

# DATACENTRIX CLEANS UP AT UMGENI WATER

**Umgeni Water (UW), the largest bulk water supplier in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, embarked on a consolidation project to optimise its branch infrastructure, improving security and performance with the assistance of IT services and solutions provider, Datacentrix.**

“The Umgeni Water Information Services Department (IS) provides a vital support service to the organisation and its subsidiary, Msinsi Holdings, a wholly-owned subsidiary that runs resort facilities on Umgeni Water dams for the eco-tourism and nature conservation businesses,” says Roop Maharaj, IT operations manager at Umgeni Water. “We advise on business solutions such as technology infrastructure, products, systems and services. Over the past four years or so, an upgrade of the existing ICT infrastructure was put on hold while the organisation conducted an extensive study on an optimal sourcing strategy for these technological business solutions.”

A number of projects were identified from the research conducted, with a Microsoft Ac-

tive Directory services and computer room infrastructure upgrade implementation identified as strategic in order to lay a solid foundation for future projects.

Says Maharaj: “The key objectives of this project included the creation of a secure platform for authentication, identity management, messaging and collaboration as well as installing secure technologies and processes for desktop management and IT support. In addition, we needed to consolidate our servers and storage facilities, allow for more efficient bandwidth utilisation and enable reliable communications among users at all sites. Other requirements included reliable mobile computing, automated network administration and decentralised user management.

“We also identified that in order to meet these objectives, Umgeni Water would have to migrate from Windows NT4 and Exchange 5.5 to a Microsoft Windows 2003 Active Directory and Exchange 2003 environment, upgrade servers with the aim to consolidate and ensure the successful transfer of knowledge and skills to Umgeni staff.”



Umgeni Water went out to tender for a solutions provider to assist with this project and, after a lengthy process of adjudication and due diligence, Datacentrix was selected as technology partner. “We opted to partner with Datacentrix based on a number of important factors,” Maharaj explains. “The company’s strong skills and expertise in server and storage consolidation and Active Directory was a key consideration, as well as its strong BEE credentials coupled with its sound financial track record. Additionally, Datacentrix boasted solid customer references of similar successfully completed projects, could provide the required service delivery value add and had demonstrated its ability to execute and commitment to both Umgeni Water and the project itself.” Umgeni Water immediately reaped the reward of several benefits such as enhanced security, increased uptime, flexibility in terms of expansion, a reduction in system maintenance and management costs and optimised network speed as well as improved utilisation of IT staff and resources. **N**