice for work. Users are so used to playing and working with apps, that certain standards and perceptions have been formed. As a result, the moment the experience does not meet expectations, dissatisfaction sets in," he says. But for Parry it is more

**"It is not a case of being able to move large volumes of data but giving people the ability to unlock themselves from the office environment."**

than just about being mobile. "There are hundreds of thousands of apps available for download but how many deliver real business value? Certainly, what we have available today is quite staggering especially looking at how the younger generation have grown up with these devices. There are real business benefits associated to mobility. However, business applications need to access data and present that in a way that is accessible on a mobile device."



**The best mobile apps in the world will mean nothing if the network reliability does not exist.**

For Hall though, ensuring a quality user experience within enterprise apps should be the top priority. "If the app is too slow, struggles to load, uses too much data, does not allow for offline capability, has a different look and feel across all your other devices, and does not seamlessly connect and update your backend systems, it will not be used and may lead to increased BYOA (bring your own application)," he says. Fortunately, he says, there are mobile app platform providers that offer ease of development and important enterprise features that can help ensure that all the challenges above can be overcome.

According to Jacobson there is a big revolution happening around BYOD (bring your own device). "Companies are forced to deal with BYOD. People want to use the technology they are comfortable with whether it be an Android smartphone or an Apple iPad. Enterprise mobility management (EMM) will help companies deal with this shift to let them put policies in place to better manage this." He says that a good



**Daniel Hall,**  
Country Manager,  
Magic Software  
SA



**Kevin Jacobson**  
General Manager:  
Enterprise Marketing,  
MTN Business

example of using EMM would be to separate the business and personal segments on the device without compromising it.

#### Future vision

For some, it is not the large corporations that will be driving enterprise mobility over the next few months, but rather smaller and more agile organisations over the next few months. "It is all about time to market or rather time to money. The bigger the organisation, the more red tape to fight through. The smaller companies will see opportunities in mobility and develop apps for this environment especially given the fact that bandwidth is becoming more widely available and more cost-effective," says Parry. He cautions though that the best mobile apps in the world will mean nothing if the network reliability does not exist.

Parry believes that there are three things that need to come together for enterprise mobility adoption and value to be delivered. "Firstly, there is the modification or enhancement of back-end systems to make them more agile and capable of interacting with mobile devices. Secondly, there is the issue of bandwidth that needs to be addressed. And finally, the realisation of the first two points need to happen with clever people saying that they can design valuable business application for mobile device that understand the business requirements."

While this all might sound very straightforward, the next 12 to 18 months in South Africa will see if it will be realised. Jacobson adds that companies have to embrace mobility and adapt to the changing business requirements. "We have so many things integrating around the mobile ecosystem. The reality is that mobility has to happen. It is how the company manages, secures, and benefits from it that will make the differentiation." **TSB**



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# IT Outsourcing: A way to get the best

For small and mid-sized companies it is possible to gain access to world-class technology skills by outsourcing some, or all, of their IT requirements to specialist service providers. Lance Harris digs deeper.

**T**he pace of change in the IT industry is relentless and the complexity of keeping a technology infrastructure running smoothly and cost-effective is daunting. That's especially the case for small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs), who do not have the budget to buy high-end IT systems or run massive IT departments to keep their technology environments going.

For them, IT outsourcing (or managed services) is a potential means to access specialist IT skills, improve uptime and performance in their technology environments, and possibly introduce more predictability to their IT costs.

## What and why?

IT outsourcing can be loosely defined as a long term agreement that sees an IT service provider take responsibility for managing all or part of an organisation's information systems infrastructure and operations. You could outsource everything to a service provider, or just selected components of your IT, such as application development, data centre hosting and management, the network, or information security.

So why outsource IT? Julian Liebenberg, general manager at Business Connexion, says that managed service providers

offer defined sets of services to their clients, often at a flat, near-fixed, or usage-based fee. They monitor their clients' infrastructure and strive to resolve any issues that arise before they become major problems. "This provides peace of mind and predictable costs for the client," says Liebenberg. He notes that good service providers will adhere to best practices and standards for IT governance such as the IT Infrastructure Library. This will help ensure the alignment of IT services with the needs of the business.

## A fresh pair of eyes

Mid-sized businesses can benefit from setting firm service level agreements (SLAs) with service providers without the high fixed-costs of investing in their tools and IT staff, says Dawid Upton, services executive at Dimension Data. What's more, an outsourcing service provider will bring a fresh set of eyes to the customer's environment, potentially identifying new solutions to old problems. It could provide innovation

**Managed services are a potential means to access specialist IT skills, improve uptime and performance in their technology environments.**

to the business by constantly evaluating the costs and value of IT, says Upton. Another advantage of IT sourcing is that companies will make it the service provider's job to keep their skills and technology up-to-date with the latest developments in the market, Upton says.

Of course, the potential for cost-savings factor into the decision to outsource. Upton believes service provider may also be able to offer lower costs than in-house IT departments because they can share the costs of expensive skills and IT tools across a number of clients. "If you take the complete cost of the environment into account, you should be able to reduce the total cost of ownership significantly," says Upton. "This is achieved by moving from an environment where you did not have a view on achievement of SLAs to a better managed environment with measurement of all SLAs."

### ➤ **A poorly defined contract with the wrong service provider could result in higher costs and lower service levels.**

For mid-sized businesses, one of the biggest benefits of outsourcing IT is that it hands off the responsibility of recruiting, retaining and developing IT skills to a third-party service provider, says David Jones, executive for managed services at Intuate Group. This service provider will have a deeper pool of IT resources than most SMBs could attract because it will usually be able to offer better career paths for IT professionals with scarce and expensive IT skills in areas such as storage and information security.

#### **Managing the risks**

Outsourcing does have a number of potential risks and drawbacks that SMBs need to be aware of before they sign a contract. A poorly defined contract with the wrong service provider could result in higher costs and lower service levels, says Liebenberg. But these risks can be managed in the same way as any other business risk if the organisation is aware of them, he adds.



**Julian Liebenberg,**  
GM, Business Connexion

Upton says one potential issue that companies should be aware of when embarking on outsourcing is that they may no longer have the direct control of their IT environments that they had in the past. In addition, they might find that the contracts with their service providers are not flexible enough to adapt to changing business requirements. To mitigate against the risks of outsourcing, companies should carefully evaluate the skills of their potential partners, says Jones. Rather than necessarily opting for the lowest cost provider, they should find a value-for-money provider that is investing in the skills and infrastructure needed to provide a world-class services, he adds.

Perhaps the most important element of IT outsourcing is ensuring that the service provider will be able to support the business's needs in the long term, says Upton. He notes that the outsourcing contract shouldn't be purely about cost, it should also be about looking for ways to improve the value and performance the business gets from IT. A related point is that a big and established service provider will have the funding to invest in service delivery and infrastructure, keeping clients at the forefront of new developments in key areas. **TSB**



**Dawid Upton,**  
Services Executive,  
Dimension Data

### **Benefits and drawbacks of IT outsourcing** ←

#### **Pros**

- Provides you with reliable access to specialised skills
- Allows you to focus on your core business
- Service providers may have better infrastructure than most small companies could afford to buy themselves
- More predictable and potentially lower IT costs
- IT service providers may help to inject discipline into your IT governance, processes and methodologies
- Helps you stay up to date with latest technology

#### **Cons**

- Potential loss of control over your IT environment
- Risk of losing skilled employees with knowledge of your business
- Danger of entering into an inflexible agreement that doesn't keep pace with your evolving business

# Managed services not all or nothing

Gerald Naidoo, CEO of Logikal Consulting, believes that moving to managed services need not be an all or nothing approach.

**A**s an increasing number of organisations consider outsourcing all or part of their IT to improve efficiency or lower costs, managed services become an attractive option.

However, there are several points businesses should understand about managed services before they take the plunge. Gerald Naidoo, CEO of Logikal Consulting, says many businesses perceive that adopting managed services is an 'all or nothing' approach. "This is simply not true, although it is a common misconception. You don't have to outsource the whole IT function in order to achieve the cost savings that attract so many businesses to managed services."

## Misconception a problem

He says this misconception is putting companies off adopting managed services, as they fear they will have to relinquish too much control over their IT. Naidoo says that many organisations are cautious, and test the waters by outsourcing individual functions to specific suppliers. "Key to success here, is the choice of vendor," Naidoo says. "The market is flooded with suppliers, but it is crucial to choose a supplier that is in line with the individual business requirements, and doesn't dictate the provisions of service with a 'mud against the wall' or 'one size fits all' offering."

**"You don't have to outsource the whole IT function in order to achieve the cost savings that attract so many businesses to managed services."**

He adds that choosing the right provider can in fact, give a business more control over its IT, as opposed to less. "Although there is the accepted wisdom that keeping things in-house equals more control, this is not necessarily the case. In-house services are often limited in terms of resources and budget - spreading themselves too thin to adequately meet target service levels, or deliver top-notch customer service demanded by today's customers."

## Partial outsourcing the answer

Partial outsourcing can be the answer to all these problems, as a company has only to set up the required service level agreements (SLAs) and how to meet them becomes the



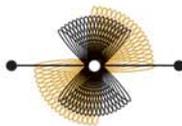
Gerald Naidoo,  
CEO,  
Logikal Consulting

supplier's problem. Again, Naidoo says it is important to choose a supplier that you can build a long-term relationship with, and who can be viewed as an extension of your own IT function. "Partial outsourcing is also safe, as the company maintains both control and ownership of their systems and their sensitive information, including how their data is managed and stored. This is particularly important in light of the tightening regulatory controls around data protection."

Outsourcing offers many benefits over and above increased service levels, he says. "Efficiencies are boosted, and costs lowered - a major driver for all businesses in these highly competitive times. It also opens the door to new possibilities, and the adoption of new models and technologies, which are often too costly to have in-house. It gives businesses access to a pool of services, technologies and skills that would be unaffordable in-house. Companies can add additional skills during busy periods, or peak times, without breaking the bank." **TSB**



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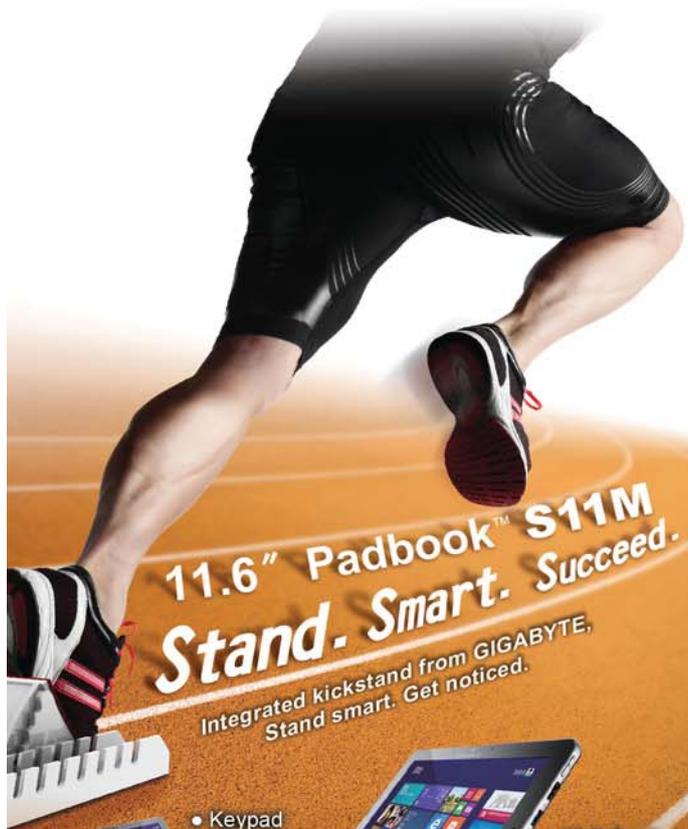
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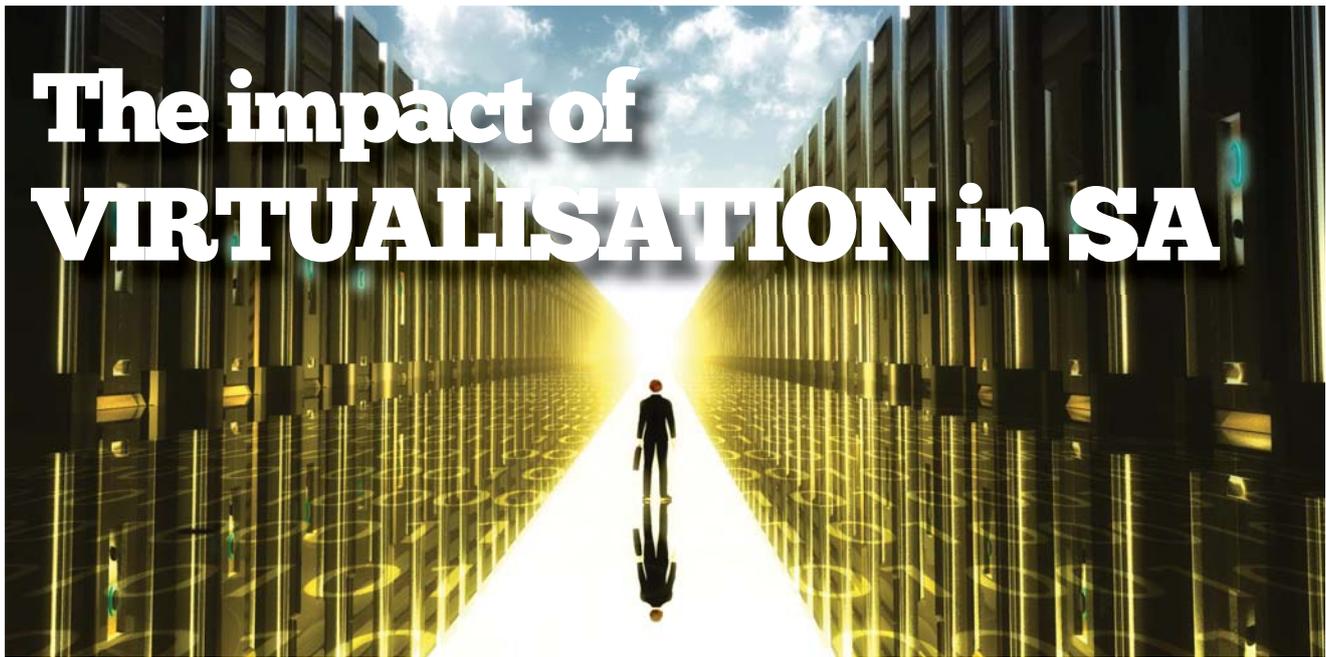
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Today, there are so many benefits of going the virtualised route that it makes sense to move as many systems and processes as possible to the environment. But what are the trends in South Africa when it comes to this technology?

**A**ccording to an Intel desktop virtualisation research report from a survey of 200 IT professionals, 60% of respondents are making significant financial investments in desktop virtualisation. The report indicates that there are three reasons for moving to a virtualised environment. Firstly, it represents a platform for the future. This means that companies will be in a better position to implement future changes to their IT environment if they are already virtualised. The second reason is the business and IT benefits. Virtualisation will result in improved productivity and will lead to better business outcomes. Finally, the report reflects that virtualisation will help balance the needs of employees, who want flexibility and freedom, with their need to maintain security, retain management control, and contain costs.

#### Embracing virtualisation

Warren Olivier, regional manager for Southern Africa at Veeam, a provider of virtualisation and cloud solutions, says that all spheres of industry and vertical sectors are adopting virtualisation. “The improvements to system performance, the associated cost benefits, and increased efficiencies are appealing to decision-makers in an ultra-competitive market. However, there will always be a need to educate the local market even further as technology changes to more positively impact the way virtualisation can benefit the organisation.” He believes that the South African market has approached a tipping point where approximately 60% of organisations have already gone the virtualised route. “The challenge now is that with so many companies having addressed the low-hanging fruit like moving their file and print services to a virtualised environment, the next step would be to address Tier 1 applications like SQL, SAP, and Oracle.”

According to Zoaib Hoosen, COO of Microsoft South Africa, cloud computing is a big contributor to the changing computing environment and the way enterprises are managed and deliver services. “With 80% of new apps to be delivered and deployed through the cloud in future, and the majority of the world’s CIOs aggressively embracing cloud computing, the Microsoft solutions are now delivered across multiple cloud-based models,” he says.

 **The SA market has approached a tipping point where approximately 60% of organisations have already gone the virtualised route.**



Zoaib Hoosen,  
COO,  
Microsoft South Africa

For Oliver, migrating a lot of business-critical applications to a virtualised environment can be seen as taking a leap of faith. "However, if you do the deployment correctly there are so many benefits as other companies have shown already. The key message in this is that solutions need to be designed around virtualisation. A company cannot use old tools in this new marketplace. It is a case of embracing virtualisation and not just tolerating it," he says.

### Regulatory environment

The explosion of data is also contributing to a more virtualised-friendly environment. "Big Data is growing but where do you store your photos, movies, and documents? How do you manage data? Well, the cloud is playing a key role in this," says Oliver. Already in South Africa, he notes, compliance and corporate governance are looking at the different features of virtualisation and how it benefits different users.

"We talk a lot about large volumes of data and getting that to client in terms of the bandwidth limitations of the country. It is a case of not physically being able to move data around.

This means that we as an organisation are looking at innovative ways like WAN (wide area network) acceleration to make use of high latency bandwidth requirements." He believes that this is especially important considering the amount of remote users and how they not only access corporate data but how companies can protect that data. "People want a similar experience to their desktop when they are accessing corporate data remotely. Virtualisation presents an opportunity to minimise the need to carry that data around on mobile devices by having it stored in a data experience that is protected from malicious users."

Oliver believes that even licensing, the traditional bugbear of virtualisation is getting less complex. "Companies are trying not to worry about how many virtualised machines they have running but just care about the physical server those machines are running on. In essence, a company can run 100 virtualised environments on one server to reduce license



Warren Olivier,  
Regional Manager,  
Southern Africa, Veeam

costs. There are ways to reduce complexity but the vendor needs to take advantage of that for the company to see the benefit."

According to him, virtualised environments will accelerate in South Africa over the next 12 to 18 months. Many small to medium businesses as well as larger organisations will start seeing the benefits of going this route. "This is especially true when they start using it for their Tier 1 applications. Virtualised machines are easier to create and adapt to the changing organisational requirements. Going forward, adoption will only grow faster." [IP] **TSB**

## The Benefits of Virtualisation

Microsoft has identified several benefits that using virtualised solutions could provide companies.

### 1. Increased return on investment from hardware

Using the right virtualisation software, companies are able to rationalise their system hardware, reduce the cost of management and maintenance, and extend the lifetime of the existing servers or PC fleet.

### 2. Energy efficiency

Businesses are able to cope with fewer servers and PCs, and those that they use are more energy efficient.

### 3. Increased agility

Businesses can focus on decision-making knowing that the hardware platform and system management tools are in place to respond to new opportunities.

### 4. Centralised hosting

Through application virtualisation, individuals can be given the necessary permissions to access certain files or systems, with IT retaining overall control. This provides an additional layer of defence from a security perspective.

### 5. Easier deployment

Given that the IT hardware being used is leaner than before, companies will find it easier to deploy new software in response to the needs of the business.

# SMEs look to the cloud for flexibility and cost-savings

Cloud computing offers South African SMEs a new way to consume ICT services that could give them more flexibility and help them to reduce technology costs.

**W**ith most small and mid-sized businesses looking for ways to use technology to compete with larger companies, adoption of cloud computing is expected to soar among South African SMEs over the next three years.

By moving some or even most of their business applications to cloud, smaller businesses may be able reduce operational and capital costs associated with IT; access better technology than they could afford to buy on their limited IT budgets; and reduce the complexities associated with running IT systems, for example the need to patch software and constantly back-up data. Cloud computing essentially allows organisations to access IT services and applications as online services provided by service providers rather than needing to install them on their PCs and servers. These services—ranging from applications to server capacity to storage space—are often billed for per-user, per-month.

As much hype as this technology category has received over the past three years, SMEs are being cautious in their adoption of the cloud. The World Wide Worx SME survey for 2014 finds that adoption of the cloud by small businesses in South Africa is slow but steady. The market researcher estimates that about 22% of local SMEs are currently using cloud services, up from 9% in 2012. [See p41]

## Focus on the core

However, most industry observers expect that adoption of



cloud computing will soar as the technology is demystified and SMEs begin to understand its benefits. Cloud solutions benefit small to medium sized businesses by giving them the ability to scale up their IT infrastructure as the business demands, says Stuart Cheverton, business development consultant at Hitachi Data Systems. “The flexibility of being able to scale a solution up or down, and as and when required, is a significant benefit for the mid-sized business,” agrees Alan Collins, emerging products architect at T-Systems South Africa.

Delon Karrim, senior systems engineer at EMC Southern Africa, says that the flexibility of buying technology in an operational model is the biggest advantage of the cloud for SMEs. In addition, cloud-based solutions also make it easier for SMEs to extend access to their systems to mobile users, allowing them to access applications and data wherever they are and on nearly any device. “I’d summarise the two main advantages of the cloud as the speed of deployment and the potential cost-effectiveness,” says Andy Bull, managing director of Mitel South Africa. “When you employ

**Most industry observers expect that adoption of cloud computing will soar as the technology is demystified and SMEs begin to understand its benefits.**

new people, there isn't the same high sunken cost of getting them up and running. You can easily predict the costs of adding new users to your systems."

### Getting a start

So, where should a small or mid-sized business start with a move to the cloud? Many organisations begin by moving messaging, collaboration, file sharing and archiving solutions, says Cheverton. These back-office services are less risky to move to the cloud than business-critical applications such as billing or transactional databases, he adds. "As cloud services develop and we see upgrades of international bandwidth, more and more services will be outsourced, especially among the small and mid-sized enterprise businesses," Cheverton says.

➤ **Many organisations begin by moving messaging, collaboration, file sharing and archiving solutions to the cloud.**

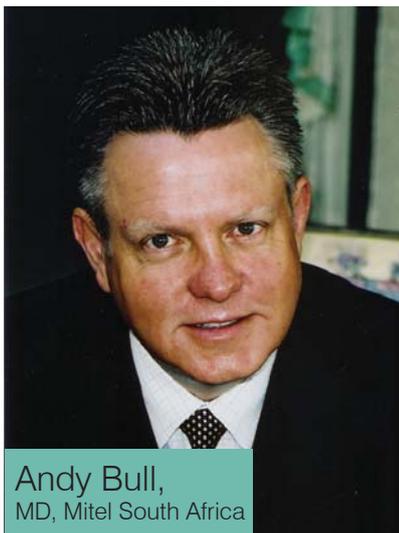
Karrim recommends looking at the software as a service offerings available from office productivity and CRM vendors. "They're easy to access. Most times you go to an online store, download, create an account and install. If you don't like it, there's probably another offering you can use instead," he says.

### Choosing the right vendor

As the SME Survey 2014 shows, SMEs are keenly aware of the risks attached to using the cloud for business-critical applications and services. One issue to consider is where the cloud provider's data centre is hosted—and hence where the client's data and application are located. Some organisations might be concerned about the implications of relying on the undersea cables that link South Africa to the rest of the world for access to their customer data and core business applications, says Cheverton. Others might be worried about regulations such as the Protection of Personal Information (POPI) Act, which implies that personally identifiable information shouldn't be processed or stored in

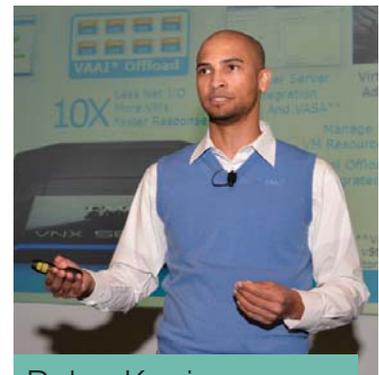
countries that don't have data protection regulations that complement the POPI.

"The track record of the cloud provider is critical," says Collins. "How long has it been in business? How long has it been providing cloud solutions? What sort of customers does it have?" In addition, SMEs should look for cloud service providers



Andy Bull,  
MD, Mitel South Africa

that are members of the Open Data Centre Alliance (ODCA), says Collins. One focus of the ODCA is ensuring that organisations are able to move easily from one cloud provider to another. This helps customers avoid getting locked in with one service provider and also ensures that different services and applications located in different clouds can communicate with each other.



Delon Karrim,  
Senior Systems  
Engineer, EMC Southern Africa

Karrim says that some questions for an SME to consider in choosing a provider include:

- Its cost model and how it fits with the company's cash flow and operating budget.
- The service provider's service level commitment — can it guarantee that the payroll or e-commerce site will be up-and-running 99.999% of the time?
- Where is the data stored?
- Who can access your data?
- Does the customer have the flexibility to cancel at any time? [LH] **TSB**

### Flavours of the cloud

Many IT services can today be delivered in a cloud model; here are three of the most common examples:

**Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS):** Renting computing resources such as CPU power and storage from a service provider.

**Platform as a Service (PaaS):** In addition to computing resources, PaaS offerings provide the customer with operating system capabilities as well as tools and libraries that organisations can use to create applications.

**Software as a Service (SaaS):** This form of cloud computing allows an organisation to use a hosted software application or function without owning any of the platform. The customer usually pays a subscription to use the application, and the service provider takes care of all the underlying infrastructure as well as enhancing and maintaining the application.

# Dell Enterprise Forum for EMEA 2014:

## Dell optimises the present and prepares for the future

Dell had teased, tantalised and tempted that this year's Dell Forum in Frankfurt, Germany, would bring significant announcements and interesting products. After attending the event, we can say that is exactly what was delivered.

**F**rom the outset, it quickly became clear that Dell's focus this year was on enabling IT users to optimise their enterprise. Rather than just being a nifty turn of phrase, this ambition had two sides. The first was helping customers get the most out of their current infrastructure, while the second concentrated on preparing enterprise businesses for the future.

Angus Hagerty, Dell's president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), explained that as the economy had slowed down in the past few years, Dell had seen its customers turn their attentions to both optimisation and cost reduction. While this happened, Dell's own business was undergoing a transition of its own, moving from being a purely hardware-orientated company to one that was both hardware and services focused.

### Change is afoot

Alan Atkinson, Dell's vice president and general manager of storage, pointed out that on a broader level, IT as a whole has also been fundamentally changing over the past few years to become a source of innovation. Indeed, he explained, IT has moved from being seen as just a business expense to rather a provider of competitive advantage that could improve business efficiency.

Atkinson elaborated and reassured, that no company will simply "throw away" its data centres (or reliance thereon) or its current IT infrastructure. He continued that many enterprises are concertedly looking at ultra-efficient models for their IT moving forward, with two such examples including next-gen data centres and the use of cloud.

However, the company stressed that the transition from the old forms of IT to the emerging new ones - which could be defined as being more efficient, future-ready (flexible) and services-centric - would not happen overnight, pointing out that it "was a journey".



**Dell Enterprise  
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### Looking forward

Instead, the name of the new IT game appears to be efficiency, which includes making one's existing IT environment more agile, less complex, and more specifically, less costly. Dell's mission, Atkinson added, was to eliminate the "rip and replace" model of upgrading one's IT infrastructure, which could be disruptive to an enterprise.

"Dell wants to enable customers to buy their IT infrastructure in bite-sized manageable chunks. Additionally, our aim is not to lock customers in but rather make it easy for them to upgrade," he added. He elaborated that the company was willing to "take that risk" that customers will stay with Dell's solutions, not because they were locked in to proprietary hardware or infrastructure. Furthermore, Dell stressed that locking customers into its systems was not the way it wanted to deal with its customer relationships.

Instead, the company's approach appeared to be firmly set on offering hardware and services that were compelling from an efficiency and business point of view, so that customers would continue to choose them over their competitors.

### Star power

Easily one of the announcement highlights was Fluid Cache for SAN (Storage Area Network). Forrest Norrod, the vice president and general manager of Dell's data centre solutions division, explained that in a nutshell, this helps dramatically improve application performance and reduce response times, by bringing data closer to the server.

More specifically, Fluid Cache for SAN utilises Dell PCI Express Flash drives for low-latency data caching inside traditional servers. This has immediate benefit to customers that rely on applications that require fast access to data, such as online transaction processing (OLTP), data warehousing, virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) and, the current darling of the IT world, cloud.



**Dell had seen its customers turn their attentions to both optimisation and cost reduction.**

Quantifying the benefits, the company asserted that Dell Fluid Cache for SAN has achieved 5 million random read input/output per second (IOPS) and can reduce cost per user by up to 71%.

Furthermore, results from Dell lab tests should be music to an IT user's ears – such as improved database average response times while allowing a more than six-fold increase in the number of concurrent users – increasing from 2200 to 14 000 users.

### Cache you later

The company went on to explain that by providing a single infrastructure for data at both high and low ends of the performance spectrum, Dell Fluid Cache for SAN eliminates the trade-offs between server performance and full-featured SAN benefits such as reliability, manageability and data protection. Dell noted that intelligent data placement from the server to SAN could enable customers to “significantly” improve performance while reducing solution costs by enabling the right data to reside at the right place at the right time.

Norrod pointed out that Fluid Cache for SAN differentiated itself from other cache solutions in a number of ways. These included the fact that it offered multiple server cache pools. “As you add servers, each server's cache can be utilised, not just the local cache, which gives users an aggregate benefit,” he enthused. Quantifying these benefits, he reported that customers using Fluid Cache for SAN have seen close to 100% improvement in their database response time.

Brad Pulford, enterprise lead at Dell South Africa, believes that IT leaders have the challenge of balancing costs with the need to provide quality IT services to ensure businesses do not risk losing customers, revenue or productivity. “The fact of the matter is preparing to handle an increased number of users on an infrastructure puts strain on a data centre – and the issue is solutions on the market today only address parts of the problem. By leveraging organic and acquired intellectual property, we're executing on our enterprise vision and providing customers with a unique ap-



**Angus Hagerty,**  
President EMEA,  
Dell



**Forrest Norrod,**  
Vice President and GM of  
Data Centre Solutions  
Division, Dell

plication acceleration solution that marries server and SAN technologies to bring new levels of performance and value to their business,” he noted.

## **IT leaders have the challenge of balancing costs with the need to provide quality IT services.**

Quick responsiveness, explained Brian Payne, the executive director of platform marketing for Dell's PowerEdge Servers, was particularly relevant to enterprises that were catering to large user bases, such as public health providers and online retailers. Indeed, not being able to respond to many customers' demands on their system quickly, could lead to a loss of business, as frustrated end users instead went to their competition to have their needs met.

### Back to the bottom line

Norrod added that end user's tolerance for wait times was only decreasing. However, optimisation and efficiency gains are not just about improving a business's customer service; it has an effect on an enterprise's bottom line. Just one such example given was that a sales organisation that was able to get its data more quickly would see a benefit in its productivity as well.

With this observation, just one of Dell's announcements at its forum (albeit a major one) brought the point about the evolving role of IT full circle, once again bringing it back to IT being a business enabler and driver moving forward. This made it quite clear that IT as a whole is no longer a grudge purchase or a necessary evil, but rather a critical solution for enterprises facing tougher business conditions, and an array of opportunities, both now and in the future. [RN] **TSB**



## Citrix Synergy touts new era for enterprise workspace

This year's Citrix Synergy 2014 conference was impressive in a variety of ways; boasting some 10 000 attendees, a number of speakers, and a plethora of announcements with possibly monumental significance for businesses. TechSmart Business was on hand in Anaheim, California, to find out more.

**C**itrix CEO Mark Templeton began by pointing out that there is a great deal more to the megatrend of mobility than just devices or apps. Rather, mobility, he pointed out, actually refers to movement, adding that the industry, workforce and the world at large was moving – changing – dramatically. He continued with a curious statement, positing that the ultimate component in mobility isn't a device at all, but rather the user.

### Get ready to move

"Mobility is really about the movability of people, business, apps, data, and desktops, and being able to respond to change, whether that change is planned like business opportunities, or unplanned like disaster," Templeton elaborated. What's more, he believes that both types of change are only increasing. According to Templeton, the transformation of workspaces, and an enterprise's engagement of its workforce, was more important than ever before, heralding "massive changes in the reinvention of workplaces." More specifically, Templeton pointed out that there were "massive trends" around workspace reinvention, hotdesking (flexdesking), work from home, and completely redesigned workspaces. Furthermore, he stressed, enterprises can expect these driving forces to grow, particularly as the millennial generation enters the workforce, with business' ability to cater to their demands influencing whether or not they can attract and retain top talent.

Steve Daheb, Citrix's senior vice president and chief marketing officer, added that the industry had moved from the cloud era to the mobile era, both of which had changed the face of IT thoroughly, and was now transitioning into the "experience" era. He elaborated that enterprise users expected and demanded a consumer-like experience when using their business tools, and user-experience had become king. "Until now, businesses have had to rely on disparate technologies to address desktop, mobile and app infrastructure challenges, but those standalone products are no longer meeting the needs of a newly mobilised workforce," elaborated Daheb.

### Open the floodgates

With this as a core backdrop to the event, Citrix then began rolling out one impressive announcement of the constituent components of its envisioned mobility synergy after the next. The first standout centred on Citrix Workspace Suite. This aims to unite desktop, mobile, app and data services in order to "provide people with a personal mobile workspace that follows them no matter where they go, what device they



**Citrix's chief marketing officer, Steve Daheb, noted that the industry had moved from the cloud era to the mobile era.**

use or how they are connected,” according to Daheb. More particularly and especially relevant given the prevalent megatrend of Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), the company elaborated that the new Citrix Workspace Suite provides a single, flexible solution that will support multiple corporate or BYO devices per user, giving them instant access to apps, data and services, and simplify how organisations manage and secure their end-user computing environment. The suite further boasts a slew of technologies, ranging from application and desktop virtualisation, mobile application and device management. It also caters to native mobile productivity apps, enterprise file sync and share, and an access gateway that enables enterprises to manage application, desktop and mobile infrastructures.

Core to the Citrix Workspace Suite are XenApp and XenDesktop, and following the new versions released earlier this year, Citrix also announced that further refinements were underway that would provide high-performance HTML5 browser-based access from any device; simplify roaming apps across multiple devices; offer support for the latest USB 3.0 peripherals and of course, enhance security.

### Sharing is caring

Also showcased was the announcement of new Citrix ShareFile features, which include integration with any Enterprise Content Management System. Citrix explained that data within today’s businesses lives in a range of places that are not easily accessible outside of corporate networks or from mobile devices. To this end, it touted new ShareFile StorageZone Connectors, which offer direct and most importantly, secure mobile access to data that resides behind an enterprise’s firewall. Furthermore, the newly



**Steve Daheb,**  
CMO, Citrix



**Mark Templeton,**  
CEO, Citrix

unveiled ShareFile StorageZone Connectors software development kit (SDK) enables any IT or partner organisation to develop connectors to any enterprise content management (ECM) system. This expands the types of data users can access and edit on the go via ShareFile.

The new announcements, however, really came alive when the company demonstrated them in action. Brad Peterson, Citrix’s chief demo officer, showed how device and OS agnostic a mobile workspace can be with the XenApp and XenDesktop in full effect. Impressively, the app and desktop virtualisation enabled a variety of applications, ranging from general productivity to graphics intensive design tools like Photoshop, to fly between a desktop, tablet and smartphone and perform speedily.

Admittedly, it was eye opening to see a typical Windows application being run seamlessly off an iPad, with mouse and keyboard interface being converted on the fly at the server layer to run on touchscreens. Furthermore, as evidence of how flexible the synergy of the apps actually can be, Peterson went so far as to run Windows 8, with its Metro interface, off an iPad as well. Furthermore, thanks to Citrix Receiver, Peterson demonstrated the ease with which workers could take their open desktop with them wherever they go, and access it - complete with browser tabs, documents and even power options intact - off whatever device they happened to have on hand.

### Big ideas and bigger pictures

Templeton explained that Citrix’s “big idea” centred around what he asserted was the most profound change happening in the world today, with regards to people and organisations, and more particularly, how organisations related to and engaged its workforce. “Traditionally people joined organisations but increasingly this is getting inverted; we think that infrastructure and solutions should allow organisations to join people easily and simply; to engage people as contractors, and be able to respond to change more rapidly,” elaborated Templeton. “We think this is the world of the future, so we are going to power this world of the future by allowing IT organisations to provide this full continuum of mobile workspace experiences,” he concluded. [RN] **TSB**

# Dell amps up its PowerEdge VRTX offering

The Dell Forum, held this year in Frankfurt, Germany, not only announced innovative new enterprise products, it also showcased enhancements to existing offerings. One case in point was its PowerEdge VRTX product.

**W**hen the PowerEdge VRTX first made its debut, it qualified as being an innovative mobile IT solution, integrating servers, storage, networking and management into a tower-sized chassis, and bringing some interesting ramifications for businesses. Still impressive is the fact that the server solution comfortably fits under a desk.

Apparently though, since 2013, the VRTX has become a bit of a server rock star, finding its way into industries and locations that Dell itself hadn't anticipated, such as ships needing an onboard IT solution but in which space is typically a premium. It is also being widely used in remote offices, healthcare facilities, and in education, by schools with multiple campuses. However, this converged solution has also proved its mobile value when deployed as part of responding to natural disasters.

## Enhancements ahead

One of the improvements made to the PowerEdge VRTX includes the implementation of a redundant storage controller. Brian Payne, the executive director of platform marketing for Dell's PowerEdge Servers, explained that the rationale behind this was that many smaller offices or remote branches had a very fragmented IT infrastructure, and few, if any, personnel in the office able to fix products in the event of a failure.

Many of the enhancements made to the latest version of PowerEdge VRTX came from listening to customer feedback. Users subsequently informed Dell that they desired a failover solution, which would give them time to address the



problem. Another strong consideration for the latest version, was taking into consideration that small offices would be able to scale up.

Thus, the PowerEdge VRTX now hosts more compute nodes, which provides its users with the means to add extra virtual machines. Also onboard is next level data protection inside the chassis, and enhanced system management. With regards to the latter, Dell joked that the latest version of the product needed to be simple enough for even their lawyer to operate – who was lightly called out as being a “great attorney but terrible systems manager.”

In a nutshell though, the PowerEdge VRTX's successes to date, and its new enhancements, are a testament to the changing nature of IT, and the need for innovative solutions that this shift spawns. [RN] **TSB**

**The VRTX has become a bit of a server rock star, finding its way into industries and locations that Dell itself hadn't anticipated**

# Lenovo ThinkPad Carbon X1 lands

For busy business executives on the move, notebooks need to be fast, powerful, thin and boast exceptional battery life, all of which the ThinkPad Carbon X1 offers in spades.



**N**ot only does the 14" ultrabook impress right off the bat with beautiful 2560x1440 screen, it also weighs in at a travel-friendly 1.2 kg with a supermodel 18.9 mm thinness. Moreover, its construction is impressive, with, as the name suggests, the chassis employing carbon fibre, which is purportedly stronger than magnesium alloy and thus able to weather more than its fair share of abuse.

What should also put a smile on the faces of business users and long distance travelers alike is that the ThinkPad X1 Carbon offers a battery life up to nine hours according to Lenovo, and can, through Rapid Charge, be recharged up to 80% in an hour; useful for inbetween connecting flights and when work onboard is a necessity. It can also accommodate a SIM card for 4G connectivity.

## Beyond the familiar

Along with a well-executed backlit keyboard deep, notable specs including up to a fourth generation Intel Core i7

processor with 4 GB of memory and a ten point multitouch screen (on Windows 8.1) are all onboard. Less common in an ultrabook, but preferred in many an enterprise, is that the X1 Carbon caters to docking stations. Furthermore, the ultrabook boasts a particularly new innovation from Lenovo – an adaptive keyboard. This adjusts to a user's needs based on the software or application being used to highlight the most relevant keys. More specifically, Lenovo has removed the Function key row, and replaced this with a liquid crystal display touch strip that adapts to whatever application you are using. For example, if you are browsing the web, the strip displays touch keys for refresh, copy, paste, the snipping tool, and cloud services. If you instead open your media player, the buttons change accordingly.

Topping it off, Lenovo's latest is certainly a svelte and attractive machine, rejecting the notion that ultrabooks aimed primarily at business users cannot turn heads, and the ThinkPad Carbon X1 does just that. RRP: R22 000. **TSB**

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## HP EliteBook Folio 1040 now available locally

The latest business-orientated ultrabook from HP has arrived locally, and the company is touting it as its thinnest and most mobile business companion to date.

**F**or business professionals and general users, thinness and mobility are often equated with stylishness and ease-of-use respectively, and thus it should come as little surprise that manufacturers continue to pack more technology into ever-thinner chassis. In the EliteBook Folio 1040's case, this equates to a 15.9 mm profile on the outside, and the presence of 4th generation Intel Core i5 and i7 processors and up to 8 GB of memory internally.

Furthermore, the 14" full HD ultrabook packs up to a 256 GB solid state drive (SSD), while the other crucial component to a mobile solution – battery life – is taken care of with a six-cell polymer long life battery. This, asserts HP, will offer users up to 12 hours of battery life, or in travel terms, a flight from Johannesburg to Heathrow.

### It's your choice

Also onboard are integrated speakers and a built-in webcam, allowing business users to participate in video conferences and web-based training. The other essential component of a work-orientated machine is its keyboard, and on the EliteBook Folio 1040 this is backlit and spill-resistant. Connectivity options onboard include Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and integrated mobile broadband with 3G and 4G (LTE) support, along with two USB 3.0 ports and DisplayPort connection.

Interestingly, users aren't shoehorned into Windows 8.1, whether they like it or not, but can instead opt for Windows 7 if they prefer. Any ultrabook trying to win its way to the corporate boardroom better have plenty security credentials, and HP's latest certainly does. This includes automated features such as BIOSphere reduce downtime for improved productivity. The EliteBook 1040 also incorporates HP's Client Security Portfolio, which includes HP Drive Encryption, HP Devices Access Manager with Just in Time Authentication, and HP Secure Erase. All these features come at a price – and at the top end, this is rather hefty at R28 000 for the top of the range model. **TSB**



www.techsmart.co.za

## Gateprotect offers small businesses greater protection

Small businesses need not be the most vulnerable to security risks, or so a new firewall product aims to prove.



**F**or small companies in particular, cutting costs, and addressing the ever present concern of security are both top of mind. The good news is that a new product from Gateprotect, named GPO 110, will apparently answer both concerns in the same breath. The GPO 110 provides SME companies in the local market with a durable firewall, developed in Germany, with all the functions needed for effective protection against cyber-attacks as well as the best possible performance that safeguards flowing business procedures. Further befitting the fact that small companies are less likely to have a team of IT staff to manage their solutions, the GPO 110 has also been touted as being easy to configure and manage thanks to eGUI technology and optional endpoint protection in real time.

### Secure and expandable

"With its advanced security features the GPO 110 provides an easy-to-use firewall for up to 15 users with resilient protection for the network, emails and secure interconnection via VPN for price-sensitive customers," elaborated Alex Van Zyl, channel manager of Gateprotect at Westcon Security Solutions. Van Zyl explained that furthermore, a company's UTM firewall, together with the firewalls belonging to the GPO series, can be extended to a WLAN access point as well as fixed with features to include endpoint protection.



**The GPO 110 provides an easy-to-use firewall for up to 15 users with resilient protection.**

"Thanks to the GPO 110 with software version 9.4, Westcon's resellers can provide their customers with a security solution that provides enhanced reporting as well as dual-factor authentication for even safer access. Small companies can now rest easy knowing that networks are thoroughly protected by the GPO 110 with its optional WLAN module and cost-efficient hardware with entry-level UTM protection," he concluded. **TSB**



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WE DELIVER



The warning bells are ringing for enterprises to pay extra attention to their security, as two independent reports warn of increased and more targeted enterprise attacks.

**T**he first warning comes from Check Point's 2014 Security Report, culled from the in-depth analysis of more than 200 000 hours of monitored network traffic across organisations in 122 countries. This resulted in the conclusion that there had been a significant increase in both familiar and unknown malware on enterprises' network. More tellingly, the report found that malicious software (malware) was found within 84% of the organisations analysed, with a piece of infected software being downloaded once every ten minutes on average.

Even more sobering is that the report cited that smarter, more sophisticated, and more resilient malware emerged in 2013, and a third of organisations downloaded at least one infected file with unknown malware for the period between June and December 2013. Interestingly, of those infected files, 35% were PDFs.

#### Risky Business

Also identified as collaborators in the compromising an enterprises' security was the use of high-risk applications, which continued to increase over the past year. Check Point noted that torrents, anonymisers, and peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing applications were being used every nine minutes on an average day, while P2P file sharing usage increased in particular from 61% of organisations in 2012 to 75% in 2013. Exacerbating matters is that bot infections continued in prevalence, with a host infected by a bot every 24 hours and communicating with its command and control every three minutes. Check Point added that organisations also struggled with containing bots, made more disturbing by the fact that 77% of bots were found to be active for more than four weeks.

For those organisations convinced it would never happen to them, the news only grows dimmer. The latest research found that 88% of the organisations analysed experienced

**➤ More tellingly, the report found that malicious software (malware) was found within 84% of the organisations analysed.**

at least one potential data loss event, increasing a substantial chunk (34%) from the 54% observed in 2012.

#### The perfect storm

If that is not enough to make organisations take notice, then Trustwave's new Global Security Report may be. The company elaborated that it had seen a 33% increase in the theft of sensitive and confidential information such as financial credentials, internal communications, personally identifiable information and various types of customer records.

Furthermore, the company noted a 22% increase in the theft of financial account credentials, even as payment card data continued to top the list of the types of data compromised. It similarly warned of the proliferation of malware, elaborating that 59% of malicious spam included malicious attachments and 41% included malicious links. More specifically, cyber-criminals were found to have been relying most on Java applets as a malware delivery method, with an overwhelming percentage (78%) of exploits taking advantage of Java vulnerabilities.

"We found that organisations are often surprised by the severity of bot infections and the various threats that lurk on their networks," said Amnon Bar-Lev, president of Check Point Software Technologies. "It is clear that customers need an architectural approach to deal with these issues," he concluded. **TSB**



# SME Survey 2014: Local SME cloud uptake slow but steady

**Rather than making one giant leap, it seems local SMEs are more interested in small steps when it comes to cloud services.**

**I**nformation drawn from the SME Survey 2014 shows that 22% of South African small and medium enterprises (SMEs) make use of cloud services, up from 9% in 2012. And although cloud uptake by remains reasonably slow, the growth in usage is not only steady, but is, in fact, almost exactly as predicted by SME Survey 2012.

SMEs not choosing not to embrace the cloud give virtually the same reasons as those large enterprises that avoid it, namely that they don't see the benefit; they don't understand it; and they are nervous about it. This nervousness stems both from the fear of failure and the fear of the unknown. Arthur Goldstuck, MD of World Wide Worx and principal researcher for the SME Survey, is quick to point out that over the years SME Survey has repeatedly confirmed that SME deci-

**SMEs' nervousness stems both from the fear of failure and the fear of the unknown.**

sion-makers will not invest in a technology if the benefits and value proposition are unclear.

"While a part of the reason for slow uptake may be attributed to many SMEs being less sophisticated in their use of technology, the industry has certainly not taken to heart the message it sends to this sector. Hopefully, the results of SME Survey 2014 will play a role in helping to change its approach towards SMEs in highlighting the genuine benefits cloud offers," he concludes.

Some of the most important incentives that would make the cloud a more attractive proposition are:

- having a guarantee of 24/7 real-time support (36%)
- recommendations from other users (16%)
- a localised provider (15%)
- price (15%)

For more information, visit [www.smesurvey.co.za](http://www.smesurvey.co.za). The SME Survey is seen as the most representative survey of SMEs in South Africa. **TSB**

## More SMEs moving servers off-site



**Mweb Business believes electricity cost and uncertainty of supply are driving factors for SMEs moving to data centres.**

**R**ising electricity costs and the uncertain reliability of the power supply are two key factors that are driving a growing trend among small and medium-sized businesses to move their servers out of their premises into dedicated, shared data centres. This according to Debbie Pretorius, GM at Mweb Business, who says the company has experienced a rise in enquiries for its server

hosting services following the recent Eskom power supply scare which resulted in a short reintroduction of load shedding across the country.

"Colocation, or server hosting, has become increasingly affordable over the years. Connectivity prices have been on a downward trajectory for some years and now hosting costs are starting to come down too. As a result, more and more businesses are coming to realise that multi-tenant data centres could provide a better and more cost effective option than hosting their servers themselves," she said.

The cost and reliability of the electricity supply is a major concern for businesses of all sizes, and particularly for SMEs as yet another above-inflation hike in electricity prices is scheduled for later this year. "Businesses are looking at this and concluding that the cost of keeping their servers running in a temperature controlled environment is just too high – particularly when the cost of keeping generators and UPS's on standby to deal with power outages and surges is taken into consideration," Pretorius said.

**"Multi-tenant data centres could provide a better and more cost effective option than hosting their servers themselves."**

"For a fixed monthly fee, the business knows that its servers are housed in a safe, environmentally controlled environment, with a secure power supply. Other services, such as state-of-the-art firewalls and round the clock maintenance could also be included," she concluded. **TSB**

# 4 African Startups WORTH WATCHING

The African Startup environment is an exciting one, with a host of entrepreneurs and companies looking to take advantage of the continent's ever-growing level of connectedness. Here are four African Startups with heaps of potential and a promising future ahead of them.

## Gust Pay - South Africa

[www.gustpay.com](http://www.gustpay.com)

NFC-enabled payment is one area of technology that very few South African companies have taken advantage of. That's where Gust Pay comes in, as this handy payment application allows users to make the most of the NFC functionality found on most mid-to-top tier smartphones on the market these days.



What makes Gust Pay such an enticing product, is the fact that its developers have created a supremely polished product, with applications available across smartphone and tablet platforms. Further added to this is a Gust Pay wearable wristband, which has application at large events or conferences, tested out at 2013's Rocking the Daisies music festival in Cape Town.

The Gust Pay app is currently available for free download on both the Apple App Store for iOS and Google Play for Android.

## BRCK - Kenya

[www.brck.com](http://www.brck.com)

The BRCK is exactly that, a robust looking rectangular brick that's designed for one thing and one thing only - to offer a wireless connection and charging node in remote areas where connectivity is hard to come by.



The design comes courtesy of non-profit technology company Ushahidi, and has now gone into production after a successful Kickstarter campaign reached its monetary goal in June of last year.

With its rugged design and matte finish, the BRCK is ideal for use in parts of the world where a high-speed internet connection is viewed as a luxury. Ushahidi has fitted the BRCK with multiple ports to allow connectivity via traditional ethernet cable, 4G cellular data or a Wi-Fi bridge, as well as cloud support and 4 GB of internal memory to afford users the capability of storing content. The BRCK further boasts a large battery to offer an increased level of portability, making it ideal for travelling to the far-flung corners of the globe.

## Leti Arts - Ghana/Kenya

<http://letiarts.com>

Leti Arts is an interactive media studio with offices situated in Ghana and Kenya, with the sole objective of offering comic book artists and designers the opportunity to create multiple platform works of art.

Apart from being based in Africa, the vast majority of Let Arts' digital comics and mobile games draw inspiration from African folklore and mythology, celebrating the culture and history of Africa as a whole, which is fantastic to see.

LETIARTS



Having been founded in 2009, Leti Arts began as an ambitious plan by three friends, all of whom had backgrounds working on video games. To date, Leti Arts' substantial efforts have yielded five mobile games, three mobile apps, two digital comics and one social media game, as their portfolio of content continues to grow.

[www.techsmart.co.za](http://www.techsmart.co.za)



## Dropifi - Ghana

[www.dropifi.com](http://www.dropifi.com)

Dropifi is a smart contact widget designed to help small business better analyse and respond to incoming message enquiries that their websites receive. It also has an analytical engine that develops a comprehensive report detailing customer information, to allow business owners to make informed decisions and discover untapped market segments.

The Ghanaian-born company became the first African startup to be accepted into 500 Startups last year, a Silicon Valley-based startup incubator designed to offer seed acceleration and investor funding.

To date Dropifi has roughly 8000 clients in more than 30 countries, with plans to expand its use even further, making it one of the key African Startups to watch this year. **TSB**



# The Q+A Sessions

In this month's Q+A Session, we asked industry players the following:

**If there is one thing you know now regarding IT infrastructure that you wish you knew earlier, what would that be?**



**Brendan Widlake, Business Development Exec,  
Stratus Technologies**

I wish I had seen the surge in mobile App development sooner, and fully understood the impact it would have on business. Mobile Apps, both social and corporate have entirely changed the way data is architected, presented, stored, delivered and secured. A great challenge, but also great opportunities.



**Bradley Janse van Rensburg, CTO,  
ContinuitySA**

If I knew at the beginning of my career the rarity of successful IT projects that finish on time, on budget and deliver on what was originally required, it would have made a huge difference to how I made decisions and how much up front planning I would have put into every new technology initiative.



**Lourens Swanepoel, CTIO,  
Avanade South Africa**

If there is one thing I wish I knew earlier, it would have been knowing the impact that public cloud services would have on IT in South Africa. Specifically how it allows the enterprise to reshape the economics of IT through reducing the cost-to-serve of doing business, and improving the agility of business to respond to new opportunities.

This would have allowed us to capitalise on the benefits of private Infrastructure As a Service (IaaS) and Platform as a Service (PaaS) much earlier.



**Clifford de Wit, Developer Experience Director,  
Microsoft South Africa**

Looking back it would have been wonderful to know how much of an impact cloud computing and mobile devices would have on our industry. Cloud computing for what it has provided to business, for example, high quality access to enterprise grade server computing. Mobile devices for the mobility it has provided and how smart device penetration has enabled access to computing to millions of people, especially in our emerging economy.



**Gary Allemann, MD,  
Master Data Management**

Existing data management infrastructure has typically been deployed based on limited, project specific data requirements and may not scale to meet the demands of the modern enterprise. An enterprise data governance platform provides the collaboration layer to involve the business in data management decision making and should be the corner stone of the modern data infrastructure. **TSB**

# TOP 4

## Conference Centres in South Africa

Ask any PR company and they'll tell you that the setting for your product launch or large-scale conference is as important, if not more so, than the product or conference itself. With that in mind, we've compiled a roundup of the best conference centres in the country, both small and intimate, as well as vast and awe inspiring.



The Innovation Hub

[www.theinnovationhub.com](http://www.theinnovationhub.com)

Pretoria

**THE INNOVATION HUB** is a business park located in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria and geared towards science and technology companies, as well as the development and growth of organisations across the ICT, Biosciences, Green Technologies and Industrial sector.

Among the Innovation Hub's numerous high tech facilities are two auditoria, each with seating for standard or cinematic presentations. It further boasts a 100 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition space, which is often put to use in showcase events for the CSIR and South African Airways. The Innovation Hub also hosts multiple talks regarding trends and issues currently facing tech companies, with its Innov8 event on impact of technological trends set to take place in May.

### THE CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

is easily one of the largest of its kind in South Africa, and this virtue makes it the largest on our list and capable of hosting multiple events on any given day.

Opened in 2003, the CTICC has played host to a diverse array of international and local events and conferences, including the 7th annual Clean Power Africa conference, 2014 Marketing Indaba and Fine Brandy Fusion to name a few. The CTICC also boasts one of the most state of the art audio/visual setups in the country, with its very own IT infrastructure from suppliers, INHOUSE Venue Technical Management.



Cape Town International Conference Centre

[www.cticc.co.za](http://www.cticc.co.za)

Cape Town



Spier Wine Farm

[www.spier.co.za](http://www.spier.co.za)

Cape Town

Also situated in the Western Cape, the **SPIER WINE FARM** offers a far different experience to that of the CTICC, opting to use the beautiful natural surrounds of the Stellenbosch winelands landscape as a backdrop to host a variety of events and conferences.

From its sizeable conference centre, to its historic Manor House, the Spier Wine Farm is capable of catering for seminars, exhibitions and product launches. Spier Wine Farm further boasts an amphitheatre and meeting rooms for companies to make use of. Another key offering on this Wine Farm is its 4-star hotel, which is ideal for conferences lasting more than a single day.

**THE MAROPENG CONFERENCE CENTRE** is another venue that makes the most of its natural environment, as it's nestled neatly within the Cradle of Humankind heritage site in Magaliesberg on the South African highveld.

Although situated an hour's drive away from Gauteng's two major cities, Johannesburg and Pretoria, the Maropeng Conference Centre still possesses the ability to host events ranging in size from 40 to 500 attendees. All catering for events is handled by Maropeng's specialist hospitality team, with the added benefit of its own hotel, capable of accommodating up to 48 guests overnight. Apart from a well equipped conference centre, Maropeng also features the world famous Sterkfontein caves and museum for people to explore. **TSB**



Maropeng Conference Centre

[www.maropeng.co.za](http://www.maropeng.co.za)

Magaliesberg

# IN FLIGHT WITH:

## Michelle Potgieter, Samsung SA

Awesome lounges, eye-cream and lost luggage in winter – we talk travel with Michelle Potgieter, director: corporate marketing and communications at Samsung Electronics SA.

### TS: Where is your favourite airport lounge?

MP: Hong Kong has the best airport lounges. What really makes them special are the great facilities that are available, allowing you to refresh yourself, as well as the layout of the lounges. They are very private and never feel crowded. I also love the selection of both Eastern and Western cuisine.

### TS: Which airway is best and why?

MP: I really like Emirates. They have great on-board entertainment and you have a choice of the latest movies, music, magazines etc. This always helps with long flights.

### TS: Any tips on how to survive those long-haul flights overseas gracefully?

MP: Lots of water, eye-cream and I always walk up and down the aisles to ensure good blood flow to the legs.

### TS: Are there any special hotels you can recommend?

MP: Each city has great hotels, but I often check Trip Advisor and see what guests have to say about the hotel of interest - this gives you a good indication of what to expect. If a hotel is not listed, I won't consider it.

### TS: Passport and airplane tickets excluded, what are the items that you do not travel without?

MP: I do not travel without my Galaxy S5 smartphone and Galaxy tablet, and I often use my phone for navigation purposes to get to a meeting, a restaurant or to find sight-seeing locations. There is nothing worse than feeling lost in a country or city and not being able to find your way. I also always carry some medication for the odd occasion when you awake with a sniffle.

### TS: Do you have a travel horror story you won't mind sharing?

MP: A year ago I travelled to Seoul, Korea, during their winter, for a business meeting. The meeting was scheduled for two days. There is no direct flight and I chose to fly via Hong Kong to



Seoul. The arrival time in Hong Kong changed due to the weather conditions. As a result, I missed my connecting flight and had to fly via Taipei to Seoul.

On arrival my luggage was nowhere to be found. I was asked to go to my hotel and told that they would keep me posted on tracking my luggage. I did not pack an additional travel bag (which I normally do) as the visit was only scheduled for two days. There I was in the freezing cold weather with only the clothes I was wearing. I had no time to go buy anything and they do not really make provision for western women's clothing. My bag never turned up and on the day of departure, the airline advised that the bag was located at OR Tambo. Needless to say, I spent most of my time indoors and when possible at the hotel. **TSB**

# Autobahn Cruising



A beautifully designed Coupé is the perfect calling card. Having made their debut at the beginning of the year, BMW's 435i Gran Coupé and the Mercedes S63 AMG Coupe, are a bold step up the corporate ladder.

## BMW X4 Series Gran Coupé

**T**he 4 Series Gran Coupé is BMW's answer to the slew of similarly styled coupés hitting the market, aiming to one-up its German counterparts' offerings like the Audi RS7 and Mercedes-Benz S Class Coupé.

### Breaking the Coupé mould

One of the 4 Series' defining features is its four-door orientation, making it slightly longer than most conventional luxury Coupé models at 4.64 metres. This is best seen when viewed from the side, with the classy silhouette of the BMW 4 Series Gran Coupé catching the eye instantly. The long, sloping roof, the flat window graphics and expressive lines converge in an extremely muscular looking back panel.

The powerful front-end of the BMW 4 Series Gran Coupé, which gives the impression of being particularly flat and wide, also makes an immediate impact, especially in combination with the value added M Sport package, which enhances the vehicle's striking details and adds an extra touch of dynamism to the car as a whole.

### BMW, pure and simple

Underneath the bonnet, BMW has fitted the 4 Series Gran Coupé with the German manufacturers' own TwinPower Turbo technology, orientated for both petrol and diesel versions of the vehicle. The top of the range 435i (petrol) model produces an impressive 225 kW of power and a maximum torque output of 400 Nm, all adding up to a blistering 0-100 km/h time of 5.5 seconds and electronically limited top speed of 250 km/h. This is noteworthy, considering the 435i weighs a considerable 1650 kg.

The diesel variant 420d xDrive is nothing to scoff at either. It's engine may produce a slightly low 130 kW, but it is well

complemented by max torque of 380 Nm, making it fairly quick off the line, registering 7.7 seconds to reach 100 km/h and topping out at 234 km/h. Although slower out the blocks than its petrol cousin, the 420d xDrive boasts a CO<sup>2</sup> emissions total of 130 g/km, compared to the 435i's 190 g/km.

**On the whole, the BMW 4 Series Coupé has a winning combination of speed, safety, space and high-specced accessories.**

When we take a gander inside the 4 Series Gran Coupé, it appears as if BMW has opted for a simpler, cleaner aesthetic and dashboard layout, allowing drivers to remain undistracted while negotiating busy CBD's. The instrument panel is uncluttered with the centre console tilting ever so slightly towards the driver. All driving relevant operating elements and functions are intuitively positioned, to ensure controls and information can be accessed as efficiently as possible.

On the whole, the BMW 4 Series Coupé looks well balanced, with a winning combination of speed, safety, space and high-specced accessories to keep drivers wanting more. Pricing for this Bavarian coupé is set to start at R600 000 for the entry level model and R800 000 for the top of the line 435i, with an expected showroom floor debut in the final quarter of this year.

### Tech Specs - BMW 435i Gran Coupé

#### Engine

3.0 litre, 6 cylinder, TwinPower Turbo

**0-100 km/h**

5.5 seconds

**Top Speed**

250 km/h

(electronically limited)

**Price**

Estimated - R800 000

Availability - Q4 2014



# Coupés

## Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG Coupé

**M**ercedes-Benz unveiled the concept design for the S-Class Coupé already in the early part of 2013. A year later the Stuttgart-based manufacturer showcased the final product, along with the AMG-fine-tuned S63 4Matic Coupé, at the 2014 New York Auto Show.

### Dangerous Beauty

The first striking feature of the new S-Class Coupé in profile, is its sweeping lines, a perfect mixture of the CL-Class and S-Class' design elements in one elegant, yet powerful vehicle. It certainly seems as if other German vehicle manufacturers will have to up their game, as the S63 AMG has defined the new standard among coupés for years to come, usurping the coupé crown from the CL63 AMG.

The Mercedes-Benz S-Class has always been regarded as an elegant cruising vehicle, designed to offer unsurpassed comfort over speed, so in stepped AMG, with their powerfully designed engines, highly responsive transmission systems, and racing-style suspensions and brakes.

### Brute Power

For the S63 4Matic Coupé, AMG has integrated a 5.5 litre, twin-turbo V8 engine, similar to the one found on the S63 sedan version, which produces an immense 430 kW of power and 900 Nm of torque. All this unbridled power means it gets from 0-100 km/h in 3.9 seconds and having been electronically limited to maximum speed of 300 km/h, although we expect that to drop even further to around 250 km/h when it comes to South Africa.

Another key inclusion made by AMG is the Speedshift MCT seven speed automatic transmission fitted onto the S63 Coupé, as well as the performance-tuned 4Matic all-wheel drive system which splits the torque between the rear and front tyres at a ratio of 2:1 respectively.

In an increased effort to further enhance its performance, AMG have stripped the S63 Coupé down to 1995 kg, making it 63 kg lighter than the CL63 AMG. It further boasts an Airmatic air suspension system and optional carbon-ceramic brakes housed behind its 20" AMG styled alloy wheels.

### Control, a touch away

In the cabin, Mercedes-Benz has created a wrap-around design, incorporating the instrument panel and in-vehicle controls into one seamless system. AMG has also fitted its newly developed sport seats with power adjustment, memory function and seat heating/ventilation for the driver and front passenger to enjoy.

Another integration is the TFT colour instrument cluster with two animated round dials, as well as an innovative touch-pad, included as standard, making it significantly easier to operate the radio, phone and navigation system, according to Mercedes-Benz.

To date, the S63 AMG 4Matic Coupé is slated for an October 2014 debut in the United States, with the South African market set to receive it shortly after that. Pricing is estimated at \$150 000 (R1.6 million), which means any person looking to get behind the wheel of this highly-specced and extremely fast coupe will have to talk to their bank manager. **TSB**

### Tech Specs - S63 AMG 4Matic Coupé

#### Engine

5.5 litre, Twin Turbo V8

#### 0-100 km/h

3.9 seconds

#### Top Speed

300 km/h (electronically limited for EU/US markets)

#### Price

Estimated - R1.6 million

Availability - Q4 2014



# The WAITING GAME

## & How to Win It

By Gus Silber

*Thanks to the miracle of mobile technology, a queue is now a good excuse to lose yourself in the private universe of a screen. As long as your battery holds out, of course...*

I got to the Licensing Office bright and early, or at least early, because I hadn't had a cup of coffee yet. I joined the raggle-taggle throng that was slowly mutating into a queue, in the manner of an amoeba dragging itself onto the shore. There was an hour to go before opening time, and we stood in front of the shuttered service window, gawping at the Prestiked checklist of requirements for a clearance certificate.

You needed 2x certified copies of your ID, 2x copies of your proof of residence, 2x copies of your registration papers, 2x copies of your Microdot certificate, 2X copies of your application form, and 2x copies of your Stolen-and-Recovered document from the Police. The only thing you didn't need 2x copies of, I was pleased to note, was yourself. Microdot? What's a Microdot? The friendly freelance licensing procedural adviser who had jogged alongside my vehicle as I drove in was only too happy oblige. He pointed at an Auto Fitment Centre across the road, and when I looked confused and exasperated, he offered to hop in and navigate. Fine, I said, but I'm driving.

I stood in another queue, signed and shuffled some papers, handed over R550 in cold hard cash, and watched as a man sprayed invisible dots of data at strategic points on my car. Back at the Licensing Office, the queue had grown orderly and winding and long, and I was at the back of it, grumbling. I was not alone.

We stand together when we stand in a queue, bound by the camaraderie of our contempt for the system, and our fear that when we get to the front, we will learn that we have left an important piece of paper behind, and will have to come back tomorrow. Then I noticed something about the queue. Almost everyone, myself included, was looking down. Not out of dejection, but out of redemption. We were tapping and swiping and scrolling and thumbing, lost in our own little universes, the private real-estate of our screens.

Some people argue that this is not a good thing, that it puts barriers between us and cuts us off from the flow of interpersonal communication. But I say to those people, sorry, I can't talk to you right now, because I am busy reading a book on my phone. I am busy turning the empty hours of waiting into hours filled with learning and enlightenment, or even better, mindless entertainment.

Yes, I can watch a movie on my phone, and when I get tired of that, I can tweet that I am standing in a queue at the Licensing Office, and then I can take a picture and post it on Instagram as proof. I can reply to an email, send a WhatsApp, leave a comment on somebody's blog. If that isn't interpersonal communication, what is?

The smartphone compresses time. It accelerates its particles and renders it meaningless, to the point where, after seconds or hours or aeons have flitted by, you need to be jolted back into the moment by a tap on the window and a gruff voice demanding, "Papers!"

**We were tapping and swiping and scrolling and thumbing, lost in our own little universes, the private real-estate of our screens.**

And still, as my papers are stamped and stapled and collated, and I am directed to wait in another queue for my vehicle to be inspected and my certificate to be issued, I can't help sneaking a glance at my time-travel device, grateful once again to be living in age when technology holds us in its thrall as we hold it in our hands.

And then, of course, my battery-meter turns red, and I am left holding a glossy black slab that has as much utility as a paperweight. Don't you hate it when that happens? Join the queue. **TSB**



Illustration: Thinus van Rooyen

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# TechSmart SHOP

# TOP DEALS

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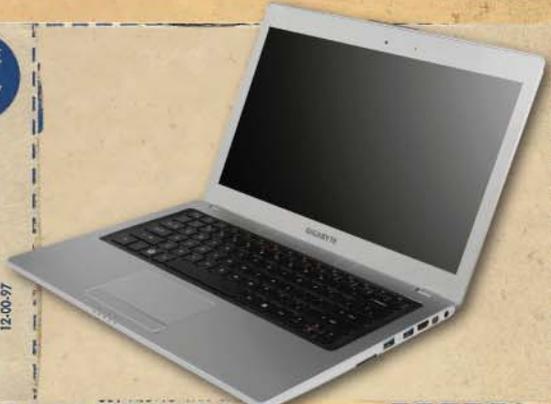
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