

A virtual and radically different business environment

Today's business environment is defined by the strategic application of Unified Communications technology, underpinned by virtual and cloud applications, to establish and sustain operations.

 By [Robert Sussman](#) 13 May 2013

It does not really matter what industry the business operates in, or what sector it may be focused on, the fact is that the model will be affected by the cloud and virtualisation on some level.

These are disruptive technologies that are specifically designed to streamline operations, if understood and used strategically.

There are inherent benefits to aligning processes and procedures to the cloud and to virtualise core operations. These are advantages that can make a substantial difference to the bottom line.

This is what decision makers understand and this is what they want to bring on board. Essentially, the main challenge in running any sized operation today is to cut costs and 'do more with less', whilst maintaining a close eye on influences including big data, big data analytics, mobility and BYOD.

Unified communications brings together a number of technologies and applications, including social media, cloud services, web services, to improve and enhance operations. Decision makers understand that they can no longer rely on traditional ways of operation and have to take cognizance of the growth of the cloud.

One of the reasons why cloud service is on the move is because of the increased focus on broadband connectivity across Africa. There is emphasis on raising connectivity services and ensuring that there are solutions to sustain and support these services.

It is widely acknowledged that as the cloud and virtualisation market matures, issues like backup, hosted voice solutions, VoIP and hosted PBX will become even more relevant.

Whereas in the past, these technologies have not been developed sufficiently to warrant heavy investment or focused attention, the situation is very different today.

Those companies that do not integrate these applications on some level and are effectively behind the unified communications curve, will battle to sustain operations and compete going forward.

Careful integration and strategic use of these resources can help a company secure competitive advantage and differentiate the business.

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