

Extending Africa's Largest Data Center Footprint to the Cloud with Cisco ACI and Cisco HyperFlex

BCX · Industry: Information technology and services · Size: 4900 employees · Location: Centurion, Gauteng, South Africa

BCX is Africa's leading provider of information and communications technology (ICT) solutions and services. With an unparalleled geographic reach and points of network presence across the continent, the company delivers end-to-end digital solutions for large and medium enterprises in both public and private sectors. BCX is committed to providing ICT solutions that reduce the cost of doing business, increase overall business productivity, and empower organizations to use technology as a competitive advantage. For more information, visit www.bcx.co.za.



Challenges

- Modernize Africa's largest data center footprint
- Extend software-defined network (SDN) across data center, WAN, and cloud domains
- Align infrastructure and services with hybrid cloud environments

Solutions

- Cisco® HyperFlex™ Hyperconverged Infrastructure (HCI)
- Cisco Application Centric Infrastructure (Cisco ACI™)
- Cisco Secure Workload (formerly Tetration)

Results

- Established Africa's first end-to-end, cloud-enabled SDN ecosystem
- Improved IT operations efficiency by 60 to 70 percent
- Accelerated customer workload performance by 300 to 500 percent

For more information

- [Cisco HyperFlex](#)
- [Cisco ACI](#)
- [Cisco Secure Workload](#)

Challenge: Modernize eight data centers to deliver end-to-end, software-defined services

BCX isn't just a provider of technologies and services. Since 1979, the company has played a central role in South Africa's democratic and economic transformation. BCX's technology infrastructure and services help support a large percentage of the country's election centers, banks, hospitals, retailers, petrol stations, and other essential businesses.

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Mervyn Goliath
Managing Executive,
Data Networks, BCX

“We're very proud of our contributions to South Africa's democracy and economy,” says Mervyn Goliath, managing executive for data networks at BCX. “And we continue to play a meaningful role in the lives of everyday citizens by supporting some 5000 public and private organizations.”

To replace aging infrastructure systems and address evolving customer requirements, BCX recently modernized its eight data centers, which represent the largest, most technologically advanced computing footprint in Africa.

“The world is changing and our customers are changing,” Goliath explains. “Many organizations are looking to put their workloads in the cloud, but they need help with management, access, and security. We're delivering end-to-end software-defined networking (SDN) as the foundation for next-generation technologies, and we're doing it at an unprecedented scale in the EMEA region.”

At the heart of BCX's data centers is Cisco ACI, the world's leading SDN solution, and Cisco HyperFlex, which extends the simplicity of hyperconvergence from the core to the edge to multi-cloud environments.

“Cisco ACI and Cisco HyperFlex give us visibility, policy consistency, and assurance that can be extended across SD-Access, SD-WAN, and public cloud domains,” Goliath says. “We're using them to drive new business value and deliver new capabilities for our customers.”



Transforming IT operations

According to Goliath, the new infrastructure has transformed BCX's internal IT operations. Leveraging multitenancy and segmentation, the company no longer has to manage discrete computing systems for each client. BCX has also enhanced application security and network assurance across domains with Cisco Secure Workload (formerly Tetration).

"We've lowered our costs and improved our economies of scale," says Goliath, noting a 60 to 70 percent increase in operational efficiency across all metrics. "We can extend those benefits to our customers or help them invest in additional capabilities that drive their business forward."

The company's top technologists are no longer tied to infrastructure systems, he adds, thanks to software-defined, policy-based automation.

"We've been able to transition our expert-level technologists into new value-added roles," Goliath explains. "Instead of managing hardware, they're working on digital transformation projects and increasing the level of technical knowledge and engagement we bring to our customers."



Delivering new customer services

In addition to transforming BCX's internal operations, the new infrastructure has enabled the company to modernize and expand its portfolio of services. BCX now offers cloud on-ramp, virtual private network (VPN), SD-WAN, managed network security, global connectivity, managed LAN, and other software-defined services. The company is also in the process of creating new self-service capabilities for its customers that will allow them to spin up their own virtual network functions, policies, and alerts.

"We're helping our customers see more and do more," Goliath says. "Additional visibility, control, and agility is good for everyone."

As BCX migrates workloads to the new environment, its clients are noticing a big difference. In fact, one international mining customer has experienced a multi-fold speed improvement in addition to better uptime and security.



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"We expect most of our customers to achieve a 300 to 500 percent performance improvement when they move to the new infrastructure," Goliath says.

To learn how Cisco can help your organization on its journey, please contact [Cisco Sales](#) or your [Cisco registered partner contact](#). Explore more [Cisco Networking customer deployments](#).

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