

Look to the cloud for payroll and HR compliance across borders

'Africa is not for sissies' is a phrase often used by businesses who are operating in various regions on the continent. Africa is made up of many different countries, each with their own culture, as well as rules and regulations that present both challenges and opportunities.



Heinrich Swanepoel, Head of Sales, at PaySpace

The complexity of doing business on the continent is getting increasingly challenging so attempting to do business in traditional ways are often doomed to fail.

"Business leaders and owners wishing to operate in Africa need to have the peace of mind that many of the main challenges they are faced with in Africa are taken care off," says Heinrich Swanepoel, Head of Sales, at PaySpace, a leader in payroll and human capital management software. "This could range from accurately interpreting local legislation changes or having reliable electricity, to finding suitable partners in a certain country to service specific needs."

According to Swanepoel, even before the world was swept up in the Covid-19 pandemic, expanding businesses wasn't easy. "However, post-Covid, this is likely to be even more challenging. The companies which are thriving or even surviving are implementing essentials instead of 'nice to haves'. In addition, the world had seen a rapid increase in digital transformation, which isn't possible without a move to the cloud."

He says Microsoft, for example, has opened new regions in Africa that are assisting businesses to accelerate services for

people and organisations from Cape Town to Cairo and helping them become part of one of the largest networks on the planet.

So while Covid has forced the world to embrace online technologies and cloud platforms, all solutions are not created equal. “We need to look at what businesses really need when it comes to their cloud software.”

Accessibility

The first thing, according to Swanepoel, is increased productivity. “There are two things that the right cloud software can enable. Firstly, having access to software from anywhere, and on any device. Businesses across the board need to face the fact that we never going to go back to the way things were. The pandemic has set in place new ways of working and having access to the software employees need to do their jobs.”

Next, he says it is all about integration. “Importing and exporting information and sending timesheets is a duplication of work and a massive waste of time. API Integration and Web Services Integration makes it child’s play for customers and developers to integrate with a variety of third-party applications. This includes existing on-premise solutions that will be around for some time.”

Organisations are also looking for greater visibility, “The days of legacy software, and manual sheets and reporting after the fact are over. Companies simply must have access to the information they need in real-time, to pinpoint the impact and have the ability to make decisions quickly.”

Security, compliance and agility

He adds a caveat: “Remember, that this functionality can also open the doors for ‘bad actors’ to carry out cybercrime by weakening security. Therefore any business looking to adopt a cloud solution, must ensure that they are both GDPR and PoPI compliant. A good provider that can promise 100% compliance will also include additional functionality such as single sign-on and multi-factor authentication which adds a much-needed extra layer of cyber security.”

Finally, he says companies cannot ignore agility. “Today’s businesses need to be able to move fast, a lesson the pandemic has brought home rather forcefully. Take for example legislative changes in Africa. A staggering 60% of Africa has had legislative changes over the past 90 days, amounting to nearly one a day. Getting this wrong could be hugely detrimental to your organisation’s bottom line.”

However, with cloud software, your business will always enjoy the latest and greatest version that is fully up to date with legislative changes, which will enable your business to adapt and scale according to its specific needs, he concludes.

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