

Vodacom uses tech to help government save money

Cost containment measures announced by the state in the 2016 Budget Vote have contributed to a significant reduction in certain national and provincial government institution consumption. A prime example is the Mobile Communication Services Transversal Contract (RT15) awarded to Vodacom Business on a four-year basis in September 2016.



Mickey Mashale, chief sales officer for Vodacom Business

In 2016, National Treasury issued a circular instructing state institution expenditure to be cut by R25 billion in three years, mainly by curtailing non-business related spend.

RT15-2016, with the first objective of cutting communications costs through maximising on the power of volume as government, instead of individual contract that the departments were concluding with mobile operating companies which resulted with varying levels of benefit, the partnership with Vodacom Business has already helped government save circa 56% in expenditure from all participating government departments over a two-year period.

This comfortably exceeds the initial savings target of 40% expected after four years from over 400,000 lines of most national and provincial government departments.

Moving up the value stack

Onto the second objective of digitising government, speaking on behalf of Vodacom, Mickey Mashale, chief sales officer for Vodacom Business, said that the state can leapfrog and deliver high-quality services to their constituents it serves through the use of technology, we have been able to make notable progress in the public sector space in South Africa in moving up the value stack. We have managed to connect remote community health workers to patients and have helped identify 160,000 potential health risks across 4 provinces.

We have partnered with the property management organisation of government to help digitise the way they run and operate building operations turning these building into smart buildings enabling them to save on power, do proactive maintenance and thus increase the efficiency and lifespan of assets.

The partnership with GPG resulted in GPG being able to register to enable application of Grade 5 & 8 in Q2 of 2018 in preparation for 2019 calendar year. This process went smoothly with the department and has enabled placement of learners efficiently ahead of the new academic year which will ensure proper planning of resources required to be able to cater for these pupils.

Processes and people

Digitisation does not only relate to things but to processes and people, Vodacom announced in June this year that it had developed a Smart Citizen App called “My Ekurhuleni App” in collaboration with the Ekurhuleni local government. Following the success of the same application in the OR Tambo Municipality and Mpumalanga Province.

Alongside a bouquet of other innovations, the Ekurhuleni App provides the municipality with a real-time two-way communication engagement platform with citizens to report and resolve service delivery issues from water to sanitation.

Bringing about administrative efficiency

Mickey explains, “Vodacom is using technology to bring about administrative efficiency and enhance communication between government and citizens in an effort to support service delivery. Through the RT15 contract, we are not only helping government on cost savings, but essentially help bring government closer to the people and provide an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability in the process.”

In concerted effort to help tackle skills development and job creation within communities, Mickey adds: “We will be rolling out Tech Zones that will operate as mini Vodacom-shops in previously disadvantaged communities and these will help create some form of job opportunities for our people.”

National Treasury, through RT15, aims to promote economic development, good governance, social progress and rising living standards through accountable, economic, efficient, equitable and sustainable management of public finances.

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