Digital Readiness Assessment

Why a Digital Readiness Assessment is important for your business.

Tomorrow starts today
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Digitalisation is the pervasive incorporation of digital technologies into a system, resulting in an enhanced user experience and changes in the business engagement model of B2E, B2B, and B2C enterprises. It is a business, more than a technology exercise and it is driven by a Digitalisation strategy.

Digitalisation is foremost a social phenomenon that takes place on a society-wide level due to the increasing adoption of digital technologies into everyday life. The core of digitalisation is the faster mass adoption of connected digital technologies and applications by the broader consumer population, faster than businesses or enterprises. This has caused a disruption zone, creating new opportunities, new services, new business models and new competitors and companies that leverage digital technology.

At a business level, digitalisation looks not only at the increasing adoption of digital technology within business processes, but how this technology can influence the integration, automation, and optimisation of processes in order to leverage greater business potential and interact more seamlessly with the new, digitally savvy, "everywhere", or mobile, consumer.

Within a business, digitalisation has the power to seamlessly weave together the business processes, systems, customers, partners, employees and industries to achieve the ultimate connected business, providing a brilliant customer experience.

Digitalisation and Disruption

Digitalisation has been widely adopted as a business trend in emerging ‘digital first’ or ‘digital only’ businesses. Some of these are digitally built, ‘hyperscale’ businesses, such as Google, Apple, and Amazon. These are digital based companies that began by offering one simple product, but have now grown in scale to the point where they can cause disruption in any number of industries, from banking and payments, to telecoms, media, healthcare, and education.

Other ‘digital first’ businesses are newer entrants that have drastically disrupted certain industries but putting digital technology at the centre of their businesses. Examples of this include Uber, which is having a massive impact on the taxi industry internationally, and AirBnB, which is disrupting the hotel and leisure industry.

While many industries have been, and continue to be, disrupted by digital era businesses, many incumbent companies remain defiant and believe that they are immune to the disruption – this is evident by the slow adoption of digital solutions in many industries. The “business as usual” attitude and fear of change, or fear of the unknown, by organisations provides opportunities for new entrants to ‘shape’ incumbents’ industries, gain early mover or adopter advantage and divert customers away from incumbents.
Slow adoption of new technology and innovation by market incumbents, when coupled with the fast pace of digital adoption of consumers, leaves a massive space for disruption from new entrants. Successful new digital companies, once they enter a specific industry or niche, make it very difficult for others to compete and win in the space.

**Digitalisation and Business**

Digitalisation in and of itself is not a new concept. The idea that new technology can disrupt and transform a market is as old as business itself. While digitalisation is still causing major disruptions in business today, it has been around for almost two decades. One just has to look at how the entire camera and photography industry was transformed by digital photography, or how online booking changed and disrupted travel agencies.

It remains, however, that the speed and pervasiveness of digitalisation that we are seeing today are unprecedented throughout history. What Gartner calls the nexus of forces - mobility, big data, social media and cloud computing have conspired to create the perfect storm. Add seamless connectivity, IoT and unified communication and collaboration and we have a tsunami of change heading the way of Business. In order to remain competitive and relevant, it is imperative for businesses to embrace digitalisation and change before they have to.

While digitalisation has the power to transform every industry, companies must not just embrace it for the sake of it. It is important to take a thoughtful and deliberate approach to digitalisation and plot the benefits it will bring to the company. The real advantage of digitalisation lies in what can be accomplished through the strategies that are implemented. With proper planning, real benefits can be gained in terms of revenue, reputation and efficiency.

Digitalisation can cause sudden and radical shifts in traditional business models. Even if your core business remains unchanged, how you communicate your message, speak to customers, service your customers, deliver your product, or manage your internal process can change dramatically.

If something in a business can be disrupted by digitalisation, it will be. Businesses must therefore create a plan for change so that they are moving towards digitalisation not reacting against it. A successful company will have the agility to navigate the changes that digitalisation demands of it.

Digitalisation for business is not just about technology, it is about how changes in the broader society must be acknowledged and adapted to. In order to compete and remain relevant, organisations need to be able to successfully interact and transact with digital savvy consumers.

**Digitalisation vs Digitisation**

In order to embrace digitalisation, it is essential for a business to identify what and how new technology is impacting the way their industry does business or, even better, how they can impact their industry by being first to market.

The first step towards digitalisation for businesses is often the digitisation of existing business processes through the extension or support of electronic channels, content, and transactions.

Some of the major traditional business practices that are often the first to be digitised include hard copy documents and correspondence, internal communications, and customer touch points.

While starting the process of digitisation, it is important to balance electronic capabilities and traditional business practices. The level of digitisation required, and how quickly it must be effected, will often be led by consumer preferences and wider society norms and constraints.

Another important aspect of digitisation within a company looks at the internal connectivity solutions. This can include mobile communication, Internet access, fixed line communication, area networks, VPNs, etc.

All of these are extremely important to how effectively an organisation can be run, but traditionally have been treated as individual digital elements. In order to move from digitisation to digitalisation, these systems must be integrated, work together, and paired to a digitalisation strategy to transform a business.

**Digitalisation**

- Integrates
- Implemented on a business strategy level
- Encompasses all parts of the business, not just IT, led by C-level executives
- Implemented on a mental level through a change in corporate culture

**Digitisation**

- Automates
- Implemented on a technology level
- IT driven
- Implemented through physical technology
The Digital Readiness Assessment

Developing a digital strategy

While digitalisation is widely acknowledged as an important business trend, many companies are at a loss as to how to best embrace it. While they know they need to change, they do not know where to start. According to Telkom Business research as received from C-level executives at their CxO Debates, while close to 100% see digitalisation impacting their organisation, 64% did not have a clearly articulated digitalisation strategy.

While it is important for organisations to match the pace of digital change, they must first realise that driving digitalisation within a company is not just about technology. That is, it cannot just be seen as a problem for the CIO. A true digitalisation strategy will cut across the domain of all C-Level executives within a company and across all levels of Business. Buy-in and support from all business areas are essential for true digital transformation to take place. Digitalisation, therefore, is not a technology strategy but a business strategy.

By adopting digitalisation as a business strategy, it becomes part of the broader business focus. This can mean altering both internal business processes as well as how a business delivers its product. It is also important for businesses to acknowledge that digitalisation is not a big bang approach. It is a process of business evolution that a company must go through. In order for a business to achieve digital maturity, it must be part of the long-term road map for the business.

A digital strategy must therefore look at what digital components need to be incorporated into the business and what is the long-term plan in order to implement these changes. It should concentrate on the “beyond”, i.e. what will it enable the business to do.

Digital Readiness

Once a business has decided to focus on digitalisation as a key aspect of its business strategy, and there is support and buy-in from all C-level executives, the company, as a first step, should do a digital readiness assessment. The purpose of an assessment is to gauge or measure the digital maturity of a company. It is the first step in the journey to becoming a digitally focused company and provides an unbiased view of the status quo.

The assessment is aimed at helping businesses understand their current digital capability and presence. Information is gathered to help define key areas for innovation around current and future services, channels, and infrastructure.

Some of the areas that a digital readiness assessment will look at within a business include:

1. Customer engagement – what digital channels does the business provide to the customer, do they have multi-channel options, are the channels integrated into an omni-channel solution, what view does the business have of the customer, how is customer experience and engagement being measured, what data is being collected, etc.

2. Internal operations – what aspects of internal operations have been digitised, what processes are integrated, what communication systems are in use, what is the visibility of the value chain, what is the visibility of sales and marketing performance, how efficient are internal processes?

3. Governance – how is governance tracked and monitored, how are SLAs managed, is there a single view of operations, how is data being stored, sorted and managed, what security measures are in place around data, how are records kept and managed?

4. Infrastructure – how much of the infrastructure is digital, how is it monitored, is it up to date, what feedback and data does it provide?

A digital readiness assessment gives a business a clear view of where it is in its digital transformation journey by giving a clear view of its current digital maturity status.

1. http://www.telkombusinessblog.co.za/?p=2447
Elements of Digital Readiness

When conducting a digital readiness assessment it is important to look at the different areas of digital technology that can be leveraged within a business and assess to what level they are currently being utilised.

Telkom Business has identified several Key ‘technology levers’ that represent the current leading technology trends impacting all industries. Organisations need to understand how they acquire, deploy and integrate these technology trends and how they can be integrated going forward.

Examples of these technology levers include:

1. **Pervasive Connectivity** – new technology allows for constant and all-encompassing connectivity across all areas of a business. It is now possible for head offices, regional offices, branches, suppliers and mobile employees to communicate with each other and process transactions in real time, even across widely dispersed geographical locations.

2. **Machine–2–Machine / Internet of Things** – M2M and IoT can be utilised in a number of ways to increase organisational efficiency. For example, it can be used for condition monitoring across such areas as utilities measurement, perishable food monitoring, employee behaviours, time-pattern monitoring, logistics, stock control and asset tracking.

3. **Mobility** – enabling a mobile workforce that can communicate from anywhere at any time increases the efficiency and effectiveness of employees while at the same time giving them more flexibility and freedom.

4. **Unified Communications** – The integration of mobile with other real-time communication services such as IM, presence, video and data sharing with non-real-time communication services such as SMS, email, voice mail and fax, can enable communication for business processes.

5. **Social Media** – by engaging effectively with customers on social media platforms, a company can increase its brand capital, find out what customers want and need, gather important information, and enable an additional sales channel.

6. **Cloud Computing** – many key business processes can now be run through cloud services. For example, IT services and solutions such as security or data centre services such as hosted applications, backup and storage. Leveraging the power of cloud computing can increase system uptime and make necessary information or systems available across all areas of the business, even remotely.

7. **Big Data** – the volume of data being produced by businesses is expected to expand 50-fold by 2020, and unstructured data will account for 90 percent of all the data created in the next decade. Companies that are able to use big data analysis in order to spot trends, track performance and make strategic decisions will have a major advantage in many aspects of their business.

After completing a digital readiness assessment, a business will not only have clarity on its current digital presence and the level of maturity of this presence, but an idea of key areas for innovation that can be enabled across current and future channels.

Businesses, therefore, come out of a digital readiness assessment with a proposed plan of action for their digitalisation strategy.

**Benefits of a Digital Readiness Assessment**

Doing a digital readiness assessment is an effective 1st step for a company to create a unified plan and vision around its digital strategy. It is also an effective tool to create alignment across all business units and make sure that senior management is on board with the digitalisation roadmap.

A digital readiness assessment is also an effective way to give a business a jumpstart towards digital maturity. It will highlight areas of easy opportunity and flush out potential projects or business areas where digital initiatives could have a major impact on the company.

The assessment also gives businesses additional data sets to work with. They will have a clearer view of their internal business processes as well as better insight into what the market is doing. This enables improved strategy development.

Improved insight into the digital forces emerging in the market can also give a business better insight into the unknown potential disruptors that are not currently in view. This can clarify the business case for digitalisation and help to mediate future risks.

On an infrastructure level, a digital readiness assessment will also give businesses insight into the maturity of their current ICT. This includes looking at the companies’ internal digital operations and governance, as well as their customer engagement across all channels.

**Areas affected by ICT maturity in a business**

- Customer engagement
- Internal operations
- Customer engagement and experience
- Customer insight and intelligence
- Mobile engagement
- Marketing performance
- Sales performance
- Service performance
- Value chain visibility
- Channel integration
- Data and content management
- Information governance and quality
- Master data management
- Records management
- Infrastructure readiness

**Figure 1**: A Digital Readiness Assessment looks at the digital maturity of both customer engagement and internal operations.

Most importantly a digital readiness assessment will foster a new way of thinking about digitalisation within a company and provide a long-term plan for digital transformation.
Creating a digital roadmap

Once a business has decided on creating a digitalisation strategy and has conducted a digital readiness assessment to gauge its level of digital maturity, it is important to create a roadmap of the future showing how the company will complete its digital transformation.

Digital consumers are everywhere and they expect an engaging, consistent and seamless experience. Digitalisation therefore needs to be an end-to-end response if it is to work effectively. The new consumer demands a new way of doing business.

Done correctly, digitalisation holds more opportunity than risk. It has the ability to transform businesses beyond the ordinary, from good to great. The important thing to remember is that digital transformation is a journey. It cannot be accomplished overnight but is rather about aligning a business in the right way to ensure future survival, growth and a competitive edge.

Value of Digitalisation

By integrating these various digital elements into their business, companies can see real benefits across a number of areas.

Customer experience

As digitalisation is first and foremost a society level trend, by embracing it, businesses can open up new ways to engage with their clients in ways that clients want and appreciate. Digital technology allows businesses to interact with clients across a number of channels and collect information that gives them a 360 degree view of the customer.

Operational efficiency

Digitalisation allows businesses to breach Chinese walls and move beyond a silo approach allowing for the integration of previously discreet business units. This enables a new mode of doing business with more efficient and transparent processes. It also allows for greater automation of tasks, increasing turnaround time and reducing wastage.

Business Performance

Creating and executing upon a digital strategy, organisations will have the ability to effect dramatic changes within their markets. This has the potential to increase revenue, market share and profitability, enhancing reputation and market valuation. Generally, a business that has embraced digital transformation will be more robust and better equipped to deal with any sudden market changes.
In order to help you put your business on the right track to digital transformation, Telkom Business, in partnership with IBM, offers a comprehensive digital readiness assessment.

By collaborating with Telkom Business, it is possible to gain a full understanding of your business's current digital maturity as well as develop a roadmap for your digital transformation.

Telkom Business is committed to understanding what its customers need. IT can provide a solid foundation of technology offerings and will work together with your business to develop a detailed digital roadmap, covering everything that your business needs to execute digital transformation.

Telkom Business’s range of platforms and technologies ensures they never fall behind the digital curve. Through its BCX and FastNet subsidiaries, Telkom Business also provides the most comprehensive end-to-end digital solutions for business. In addition to this, Telkom Business also has a number of strategic partners that assist with enabling digital business transformation.
## Telkom Business’s key differentiators

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<th>Largest, most reliable fixed network</th>
<th>Leading POP Infrastructure &amp; backup</th>
<th>World-class Unified Communication services</th>
<th>Best mobile data network in South Africa</th>
<th>Innovation in M2M and POS</th>
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<tr>
<td>About 147,000km of fibre across South Africa</td>
<td>Most extensive POP infrastructure – IP Net, Exchanges, Fibre distribution points, Internet POPs, Internet breakout, international investment in undersea cables</td>
<td>Hosted/virtual PBXs</td>
<td>98% population coverage in SA</td>
<td>Telkom is the only service provider to include advanced M2M and PoS, complementing traditional connectivity</td>
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<td>Multiple redundancy, best availability and uptime in SA</td>
<td>Data Centre backup (9,700 square metres of hosting)</td>
<td>UC ready network (rich media capable)</td>
<td>Sites: LTE, 3G</td>
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<td>Manage data network sites sites: 47,000+</td>
<td>Device management</td>
<td>Advanced UC with collaboration and telepresence</td>
<td>2,643 mobile base stations constructed at 30 September 2015</td>
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<td>Internet subs: 560,000+</td>
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<td>End-to-end SLA and network prioritisation</td>
<td>High data quality and speed with extensive LTE coverage</td>
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<td>World-class network monitoring and management (24x7)</td>
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<td>Application performance monitoring</td>
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<td>Network &amp; application performance management</td>
<td>Converged Communications</td>
<td>Cloud and IT services</td>
<td>Wi-Fi hotspots</td>
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<td>Manage user-experience, networks and applications</td>
<td>Introduce Unified Communication platform and services</td>
<td>Provide all integrated IT, data centre and cloud services</td>
<td>Campus Wi-Fi roll-out in customer locations</td>
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<td>Deliver QoS classes for applications</td>
<td>Hosted IP Contact Centre</td>
<td>11 Data Centres in South Africa, 3 x Tier IV design certified</td>
<td>Free access to Telkom’s existing Wi-Fi hotspots as part of Mobile data offer</td>
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<td>Manage IT assets in the data centre and cloud</td>
<td>ISO20000 certified for hosting</td>
<td>Faster time to market</td>
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<td>Full range of Cloud solutions (Public, Private, Hybrid) offering IaaS, PaaS and SaaS</td>
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<td>Business requirement based IT solutions</td>
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<td>Data Residency / Sovereignty</td>
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<td>Economies of scale</td>
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<td>Service Level Agreements</td>
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### Telkom Business’s key differentiators

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<th>Leader in Data Centre Services in South Africa</th>
<th>Data Centre Facilities Management and Operations</th>
<th>Data Management Services</th>
<th>Data Centre Support Services</th>
<th>Cloud Platform Support Services</th>
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<td>BCX’s Tier IV designed-certified data centres are the benchmark for hosted information systems and applications</td>
<td>Data Centre Hosting (incl. Co-location)</td>
<td>Mainframe Support Services</td>
<td>ICT Infrastructure Management</td>
<td>Infrastructure as a service</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCX’s operational expertise combined with its management skills and experience in customer services enables the group to deliver data and facilities management ensuring a connected world at all times</td>
<td>Data Centre Operations (24/7 monitoring)</td>
<td>Open Systems Support Services (UNIX, LINUX)</td>
<td>Media Management</td>
<td>Computing as a service</td>
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<td>Data Centre Facilities Consultation</td>
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<td>ITSCM (Disaster Recovery)</td>
<td>Cloud Infrastructure (Pvt Cloud and CSB)</td>
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<td>Data Centre Facilities Upgrades</td>
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<td>Deployment</td>
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<td>Leader in Application Services, Application Development &amp; Application Outsourcing</td>
<td>One of the largest Industrial Solutions capabilities on the continent</td>
<td>The largest ICT Service Provider to the South African Retail Space</td>
<td>Full Business Consulting Capabilities</td>
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<td>Application Services provides trusted application development capabilities supported by defined methodologies to plan, design, and build quality applications.</td>
<td>Energy &amp; Industrial Solutions provides an in-depth understanding of the industrial sector enables us to provide stable and reliable ICT environments that are effective and efficient, improving production, maintenance, quality and inventory, bridging the gap between factory floor and the boardroom.</td>
<td>Africa’s largest Retail IT POS Maintenance Service Provider</td>
<td>Business Consulting provides Business Advisory, ICT Planning and Integration, Risk and Service Management Services</td>
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<td>Services are focussed on creating a mobile platform and presence for customers.</td>
<td>BCX has the largest pool of Industrial Solutions Engineers amongst its competitors and peer Systems Integrators (Si’s) – total of 99 people</td>
<td>Providing services to 8 of the 10 Top 100 Listed JSE Retailers and most of our customer contracts have been in place for &gt;15 Years</td>
<td>Business Advisory Services (BAS): Improving business performance and measurement, realising IT value, understanding changing business and operating models and managing change</td>
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<td>Application Outsourcing manages the full life cycle of application development and application management for Enterprise and Corporate Clients.</td>
<td>Accredited as an Eskom Energy Services Company (ESCO) which allows us to develop and deploy technology that will conserve power within the commercial and industrial environments.</td>
<td>Presence in 74 locations throughout Southern Africa</td>
<td>ICT Planning and Integration (IPI): Using planning frameworks and methodologies to “architect” enterprise solutions; establishing EA centres of excellence and capability, aligning ICT to business; planning ICT strategies and underlying systems</td>
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<td>Mirrored support provided to &gt; 180 Retail Stores in Ghana, Nigeria, DRC, Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda</td>
<td>Risk and Service Management (RSM): Optimising ICT processes; managing ICT Governance, improving IT service management ensuring business continuity; identity management</td>
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<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Retail IT Infrastructure Break Fix Services including Desktop Support Services</td>
<td>Specialised Procurement – value added supplier (BBBEE)</td>
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<td>Research and Development</td>
<td>Workshop Repair Services</td>
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<td>Cabling</td>
<td>Warehousing</td>
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<td>Provider of business process and IT related services to companies that operate within the Retail Value Chain</td>
<td>Specialised Procurement – value added supplier (BBBEE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides SAP oriented services, Position and JDA-related and business process optimisation services to large and medium size retail businesses</td>
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<td>Specialist retail supply chain, merchandise and store expertise focused on process and system optimisation</td>
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<td>Flexible, innovative and dynamic managed Private Cloud services for SAP and other business critical systems</td>
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<td>Proactive management and improvement of service delivery underpinned by our dedicated command centre and optimisation team</td>
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Glossary of Acronyms

3G – Third-generation wireless telephone technology
B2B – Business to Business
B2C – Business to Consumer
B2E – Business to Employee
BAS – Business Advisory Services
CIO – Chief Information Officer
CxO – Chief Experience Officer
C-level Executives – Executives at the highest level (usually with ‘chief’ in their title)
CSB – Cloud Services Brokerage
IaaS – Infrastructure as a Service
IT – Information Technology
ICT – Information and Communications Technology/ies
IM – Instant Messaging
IoT – Internet of Things
IP – Internet Protocol
IPI – ICT Planning and Integration
JDA – Johannesburg Development Agency
JSE – Johannesburg Stock Exchange
M2M – Machine to Machine
Omni-Channel – An approach to sales that seeks to provide the customer with a seamless shopping experience whether the customer is shopping online from a desktop or mobile device, by telephone or in a bricks and mortar store
PaaS – Product as a Service
PBXs – Private Branch Exchanges
PoP – Point of Presence
PoS – Point of Sale
QoS – Quality of Service
RSM – Risk Service Management
SaaS – Software as a Service
SAP – Systems, Applications and Products
SI – System Integration
SLA – Service Level Agreement
SMS – Short Message Service
UC – Unified Communications
Telkom Business is a division of the Telkom Group organisation. We exist to serve the South African and African corporate; government and SME markets. Our passion is to seamlessly connect every business towards a digital future. Our solutions are offered end to end — ensuring that your business benefits from every economy of scale and superior service quality. Our solutions are customised by taking into consideration the role of the relevant technology trends; such as: fixed mobile convergence; mobility; machine to machine; big data; Wi-Fi; broadband; LAN; WAN; cloud computing; unified communications; digital and social media and others.

Migrate your business into the digital future — contact Telkom Business today!

Business Connexion is one of the largest ICT services providers in Africa when measured in terms of turnover, assets under management and staff complement. It remains one of the leading South African cloud-based services providers with offices in South Africa, Namibia, Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Botswana, the United Kingdom and Dubai. The company employs more than 6 800 people on the African continent and generates revenue in excess of R6 billion a year.

For more information, please email tbsm@telkom.co.za
www.telkom.co.za/bigbusiness