

# Digitalisation - a business critical move in 2017

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Business as we know it has changed; it is all about collaboration, connectivity and mobility, and of course, for these to work hand in hand there is a real need for organisations to move towards integrated technology solutions. It is about digitalising your business through solutions that are tailored to your organisational structure and needs, as well as those that meet the demands of your customer network.



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While we all know it is no longer about keeping staff at their desks, flying from place to place to do business, or having important documentation saved to a desktop, the year to come will define how businesses integrate technology into their structures to achieve real digitalisation – where the cloud, Internet of Things (IoT), and valuable technology partners will play a critical role.

With mounting economic pressures, the need for digitalisation to address business pain-points, improve productivity and, very importantly, reduce bottom line costs will be the deciding factor for uptake.

## Global markets

In global markets, such as in the UK, we are witnessing the commoditisation of markets – very much as a result of digitalisation – meaning that businesses have to get smarter about the way in which they run and manage their organisations, as well as where they place their spend.

Globally, organisations are driven by consumer demand to create more digitalised businesses and this means that these companies have to not only have stronger online presence, but that they need to have back-end services and solutions that are streamlined, integrated and innovative from a technology stand point. Through this, they are ensuring quicker time to market, better service offerings and support as well as reducing operational expenses for a more competitive approach.

We believe that in the next two to four years, with 2017 forming a key pillar, the global market will be mapped rather strongly in South Africa. In fact, [research indicates](#) that digitalisation in South African companies is expected to rise from 27% to 64% by 2020, demonstrating the real need for such a model and the fact that South African businesses are beginning to embrace the digitalisation trend.

## **Technology partners**

To ensure success of such a technology model, over the next year we will continue to see clients acquiring technology partners that simplify solutions for them and a partner that is easy to engage with – especially in volatile times where needs are constantly changing – yet additional investment is not an option.

This means optimising solutions within current structures to provide effective business outcomes – with less effort. The industry is evolving so rapidly that companies are worried about the correct product or service to choose, and so they need guidance and a trusted partner to advise them on this – and this will be a main business driver in the technology sector.

## **Cloud services**

In addition, cloud remains a key trend, especially as a result of mobility, which is increasing year on year and is expected to continue to rise. More clients are moving services to the cloud and adoption of these services is a much more common practice than it was a few months ago – varying from hosted telecoms solutions to simple data backup.

## **Application-based IP**

We are also seeing a lot more application-based IP as a result of IoT and as such, the integration of this technology will be business critical – incorporating it into existing products and optimising offerings to support it.

## **Software services**

Another key aspect that will drive business and technology adoption – in the aim of simplifying services for customers – will be software services such as interactive billing for example, focusing less on hardware and more on the integration of cloud based, software services that enable further business efficiencies. This says a lot about where the future of technology and digitalisation is headed.

The benefits of adopting a more digitalised business model are plentiful – think a more competitive business model that is able to deliver on its customer's immediate needs, mobile workers, digital connectivity, cloud services, business collaboration with staff and partners and the like – delivered through more streamlined processes, thus helping businesses improve the manner in which they operate.

## ABOUT GAVIN MEYER

Gavin Meyer is the executive director at Itec SA, an Investec (EP) business.

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