

The connected business society

 By [Brian Timperley](#)

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In today's more digital world, businesses have started to focus less on the amount of data consumed and more on just having fast and reliable connectivity.



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The increasing commoditisation of data means that being able to access it, irrespective of location and device, becomes a vital competitive advantage. The abundance of bandwidth created by the influx of undersea cables sees businesses becoming more agile and having access to a dizzying array of cloud services that can be customised to meet any requirement.

Driving connectivity expansion

In the past, decision-makers would consider upgrading their line speeds when the corporate network hit 70 to 80% capacity. Today, that environment is significantly different. Modern companies are continually looking for ways to increase the amount of bandwidth available to them in order to remove any limitations to growth.

With fibre providers dramatically dropping their price points, it is starting to make business sense to drive this connectivity expansion. For example, a 100Mbps fibre connection costs the same in 2016 as a 2Mbps line in 2011. The result? A significantly bigger bang for their buck and a highly competitive and dynamic marketplace.

Unlike copper, fibre has no resale value and therefore connectivity will never go down as a result of cable theft. This age of connectivity and the opportunities it provides mean that corporates and consumers alike have changed their expectations around digital. There needs to be a constant influx of information. People are becoming less tolerant of high latency and slow speeds. For them, they just want to be connected in the fastest and most cost-efficient way.

Additionally, growing consumer use of data is driving a push in business for more bandwidth. They expect their companies to provide a seamless connectivity experience with faster speeds than what they get on their mobile devices or at home. It seems archaic not to sustain business-critical data in the fastest possible way.

Fibre shift

The outcome is that more companies are investing in fibre and embracing cloud services than just the fat pipe and dedicated offerings of the past. South Africa is experiencing a dramatic shift towards fibre.

Realistically, this is not a feasible solution for every business in a country where there is still a significant digital divide. Yet despite this, alternative solutions like mobile and satellite mean those entrepreneurs in outlying areas can still be connected and empowered. This presents more people with opportunities that were not possible in the past due to a lack of access to broadband.

In certain respects, changing expectations around content are also driving this migration to faster connectivity, and video is one of the fastest growing drivers. Sending text and photos to family and friends are no longer good enough – it has to be video. And the impact this has on bandwidth is significant.

The acceptable usage policies of old no longer apply. Those operators trying to limit users with a nominal amount of bandwidth usage are fighting a losing battle. Being connected means you want an immediate response, and will consume a decent amount of bandwidth. It is up to service providers to meet the growing demand for fast, reliable, and accessible connectivity.

ABOUT BRIAN TIMPERLEY

Brian Timperley is managing director and co-founder of Turrito Networks and managing director of Dial a Nerd.

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