

True innovation-led business transformation starts in the cloud

by Cameron Beveridge, Director: Cloud at SAP Africa



No matter your industry sector or geographic location, all businesses today have one overriding thing in common: to be successful and sustainable you must be digital. While the rewards of moving a business towards digital are considerable, the initial transition can be challenging. Innovation requires the ability for businesses to collect, manage, analyse and leverage data of all types, to extend and connect to business networks, and to innovate new edge scenarios to allow the business to continuously adapt and advance.

Regardless of size, shape or location, companies also need the ability to build and extend applications for every department and every role quickly, easily, and economically. The only way to do this is by leveraging a powerful cloud platform: solving individual business problems, empowering employees, and engaging customers requires a scalable accessible platform with real-time computing capabilities that can future proof the business and unlock the ROI of technology investment.

In [a recent study](#) commissioned by SAP Hybris and conducted by Forrester Consulting, enterprises using SAP Hybris Marketing Cloud saw net-new revenues rise by an average of \$10.1 million over three years and 306% increases in ROI.

Hyper-connectivity demands scalable, reliable solutions

A cloud platform enables companies to achieve business agility, create a truly integrated and optimized enterprise, and accelerate digital transformation across the business – all without the requirement of maintaining or investing in on-premises infrastructure. In today's hyper-connected world, this is particularly important: by 2020 there will be more than 2.5 billion connected people on social networks alone. For businesses who want to handle billions of different types of connections at once, a scalable, efficient and reliable solution is critical.

There is also an urgent need for businesses to modernise their technology infrastructure. At the centre of all modern business infrastructure is data: the ability to transport data from devices on the edge of the organisational network to the heart of the business – the enterprise core – is an essential step to companies realising the business benefits of their technology. Businesses need a powerful cloud platform at the heart of the enterprise, one that can consolidate data across heterogeneous system landscapes and infrastructures.

South African enterprises driving wholesale cloud adoption

According to a recent IDC study of the South African cloud landscape, 93% of South African companies are pursuing a cloud strategy, and are either in implementation phase or planning to implement. Companies are typically looking for a way to get ahead of the pace of disruption: this requires an enterprise system that supports new business models and processes, and enables companies to offer new services, explore new markets, and better focus on changing customer needs. During the IDC Datacentre Roadshow held in Johannesburg, South Africa on 16th November 2017, Simon Carpenter, Chief Technology Officer at SAP Africa said: Cloud is compelling because it has low risk and gives business fast access to innovation and that businesses that are pursuing digital cloud strategy will become ten times faster and better.

Local businesses are constantly challenged to improve their operations and transform to keep pace with rapidly changing customer expectations. To do this, they need intelligent systems that eliminate redundant tasks while providing real-time analytical insights that can give business leaders predictive capabilities. And as technology hastens the pace of change, businesses will increasingly need enterprise systems that provide access to the latest technologies while giving the business the agility and flexibility they need to constantly adapt to changing conditions.

The leading edge of enterprise cloud

SAP S/4HANA Cloud is the intelligent, NextGen cloud ERP that takes enterprises into the digital age. Giving companies access to global best practices and innovation, SAP S/4HANA Cloud delivers immediate and continuous business value with the ability to scale and adjust to future needs.

Built on the SAP Cloud Platform, it provides companies with an agile, low-cost and scalable solution that helps optimise finance processes, cash flow management, supply chain management, real-time insights, and an end-to-end view of the performance of the entire enterprise. That is why SAP is the fastest growing enterprise cloud company at scale, with more than 110 million users trading more than \$820 billion.

Cloud will have an impact on all businesses regardless of their location, size or nature. Organisations need to embrace innovation to remain relevant. And in a modern, constantly-evolving business environment, the only way to do this is by building a future-proof business on the best cloud platform.