

# Accenture simplifies cloud migration in sub-Saharan Africa



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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At the recent Amazon Web Services summit, I had the chance to chat to Kabelo Makwane, managing director for Cloud First business at Accenture in sub-Saharan Africa. We discussed all things cloud and how the Accenture Cloud Platform enables companies to combine more than one cloud infrastructure and benefit by pooling multiple cloud infrastructures from various cloud solution providers.

## **What would you say is the purpose and functionality of cloud for sub-Saharan Africa?**

The rise of the internet-based digital economy means that companies in sub-Saharan Africa that implement and utilise the correct platforms and systems have the potential to reach a global market from day one, rather the merely focus on organic growth and expansion within local markets. And the key to unlocking this potential is cloud computing.



Kabelo Makwane

Cloud computing, be it software-as-a-service (SaaS), infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS), or platform-as-a-service (PaaS) – collectively termed everything-as-a-service (XaaS) – offers organisations access to enterprise-grade infrastructure and systems as the model leverages the investments, innovations, and developments that cloud providers have already made into technology. This negates the need to commit capex and the considerable time and energy needed to develop standalone, on-premise solutions.

This technology consumption model also increases an organisation's capabilities and boosts agility and flexibility, enabling it to respond to changing business needs and environments. It also delivers a competitive advantage with the ability to innovate faster than ever before without the long leads times and associated costs of in-house implementations, or to scale back in response to shifting market trends.

Once in the cloud, systems become interoperable, which makes cloud computing both a catalyst for growth and a connector for new services or capabilities that can enhance business, such as transaction processing, advanced analytics, the internet of things (IoT) or industry-specific solutions, to name a few.

These attributes are particularly important for small companies in sub-Saharan Africa looking to take on big industry incumbents, many of which are struggling to make the shift to cloud computing because they need to sweat the sunken investments made into developing bespoke legacy systems.

■ ***As I understand, the Accenture Cloud Platform enables companies to combine more than one cloud infrastructure and benefit by pooling multiple cloud infrastructures from various cloud solution providers. Elaborate some more on the functionality of the platform and what differentiates it in the market.***

Simply taking siloed IT systems and moving them into the cloud erodes some of the delivered-as-a-service value proposition, namely increased efficiency, reduced complexity, horizontal scalability, seamless integration, and ease of use.

One of the biggest benefits of moving all IT systems and platforms into the cloud is the ability to integrate everything into a unified infrastructure. When the correct cloud computing ecosystem is selected, this infrastructure also becomes scalable and replicable for immediate mass consumption should it be required in multiple locations to support rapid multinational or even global expansion.

The Accenture Cloud First Platform (ACP) is an open, scalable technical cloud platform delivered as-a-service that can integrate with technology from Amazon Web Services, Cisco, Google, Microsoft and NTT Communications, among others.

It allows us to assist companies to pool a number of cloud-based systems, which helps clients achieve efficiencies and flexibility, and reduce costs. The multi-cloud management platform powering the Accenture Hybrid Cloud also helps companies to manage their business services securely and effectively across multiple clouds on demand, at speed, from a single point.



### The importance of finance, HR collaboration with unified cloud

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It is the robust cloud management capabilities of the ACP ecosystem that set the offering apart from competitors, with a centralised, business-friendly dashboard to optimise choices and management capabilities, with the ability for users to source, procure, integrate and manage public and private cloud services when and where needed, from one location. The ACP also helps companies accelerate the speed of implementing new cloud solutions, improve cost efficiency and optimise IT resource usage to reduce operational costs and improve ROI, and simplify oversight with centralised cloud governance using analytics, cost controls and policy management.

Ultimately, standardising on a cloud ecosystem using a single service provider that can implement and manage disparate systems makes cloud computing a simpler, more attainable proposition for companies.

■ ***Are such technology platforms a major focus area for the overall business strategy?***

The question that businesses are asking now is no longer whether the cloud is a part of their future business strategy but rather when and how: how much of their technology stack should they migrate? How quickly should they do it? And, what's the best path for migration?

The integration of all the cloud computing elements means we can take commoditised and siloed pieces of technology and turn them into key elements in a business model.

Ultimately, IT is no longer a backend system that merely supports business strategy. It has become the critical enabler of business for many organisations. A cloud-based model provides fast acquisition, low to no capital investment, relatively low operating costs, and variable pricing tied directly to use. The advantages also include mitigating the nightmare of managing disparate on-premise systems such as servers, storage, networks, security, and the many applications in a typical enterprise, which frees up resources to focus on the core business.

### ■ ***What is your opinion of the future of technology and how important is it for companies to have digital strategies in place?***

Technology is the future. Businesses that aren't currently embracing technology by adopting or developing relevant solutions will fail to compete and thrive in the modern digital economy.

Technology needs to help businesses transition to collaborative multi-channel models that enhance efficiencies and engagement, particularly with existing customers, and open up digital channels to drive new business. And thanks to the convergence of internet-based services through cloud computing, technology can now serve as the business platform, the sales channel, and the marketing and communications medium that enables this paradigm shift.

As this trend continues to accelerate, businesses of the future will most likely operate using a unified end-to-end platform hosted in the cloud that controls everything, from email and communications to enterprise applications, access, data storage and analysis, and real-time collaboration.

However, for companies to begin their transition into the cloud, they first require a clear vision and strategy that plots their journey to cloud computing, because the ultimate success and effectiveness of this IT model entails more than the proverbial switch-flip on legacy computing systems.

## ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work [here](#) and [here](#). Contact Ilse through her website [here](#).

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