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CASE STUDY

SOUTH AFRICA

SERVICES

ARUBA PARTNER POWERS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF AFRICA'S NEXT GENERATION FINANCIAL SERVICES PLATFORM

Mukūrū™
more than money transfers

Adopt a managed service to upgrade network across head office and branches, enabling workplace mobility and reduced management burden.

Mukuru describes itself as a 'Next Gen Financial Services Platform'. It provides a range of services to more than eight million customers throughout Africa, including cash transfer, a card product, grocery offerings and funeral cover. Its call centres deal in over 30 different languages.

"Our focus is on Africa's emerging consumers, who have previously been excluded from financial services and therefore have been financially excluded in many respects," says Lindley Heynes, Mukuru's Head of IT Operations. "We try to address the pain points and value leakages in the informal system through technology that leapfrogs those voids between the cash and digital worlds, but in a manner that our customers will still recognise for them to take that step."

SERVICE INNOVATION TO CREATE BRAND LOYALTY

The focus for Mukuru is service innovation and an improved customer experience. It wants to establish operations that are agile, mobile and efficient, and free time and energy to focus on new services.

In a competitive market, Heynes explains, being first to market with new services matters. Mukuru has managed to create a service point of difference and consistently high customer satisfaction scores: "The two main ways we build loyalty are through a human, personal approach to customer support and the strength of our technology.

"We recognised that a strong network was key to everything but we didn't want to be tied up managing the infrastructure and resolving issues," says Morne Fourie, Senior System Engineer, Mukuru. "Given our other workloads and

REQUIREMENTS

- Support robust and dynamic workplace connectivity across all locations
- Enable reliable guest internet access for Mukuru customers
- Reduce network management burden

SOLUTION

- Full Managed Services by Aruba MSP Partner MySky Networks
- Aruba Central MSP for cloud-based network management
- Cloud-managed Aruba Access Points
- Cloud-managed Aruba Access Switches
- Hosted Aruba ClearPass for NAC and Guest Access
- Third-party platform integrations

OUTCOMES

- Opex model establishes certainty around monthly costs
- Frees in-house engineering team to focus on service innovation
- Provides network monitoring and clear SLAs
- Clarifies technology roadmaps
- Creates customer service differentiation to drive brand loyalty
- Underpins sustainable growth

the pace of growth it made sense to bring in a third-party to plan and manage the refresh and ongoing operations."

LEANING ON A MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDER

Mukuru's network upgrade is planned, deployed and managed by MySky Networks, a platinum Aruba partner in South Africa. It involves an overhaul of the network infrastructure at 14 Mukuru offices, including the main locations in the Waverley and Rosebank areas of Johannesburg.

The MySky approach has been to deploy a mix of access points including AP-505 and AP-515 Wi-Fi 6 APs, with Aruba 2930M and 2530 switches in the head office and call centre

> **The MySky managed service frees us to focus on growth and new services. We have a clear view of network usage, of bandwidth, of downtime. This helps us plan any link upgrades or review branch traffic. Better planning means more effective use of our resources.**

MORNE FOURIE
Senior System Engineer, Mukuru

locations. For the first time, Mukuru owns no network hardware.

The entire environment is managed on Aruba Central. "The reporting we get from Central is more stable, more accurate than anything we've used previously," says Jamie Carruthers, Chief Operating Officer, MySky Networks.

The service provides network access to all Mukuru staff and is being extended to 13 branch offices and a larger number of kiosks. Future plans include the provision of guest access to Mukuru customers. Aruba ClearPass is being considered for use in the orchestration of secure corporate access and guest services.

RELIEVING NETWORK BURDEN ON GROWING BUSINESS

"The MSP model means that we can focus on our core business," says Fourie. "We want to make sure our people

are focused on the right things. In this market we cannot lag behind."

Heynes further emphasises: "An MSP helps us unlock other value, some of which is not immediately obvious to the bottom line but is vital for sustained growth."

The MySky managed service means Mukuru can hand-off day-to-day operations but retain clear SLAs. MySky's product expertise means Mukuru has foresight on future technology. It also offers expert integration with third-party platforms such as firewall services.

"MySky ensures we have constant access to the best skills in terms of managing our physical network infrastructure," says Fourie.

This is mission-critical. As Mukuru business continues to grow, it manages millions of transactions each year and provides remittance services from a growing network of retailers and banks. It has more than 1,000 booths and branches across Africa and its digital channels are growing.

Growth will come with new services and expanding operations throughout Africa.

"The most important part of the MySky managed service is that it frees us to focus on growth and new services," says Fourie. "We have a clear view of network usage, of bandwidth, of downtime. This helps us plan any link upgrades or review branch traffic. Better planning means more effective use of our resources."

ENABLING A MOBILE WORKPLACE

Fourie admits he was initially sceptical about the ability to go Wi-Fi-first, preferring the assumed solidity of wired: "We have some challenging locations where it is not easy to plan coverage. If we are to use Wi-Fi it has to be enterprise-ready."

The MySky service, which included a full site assessment and plan for each location, delivers enterprise class Wi-Fi. It means Mukuru's teams enjoy complete workplace mobility. Employees that work across different branches, including sales, IT and management, have seamless and secure access wherever and whenever.

It underlines Mukuru's image as a modern, flexible place to work, and helps attract new talent.

Creating a service point of difference

The engagement also accelerates Mukuru's digital plans. The business wants to drive transactions to its digital channels, including the Mukuru app, but recognises that connectivity is not always easy or cheap for migrant workers.

"Our purpose is to uplift the lives of migrant workers. Our services can empower customers to get ahead in life," says Fourie.

ACCELERATING GROWTH IN MYSKY'S SERVICE BUSINESS

For MySky, the Mukuru project is the latest in a series of engagements. The company is already a major user of Aruba Central and it is gradually migrating existing customers over to Central from Aruba AirWave. MySky also hosts Aruba ClearPass Policy Manager as a multitenant platform that can bolt onto any existing managed service offering.

"Around 60% of our revenue comes from managed services," says Dylan Horsten, CEO, MySky Networks. "The Opex model, consistency of monthly charges, guaranteed support and no hidden costs are an attractive package. Network technology can be complex and customers appreciate having a clear roadmap. Our main customer base is SMEs and, like any business, they are looking to grow. The managed services model allows them to grow their networks incrementally as well as their spend.

"Central has been massive for us in terms of our ability to scale and to manage multitenant environments. The ability to manage any sized network from the cloud, off a unified platform, will accelerate our managed services business.

"The fact that MySky uses Aruba as the vendor of choice gives our customers confidence that the infrastructure and software used to provide the managed service is of the highest quality."