

Pick n Pay migrates IT infrastructure to Amazon Web Services

Pick n Pay has announced that the migration of its IT infrastructure to Amazon Web Services (AWS) has been completed and that it will work on extending into other cloud-based applications.



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The retailer said in a statement the move has reduced its infrastructure cost by approximately 40% and that the project forms part of its Project Future to drive efficiencies across the business.

Pick n Pay's core infrastructure estate has moved completely to AWS. This includes the vast majority of systems used to run the company ranging from finance and payroll, merchandise management, inventory management at store level and supply chain systems at operating the distribution centres, to its on-demand and online shop and data and analytics functionality.

This means that Pick n Pay no longer manages its own data centres or associated technology.

This will now be housed in the cloud primarily in AWS in Cape Town, which is 140 times bigger than Pick n Pay's previous IT infrastructure.

"The scale at which they work is very different to what we're used to, and we will be harnessing and leveraging these economies of scale across our business," explains Chris Shortt, group executive - information and technology.

Shortt says this has reduced project turnaround time from week to hours. "In the past, it could take weeks to increase capacity or receive newly ordered infrastructure requirements. This would have to incorporate planning, committing to a project term, and projecting the demand for the project before ordering it.

"We now have the flexibility to rapidly scale, almost immediately. An example is peak periods, such as Black Friday and Christmas, as well as our online scheduled delivery shopping service. Previously, we'd overprovision resources to make sure our systems could manage increased trade or traffic. Our systems are now automated to respond to demand accordingly. We no longer carry the cost for additional infrastructure and capacity while we wait for the demand to catch up."

This flexibility extends to experimenting with new innovations for customers. "Through the portal on AWS, we have space ready for installation and application within minutes should we want to test a system upgrade, for example. This is also more cost-effective as we only 'pay-as-you-go' and can switch it on and off depending when it is being worked on."

Pick n Pay will also have access to the AWS ecosystem of cloud-native applications to extend and complement its existing landscape, such as Snowflake for its 'Data Lake'. "Internal and external data is now available to the entire business to run their analysis to inform key business decisions, they no longer require on the IT team to manage this."

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