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INDWE BROKER HOLDINGS DERIVES ON-GOING VALUE FROM LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP WITH ASCENT

INDWE RISK SERVICES
going the extra mile

Indwe Broker Holdings is the largest independent short term insurance brokerage in South Africa, with approximately 30 offices around the country. The company has around 600 people in its employ and a customer base in excess of 100 000. Indwe focuses on personal, commercial and corporate short term insurance, meaning that its IT systems need to be world class.

As insurance brokers, the operational management of such IT systems is not part of its core business, which is why outsourcing its database administration made sense. Ascent Technology was thus brought in to look after what was initially a mixed Microsoft and Oracle database technology environment. Ascent's vast experience working in heterogeneous environments meant that it was the ideal organisation to provide this service to Indwe.

"Furthermore, when we chose to simplify the database environment by migrating across to a single platform, Ascent was ideally positioned to deliver on this requirement as well. Ascent Technology is a company that has enormous experience in database administration and a deep understanding of the technologies involved. This meant that it was able to develop a technology roadmap in order to systematically migrate our environment across to the Microsoft platform," says Arshaad Akoob, Head of Architecture, Infrastructure and Support Services at Indwe.

"Recently, Indwe took the decision to outsource its data warehouse management and administration. Once again, we turned to Ascent, due to the company's experience with the Microsoft environment and its ability to focus multiple resources and skills on the task at hand," he says.

According to Ascent MD Johan Lamberts, since the company has begun looking after Indwe's data warehouse management environment, it has steadily been upgrading it from Microsoft SQL Server 2000 to SQL Server 2008.

"Indwe was aware of the need to upgrade from what was becoming an unsupported and obsolete platform; our deep knowledge of the Microsoft SQL Server environment and the skills we have in this arena have made the upgrade and the customisations required a relatively simple task," he says.

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Akoob points out that one of the main reasons Indwe has worked with Ascent for so many years has been the cultural fit between the two organisations.

"We have a young, dynamic and culturally diverse IT team, so it is important that our service provider brings the same kind of values to the table. For these projects to have worked, we needed a partner that was prepared to deliver the right solution, that could bring the necessary skills and that could comfortably fit into our existing IT environment."

"When you find a partner that can help you develop a strategic technology roadmap, that will play a trusted advisor role and that offers skilled and experienced personnel, a strong technical focus and a deep understanding of complex database environments, you stick with them. We have had a relationship with Ascent since their inception and plan to continue it for many years to come. Therefore, we have already indicated to Ascent that the existing contracts we have with them will most definitely be renewed," concludes Akoob.

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