

New data centre platform gears mobile operator for future



MTN South Africa lowers data centre OpEx costs and ensures quicker provisioning of subscriber services

Customer Name: MTN South Africa

Industry: Telecommunications

Location: South Africa

Number of Employees: 34,243

Business Impact

- Savings of 30% annually on power consumption
- Savings on floor space
- Quicker provisioning of subscriber services from days to hours



Case Study

Business Challenge

Launched in 1994, the MTN Group Limited (MTN Group) is a multinational telecommunications group offering cellular network access and business solutions. It has mobile licences across 21 countries in Africa and the Middle East and as at the end of December 2009, recorded more than 116 million subscribers.

The data centre performs a very important function for MTN SA, in that it houses all its business applications, such as billing information and credit verifications records, as well as its web portal (www.mtn.co.za). Most of MTN SA's challenges centred on its legacy technology in the data centre, as well as the architectural design, which required a change. The data centre did not support 10-Gigabit and deployment of servers took a long time simply because the mobile operator did not have an optimal cabling infrastructure.

As a result, MTN SA experienced lengthy provisioning delays when deploying new applications or subscriber services. They realised the necessity to introduce a new product set that is aligned to, and has a specific roadmap for the data centre.

Solution and Results

MTN SA selected the Cisco Nexus Data Center Platforms (7000, 5000 and 2000) as the best technological fit to their business challenges. The mobile operator is now experiencing significant savings on two OpEx costs involving the data centre: power and floor space. The solution also allows them to provision cabling for new projects quicker, and facilitates planning for future projects are also easier as less cabling work is required.

Other benefits include that they have improved their customer services. They can now increase the efficiencies of their provisioning of new subscriber services and reduce time-to-market for new services. Higher speeds on 10 Gigabit Ethernet also offer improved speed responses to knowledge workers to access billing applications, and for customers to access services and information on their web portal.

In addition, the solution lays the foundation for MTN SA to deploy advanced technologies. For example, they recently successfully completed virtualisation on their blade servers, which saw a significant reduction on their server footprint, providing improved utilisation and shared processing of hard drives.



“We are experiencing annual OpEx cost savings of up to 30% on our power consumption, and further savings on floor space. Customers benefit from improved speed responses on our web portal, quicker access to billing applications, and our time-to-market new services has reduced from days to a couple of hours.”

Ebrahim Adam

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