

ASCENT TECHNOLOGY HELPS RMA RE-ARCHITECT ITS DATA PLATFORM ENVIRONMENT



Ascent Technology assists Rand Mutual Assurance (RMA) with modernising its Windows Server and SQL Server, Azure Based Data Platform Architecture, ensuring Agility and Flexibility to cater for the company's increased workloads.

RMA is South Africa's leading administrator for occupational injuries and diseases for the mining and metals industries. The organisation is owned by its policy holders and operated in terms of section 30 of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases (COID) Act. As an organisation that is compassionate and caring, RMA goes the extra mile to ensure that beneficiaries and their families receive the care and compensation they are entitled to when they have sustained either a work-related injury or an occupational disease.

Such an approach speaks to the core of RMA's administration business, which can be described as the receipt, adjudication and administration of workers' compensation claims, including the payment of medical costs, once-off disability payments and the ongoing payment of pensions in the case of severe disability and death.

RMA has over one million lives in its care, mainly from the mining and metals industries. The company has witnessed such significant growth in recent years that management chose to review its Data Platform Architecture.

According to Johan Kok, ICT Operations and Technology Manager at RMA, the rapid growth of the business had led to an increasing number of challenges being experienced with the Database Systems, notably related to Performance and Maintenance.

"We soon realised that what was required to address these challenges was a partner with high end Data Platform skills. Therefore, we chose to seek out a leader in this field who would be best positioned to help us. Based on RMA's particular requirements as well as previous experiences with the company, we turned to Ascent Technology to assist us," he says.

Kok points out that while RMA is an early Microsoft Azure Cloud adopter and already hosts its entire Database Environment in Azure, its existing systems were developed in 2011. In addition, the business growth in the intervening years meant that a further level of modernisation was required. This was to ensure that the systems stayed Agile and Flexible enough to handle the company's needs.

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Asked about what this entails, he explains that Ascent configured the company's SQL Server Database Systems, and enabled Database Security and Compliance. The latter is performed by Ascent's DB Shield Service, which tracks all transactions and provides a full audit trail. This is critical, considering the amount of confidential information RMA deals with. Furthermore, he adds, Ascent provides a 24/7 Managed Database Administration Service to ensure that the systems are functioning optimally.

“Most crucially, Ascent, our trusted advisor, assists RMA to fully leverage Azure by advising us regarding new Azure features/capabilities as they are launched. ”

“The Flexibility and Agility of Azure are vital to RMA, as the company is now adding new business streams – for example, funeral cover insurance – and has also extended its product

offering into the employee insurance areas for comprehensive protection beyond COID, such as insuring workers who may have been injured in a non-work related accident, while they are away from work.” he says.

Johan Lamberts, MD of Ascent Technology says that the company is pleased to be considered a trusted partner by RMA. “We are pleased to have an organisation of RMA's stature as a client and are thrilled to be the one they have turned to in order to help them re-architect their Data Platform Environment to take full advantage of Azure. We look forward to continuing our efforts to maintain and improve their Data Platform Environment, and anticipate a long and fruitful relationship,” he says.

Kok adds that RMA views Ascent as its strategic partner for all its Data Platform requirements, and has been pleased with the feedback and guidance received so far.

“Moreover, when challenges have arisen, they have been at hand to resolve these and ensure the systems are performing optimally. Thanks to their contribution, we are well-positioned to begin the next stage of our organisational evolution,” he concludes.