

ITEC PRESS RELEASE

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Load shedding threatens economic viability

A move to the cloud might be industry's only lifeline, says Itec

Expected load shedding is set to cause chaos by disrupting productivity in the South African economy. Itec believes that cloud and energy back-up solutions will provide businesses with a lifeline.

Eskom has already warned that should energy consumption not be reduced, it will resort to load shedding and as we prepare for another cold front, the risk is increasing. This is on the back of renewed fears of a repeat of 2008, where according to NERSA the ongoing rolling blackouts cost the economy around R50 billion.

"This is bad news for corporate South Africa, particularly as our economy is already under severe pressure," says Rodney Taylor, managing director of Itec Communications. "Those hardest hit are often smaller businesses as they do not have the infrastructure onsite to cope with extended power failures."

Taylor has witnessed a moved to cloud solutions, as organisations try to mitigate the damage caused to business operations through power outages. "As the risk of power outages continues to increase, many organisations are looking to cloud solutions to ensure they can maintain productivity when the power is out," he says. The challenge here, however, is that if there is a power outage on the client's site, they might still not be able to access their data.

"While the data centre has backup power available to continue operating, electricity is required on the client site in order for them to operate," says Taylor. "To counter this problem, Itec has developed a device in partnership with Ellies, which plugs into a wall socket and will power up your whole business for a six hour window period, which is longer than Eskom's stated load shedding periods."

It is also critical for businesses to find ways of flattening peaks and demands when it comes to electricity usage. "This device is designed to do just that and Eskom is encouraging this move," says Taylor.

Cloud-based communications starting a general trend

"The move to cloud has been spurred in no small measure by the country's dramatic shortage of telephony skills," says Taylor. What began as a moving communications to the cloud due to absolute necessity, has shown organisations the advantages cloud solutions can deliver to business generally. Now, as the country faces load shedding once again, the move to cloud is viewed as a truly viable business option. "By moving their communications to the cloud, clients have reduced their risk of downtime significantly." This is managed through centralised servers for big branch networks, allowing

for branches to automatically divert to head office in the event of a power failure. “This means that clients can ensure their communications never goes down again,” he adds.

The new product, launched in June, offers a lifeline for businesses in South Africa. It is cost-effective, easy to use and the smallest of the devices can handle up to 500 power failures. “This solution is also extremely scalable, which makes it accessible to smaller companies, yet allows us to also provide for larger organisations,” says Taylor. The larger units have the capability of not only keeping businesses running during power failures, but also generating additional electricity which could be fed back onto the grid.



ABOUT ITEC

Itec is Southern Africa’s fastest growing office automation, production printing and telecommunications solutions provider - with annual revenue of nearly two billion rand. Through its 47 Southern African branches and an international footprint that includes the United Kingdom, the company implements total office solutions based on imported, industry-leading, and award-winning products.

Itec serves medium-sized and large businesses in sectors as diverse as financial services and retail - supporting its innovative solutions with proactive service delivery. Some of its 18 000 customers include Value Logistics, Implats, Department of Housing, Business Connexion, ADT, Rand Refinery, First National Bank, AngloGold Ashanti, National Health Laboratory Services and Advtech.

Itec management rebranded the company in 2004 following a merger of the separate copier, printer, and fax business units initially established in 1987.

For more information, please see www.itecgroup.co.za.

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