

## **South Africa needs cloud specialists to fully realise cloud technology**

The race to the cloud continues as South Africa is slowly transforming into a digital economy. Andrew Cruise, CEO, Routed, a cloud infrastructure provider, says that South Africa's cloud maturity levels are still lower than other countries, but the market looks promising: "From a data centre perspective, we have seen the market double in the past five years and it is still growing more than 10% annually. This is a strong indication of the overall growth of the cloud market."

One area that Cruise says that has impacted cloud adoption is that of supporting infrastructure: "This has been a significant legacy issue, often plaguing the adoption of cloud technology, but South Africa is now meeting the conditions required for the reliable implementation of cloud strategies. Whether it is private, hybrid or public cloud, South Africa has established a stronger infrastructure base and is starting to realise the benefits of cloud. "He says that this, however, is not the case across the borders, creating more opportunity within country, but also long-term options for those willing to take the leap further into the continent.

Driving cloud adoption is still the desire to digitally transform, within the enterprise specifically a requirement to not only digitise, but to improve IT agility and mobility; as well as to address leading technology trends such as Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning.

Cruise says that many of the leading cloud players are already in South Africa, but that the opportunities are still in its infancy: "The continent is still in an early adoption phase, but all indicators point to massive growth potential."

He says that another one of the biggest challenges impeding cloud adoption and overall digitisation is cloud skills: "There are simply not enough people with the experience and knowledge to effectively roll out an entire digitisation strategy, making the overall project difficult and potentially risky."

It is for these reasons that the market has seen the rise of colocation offerings and the establishment of businesses such as Routed, which provides cloud infrastructure. Encompassing the required skills and know-how, Cruise says these cloud-focused companies, will help close the digital gap significantly, and is one of the only ways digitisation will become a permanent and viable option.