ASCENT
TECHNOLOGY
ABSOLUTE DATA EXCELLENCE

GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES TURNS TO ASCENT TECHNOLOGY FOR DATA PLATFORM MODERNISATION AND CLOUD ADVISORY SERVICES

GROWTH-POINT PROPERTIES

An extensive Data Platform upgrade creates a fully virtualised, highly available and cloud ready environment to serve as a platform for Digital Transformation.

Much emphasis today is placed on the importance of Digital Transformation, and a critical part of this is the shift to the cloud. When Growthpoint Properties chose to begin its own cloud journey, through a process of Data Platform Modernisation, it needed a trusted partner and skilled technical advisor to assist throughout the process. Seeking an organisation that was experienced in supporting its clients, regardless of what stage in the cloud journey they are on, Growthpoint turned to Ascent Technology.

Growthpoint provides space to thrive with innovative and sustainable property solutions. It is the largest South African primary REIT listed on the JSE, and owns and manages a diversified portfolio of 547 property assets, locally and internationally. Growthpoint is a Platinum Founding Member of Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA), a member of the GBCSA's Green Building Leader Network, a component of the FTSE4Good Emerging Index and has been included in the FTSE/JSE Responsible Investment Index for eight years running.

According to Growthpoint CIO, Alec Davis, Ascent has worked closely with his own IT team for a number of years, so it is ideally positioned to understand Growthpoint's existing IT environment and requirements.

"As experts in the Data Platform space, we could think of no-one more perfectly placed to assist us in our Data Platform Modernisation programme. Thanks to Ascent's skilled personnel and deep understanding of complex Database Environments, the company has always been able to deliver to our needs. The value we have gained from partnering with them is such that when our company began its Digital Transformation, it was only natural we sought their assistance with this," he says.

He adds that although Ascent was initially brought on board to undertake Database Administration for Growthpoint some eight years ago, the company has since engaged them to assist with a multitude of different services, including Business Intelligence

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and Cloud Advisory Services.

"What began as a contractual service related to the Maintenance and Support of our Database Environment, along with Data Platfo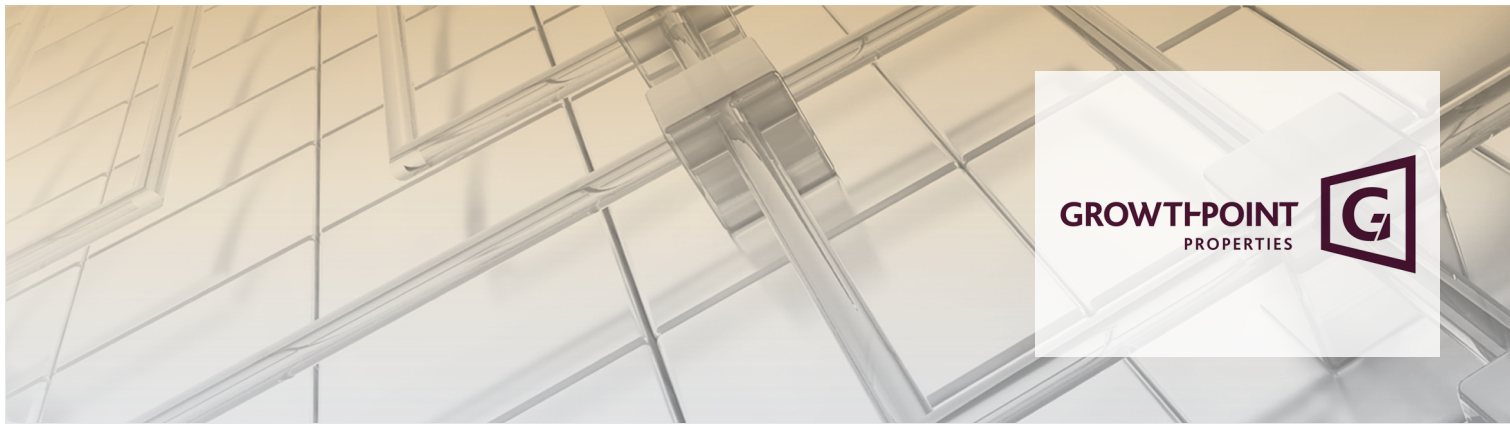rm Consulting Services, has now led to the delivery of an optimised Microsoft Azure Cloud Environment that provides us with consistency, continuity and flexibility," says Davis.

"The Data Platform Modernisation process Ascent undertook for us included a complete

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upgrade of our Microsoft SQL Server Environment, from 2008R2 to 2016. This involved the redesign of our SQL Server architecture from a purely physical environment to a fully virtualised and highly available one, including the enablement of a wide range of advanced features."

The latter, he continues, was a key part of our overall journey to the Microsoft Azure Cloud, with Ascent assisting the organisation in extracting and obtaining additional value from its Microsoft Technology Stack. While this stack is attractive and offers a lot, states Davis, it is also one that requires skill to enable, in the sense of knowing what to switch on and what not to. "It is this kind of knowledge that makes Ascent so invaluable to us."

"A good example of the value they add is how they utilised Microsoft's Operations Management Suite to monitor and automate both on premise and Azure Cloud based systems. They have also helped Growthpoint deploy ASR, enabling us to automate the replication of servers from our internal data centres to the Azure Cloud.

Another example would be Ascent's help with the definition and implementation of our automated backup solution to Azure,

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using the Microsoft StorSimple platform. With this we reduced human intervention, which then reduced the management time needed and the risk involved in the way data is backed up, as well as significantly boosting operational efficiencies."

Davis suggests that one of the key reasons Growthpoint continues to work with Ascent is the fact that over time the company has evolved its business into complimentary and new strategic areas.

What sets Ascent apart, continues Davis, is the fact that while they remain exceptional at Database and BI Consulting and Support Services, they have also expanded their offerings in such a way that they have been able to help the Growthpoint organisation move forward.

"It has been easy from our side to relate to Ascent Technology as our Data Platform co-sourcing partner, as it is a company that both understands technology trends and the challenges in our environment. Moreover, the enormous levels of experience it brings to the table, along with the ability to cut through

any nonsense and get the job done quickly and effectively makes Ascent our partner of choice."

"We are very pleased with having Ascent as a partner, and with the fact that both our organisations continue to grow together. They have added enormous value to our business over the past eight years and we look forward to continuing our journey with them for a long time to come."

Johan Lamberts, MD at Ascent Technology says that the feeling is mutual. "We are proud to have an organisation with Growthpoint Properties' pedigree as a client and we have built a trusted and fulfilling partnership with them over the past eight years."

"In this time we have worked closely with them to add business value to their organisation, while delivering a professional and high quality service. The length of this relationship underlines Ascent Technology's value as a trusted advisor in the Enterprise Data Platform space, and we are excited to continue assisting them on their Digital Transformation path," he concludes.