Welcome to a hyper-available South Africa

By Kate Mollett   11 Jun 2018

The imminent arrival of two Microsoft Azure data centres on local shores means organisations across industry sectors are re-evaluating their availability strategies.

Kate Mollett

This is ushering in the age of hyper-availability that will fundamentally change the importance of data access in a mobile and connected world. But what does this entail and how does it impact on not only existing corporate data strategies but also the business landscape of the country?

Until recently, the focus has been on establishing an always-on environment and implementing disaster recovery and business continuity solutions capable of delivering on this experience. In this environment, companies realise they can ill afford their mission-critical data to be offline or compromised. Furthermore, changing regulatory requirements necessitate a more considered approach to ensure data is securely maintained, stored, and accessed in an increasingly connected environment.

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Hyper-availability takes the next step.

It reflects the evolving reality of the importance of data in the connected business. It is no longer good enough to occasionally mine data for intelligence and insights or to do so only once a quarter. Instead, the competitive nature of business across industry sectors means data is in a continuous stage of movement.

> *In other words, decision-makers are leveraging insights organically and in real-time as opposed to the more traditional and fixed approach.*

In South Africa, organisations across financial services and telecommunications stand to gain immediate benefit from a hyper-availability strategy as they are typically rich in data. The enterprise-focused approach of this means they can extract value out of their data much faster than previously possible and deliver digital innovations to customers to improve their experiences and meet their expectations.

Continuous data flow

With hybrid cloud environments becoming standard practice, data must be able to securely and effectively move across these multi-cloud infrastructures.

> *In Africa, mobility is an imperative and being able to access data while out of the office a given. Being hyper-available means the organisation can cater for these shifting expectations. And these do not only emanate from employees but customers as well.*

Embracing this has the additional benefit of providing the organisation with new insights from data and significantly faster productivity. Combined, this enables a faster rate of innovation and delivery of newer, more bespoke solutions targeted at specific customer requirements.

Given the growth of data, it is becoming more of a challenge to extract value out of it both from an organisational perspective as well as from a customer one. Being hyper-available will enable organisations to manage their data more effectively and securely.

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Of course, it is one thing to understand the theory of hyper-availability and another thing to implement it in the business. This is even more so the case at a time where those with nefarious interests are targeting companies of all sizes with ransomware and other malicious software.

The increasing awareness of the damage corporate fraud does to the financial bottom line and reputation of a business further challenges executives to think differently about their approaches to availability, hyper or otherwise.

Growth opportunities

With the likes of Gartner and the International Data Corporation estimating that the hyper-availability market will reach $30bn through 2021, there is no point in debating its importance.

Local businesses must adapt their data strategies to be cognisant of the need for being hyper-available. Faster time to market, more innovative solutions, and catering for an increasingly fickle customer base will help drive the business case towards this.

> " *The race is on to become a business that is hyper-available. Those who are the first to do so will have the competitive differentiator needed in the months and years to come.* "

All told, the hyper-available enterprise is capable of accelerating innovation to meet the data demands of the future. And by giving people the confidence that all aspects of their digital lives will be always-on, companies will continue to drive the business bottom-line.

ABOUT KATE MOLLETT

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