Africa's first vendor neutral satellite earth station soon completed

Teraco Data Environments, South Africa's first provider of vendor neutral data centres, has announced the launch of Africa's first vendor neutral satellite earth station. The station, which effectively positions Teraco as the most connected data centre in Africa, is due to be completed in March 2013.

Lex van Wyk, managing director of Teraco says that this announcement has far-reaching effects for satellite service providers (SSPs), African carriers and Internet service providers with connectivity now available through fibre, wireless and satellite, this strategic offering reinforces Teraco's status as the communication hub for Southern Africa.
A satellite earth station is a terrestrial station with multiple parabolic antennas or receivers that function as a hub connecting a satellite with a terrestrial telecommunications network. The station, named the Teraco Teleport, will provide clients' positions on which to deploy their receivers at the Isando Data Centre site.

Distribution of services

The teleport positions Teraco as the pre-eminent landing station of choice for the satellite service provider community. SSPs will now be able to position their receivers at Teraco Isando enabling direct access to a community of over 50 telecommunication companies without the need to incur significant capital expenditure. More importantly, SSPs now have the ability, via NAPAfrica, to distribute their services to the Teraco community without having to incur on-going last mile costs, which to date have largely restricted SSP service offerings to the broader market.

Through NAPAfrica, Teraco clients have access to an immediately visible and continuously growing network of peers with just one peering agreement. Peering at NAPAfrica allows carriers and providers, Internet businesses and financial organisations to directly connect their Internet infrastructure through a distributed, fast, and cost-effective ethernet fabric to reduce IP-transit costs and to improve network connectivity and resilience. This move will now make satellite connectivity more affordable to South African corporates.

Vendor neutrality

As the first vendor neutral satellite station in Africa, the Teraco Teleport will enhance the Teraco open market offering whereby service providers can add collective value from the data centre environment. "Vendor neutrality is effectively a focused business model in which a provider limits its activities to a fixed set of value layers to avoid conflicts of interest with clients," says Van Wyk.

"The teleport will use existing and new Teraco infrastructure as well as link directly into the data centre via fibre," says Van

Wyk. "We are providing access to municipal power, resilient generator power, top-class security as well as access control."

In the Teraco environment, clients benefit from the advantages of co-location in addition to having access to all fibre and wireless points and now satellite connectivity. This allows for reduced interconnect fees, the freedom to select the best access provider and easy connections to numerous other clients housed in the data centre.

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