

# MTN's got its business brains in the cloud

By [Thabiso Mochiko](#)

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MTN Business has launched a pilot project for its MTN cloud bouquet of services that will among other things provide a single point of contact for its customers, it said on Thursday, 6 December 2012.



Cloud computing refers to the delivery of services including software and data over the Internet.

MTN's cloud service brokerage model centralises access to services, where a third party, in this case MTN, acts as the single point of contact for customers. This eases the administrative burden for companies so instead of dealing with multiple service providers, they deal with one.

Farhad Khan, executive for enterprise business at MTN, said the pilot project would be carried out in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa.

MTN Business has identified a number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in these markets to test its cloud services and product.

MTN Cloud will be targeted at SMEs in Africa to help customers reduce the cost of doing business by offering ICT solutions.

"A particular challenge facing small and medium-sized businesses in Africa is the high cost of information technology software and hardware.

"This includes the licence fees. What MTN Cloud services seeks to do is enable SMEs to minimise these costs, and at the same time improve productivity and efficiency," said Khan.

The trial period with selected customers starts today (7 December) and runs until the end of January next year.

Participating companies will automatically gain access to a variety of MTN cloud services including a back-up service for the effective management of files and servers, and an on-demand video conferencing offering. MTN will also provide McAfee, a popular anti-virus and anti-spam security software.

Users will be able to pay for MTN's cloud offering using their airtime or MTN Mobile Money.

Khan said the overarching objective of MTN Cloud services was to provide customers in the selected markets with "peace of mind, as well as affordable business management tools at reasonable price."

"We want our enterprise customers to focus on running their businesses knowing that their data is kept safely and securely," he said.

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