

# Data availability in a digital world

 By [Kate Mollett](#)

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With several multinational data centres set to arrive in South Africa over the coming 18 months, businesses and consumers alike are starting to view the cloud and the availability of data differently.



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The country is set to enter an exciting new digital landscape that is geared towards unlocking the true potential behind the vast amounts of data companies have stored. However, this requires a different approach to business continuity, disaster recovery, and intelligent data management.

Already, more traditional businesses are investigating the benefits that the cloud have to offer them. Once regarded as something limited to ICT firms, the cloud has now become an acceptable strategy for other sectors of the market, none more so than small to medium enterprises. This is an especially effective way for smaller companies who do not have a clearly defined IT strategy to compete more effectively with their larger counterparts.

Fundamentally, decision-makers, irrespective of organisation size and sector, need to embrace the cloud if they are to become truly digital and available. The mind shift has already started to happen where organisations are seeing the cloud and the availability of data as more of a utility instead of a luxury. As an enabler to move away from legacy IT obstacles, the cloud brings with it many advantages, especially around data management and analysis.

## All sizes

Additionally, some organisations cannot afford enterprise-grade security. But by going the cloud route, they get access to a secure environment from the service provider. It is the same with data backup and availability. All these elements are inherent to a cloud environment.

For management, this means focusing less on the day-to-day operations and more on the strategic value they can deliver for stakeholders thanks to better data analysis and management tools available through the cloud. Furthermore, business continuity becomes a more seamless prospect as it is embedded in cloud operations.

People expect to have services and information available to them at a time that suits them. The idea of normal business hours is a thing of the past. Fortunately, a cloud-driven environment sees the resources always accessible and available to deliver value for end users.

No business can afford downtime in the digital world. It has a significant negative impact on organisational success and can quickly become a crisis if the data is not available when it is needed most. Not only does this result in significant financial damage, but reputational as well which many companies could find difficult recovering from, if at all.

## Data-driven insights

Additionally, the business also needs access to data to extract meaningful insight for operations and more refined solutions. Those companies that embrace the cloud, especially when it comes to the potential for data analysis, are the ones that will get a much-needed competitive advantage.

SMEs who use these cloud-based solutions will have a vital edge over larger businesses who do not. They can quickly adapt to changes in the market, get better insights into customer requirements, and build their data for even more meaningful insights.

IT is not relegated to the server room any longer. It permeates every facet of business today. Every division in an organisation and every employee requires access to data if they are to deliver strategic value. The silo approach of old is not relevant any more.

And when it comes to data and its availability, having the ability to collaborate between teams, business units, and geographic locations, result in a more effective environment where the business bottom-line can be greatly enhanced.

Thanks to the imminent arrival of several multinational data centres in the country, local businesses will start operating on par with global best practice when it comes to the cloud. The country is certainly ready for change and set for an exciting 2019 and beyond.

## ABOUT KATE MOLLETT

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