SA companies edging closer to full cloud capability

While there is little doubt over the hype attached to cloud computing and services, the reality is that South Africa businesses are embracing cloud, especially solutions that are being used to strengthen contact centres and enhance customer engagement.

This is according to Paul McIntyre, CX Executive at Elingo, a Johannesburg-based leader in ICT and cloud solutions.

McIntyre agrees with the idea that cloud computing has evolved beyond the hype and is now entering mainstream.

"We are also starting to see the adoption of cloud-based technologies in the customer engagement area of the business. This is being driven primarily by the benefits of cloud, including no downtime due to technology changes, no loss of investment when hardware becomes outdated, ease of deployment and no requirement for expensive in-house skills, and many more."

McIntyre quotes a Cloud Transformation Survey, commissioned by Elingo's technology partner Genesys and focused on small-to-medium contact centres across five countries in Africa, which found that over a period of 2-3 years, 56% of contact centres are undergoing cloud transformation, while 44% have not yet moved to the cloud.

It also found that CRM is where cloud has made a significant difference to call centres, specifically with voice recording in the cloud.

Customer experience is being elevated through the cloud and companies are increasingly looking to add more channels – including SMS, social media and mobile apps – to engage customers.

"Businesses have also adopted cloud technologies for voice based cloud phone systems," McIntyre says.

Cloud has also impacted on Employee Experience (EX) and how an employee experiences working in an organisation and maximising their capabilities, as well as enabling the ability to resolve customer issues with a single view of the customer across multiple channels.

"This amplifies the customer experience … the two are connected, and cloud allows quick and easy access to functionality that can enable this," McIntyre adds.

Customers need to select a technology like Genesys that has the solution, based in the cloud, to cover all channels.

Looking ahead, as cloud becomes more pervasive and cloud solutions begin to dominate ICT infrastructure adoption, the business model will change.

According to McIntyre the advent of cloud will drive the restructuring of the business from CAPEX to OPEX and the implementation of the pay-as-you-go model – a key mechanism for the delivery of technology and applications for contact centres.