

“Liquid Telecom’s network is reliable, stable and cost effective, and is effectively backed by strong in-house technical skills and great SLAs.”

- Steve Groenewald, IT Manager at Harambee

## Liquid Telecom pulls it all together for Harambee

Harambee is swahili for ‘all pull together’, and the company aims to play a major role in overcoming the massive challenge of youth unemployment in south africa. Harambee youth employment accelerators’ goal is to reduce the risks to employers of hiring first-time workers and equip first-time job seekers with much-needed soft skills. The company has developed a bespoke model that, on scale, sources, trains and places unemployed young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into first-time jobs. Harambee focuses on supplying entry-level staff with the right behaviours, ability, interest and attitude to perform in their specific business, all of whom are drawn from a previously untapped talent pool.

This leads to improved retention rates and lowers hr and training costs. The company provides tailor-made bridging programmes to ensure new staff have the confidence, skills, and functional behaviour to do more than just a job – they have the potential to build a career. The company’s bridging programmes currently focus on the retail, business process outsourcing (bpo), hospitality and financial services sectors.

### Overview

**Products:** neovpn, neointernet, neovoice, neohost and burstable internet

#### Business benefits:

- Reduced hardware and it cost savings that allows for improved budgeting
- Optimal network stability and uptime
- Access to higher bandwidth during peak periods on a pay-per-use basis

#### Solution features:

- Flexible bandwidth allocation on branch level

## Challenge

Harambee has proved to be such a successful and necessary concept that the company has experienced massive growth on a national scale. Today, the company has six offices – two in Cape Town and additional offices in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth.

The major challenge created by such growth, explains Steve Groenewald, the organisation's IT Manager, is that the broadband connections the company had in place were not sufficient to enable the branches to interconnect with the head office.

"This meant that we found ourselves in the awkward position of having to upgrade our bandwidth needs on what was essentially a monthly basis. This was both cumbersome and increasingly costly," he says.

Groenewald adds that he had, in the past, utilised Liquid Telecom's services and so he told the management team at Harambee about the company's strong MPLS network, suggesting it might be a better option than the one that was being used.

"Firstly, using the MPLS reduces our hardware costs, as we only require a single domain controller and PABX, but more importantly, the Internet is crucial to our business – not only for inter-branch connectivity, but also for the fact that applicants use our Website to upload their details. If the Internet access goes, the impact on the business is huge."

## The solution

"When I joined Harambee and saw the challenges we were facing, I decided Liquid Telecom was the only way forward. I had previously worked

with Liquid Telecom and was well aware of the great service they provide. I immediately contacted them and discussed the various solutions they could offer."

Liquid Telecom installed NeoVoice SIP Trunk connections across all six branches, as well as its premier MPLS service, NeoOne with VPN Layer 3 connections between the branches. Since each branch's bandwidth requirements were different, the branches received bandwidth allocations according to their needs. This resulted in lower costs and ensured optimal network stability and up-time.

"To address our constantly changing connectivity needs, Liquid Telecom offered us a burstable solution. In this way, we don't need to pay for a 50MB connection when most of the time we are using much less bandwidth than this. However, should we find ourselves in a position where we require more bandwidth, it is a simple matter to burst out and pay as we use," he continues.

Furthermore, Harambee hosts its application and file servers in the Liquid Telecom Data Centre, which, Groenewald points out, is also a world class facility. "The beauty of this is that it means we are able to utilise MPLS bandwidth when accessing the servers, rather than Internet breakout traffic. This, in turn, results in greater stability and access to higher bandwidth rates at lower costs."

"As far as the actual project goes, it took approximately two months for the implementation, including all the planning and the configuration changes. Our network has 1000+ users, and getting the firewall configuration spot on and fine tuning the network took a bit of time."

"Sorting the configuration out for six separate branches was quite complex, and if it wasn't for our Liquid Telecom account manager, I think the challenges we faced might have overwhelmed us. However, they worked closely with us and helped to solve every minor issue that raised its head, and this made the project considerably easier for us," adds Groenewald.

## The results

Harambee has experienced several benefits since Liquid Telecom came on board, most notably, he says, the cost savings have greatly assisted with budgeting. After all, he points out, the company now pays a fixed fee for its service, with the ability to burst if required, rather than constantly having to upgrade its service, as it did in the past.

"The new service is stable, and there are reliable connections between the various branches and also with my servers in the Liquid Telecom Data Centre. This is critical since at their most basic, my requirements were for a service that delivered reliability and stability."

"The fact that we have not experienced downtime since Liquid Telecom came on board has been fantastic, as for us, downtime equals lost business and unhappy users. In addition, the stability of the network means that I have not even had to think about talking to another service provider to obtain a redundant link. Liquid Telecom's network is so stable and their service level agreements (SLAs) so good that we haven't felt the need for alternative connections," he adds.

"Overall, I would have to say that Liquid Telecom's solutions and the service we have received from the company has been brilliant. The network is reliable, stable and cost effective, and the company also has strong in-house technical skills, which means any challenges are quickly resolved. I would be only too happy to recommend Liquid Telecom to other businesses – after all, they have helped us enormously and there is no reason why they would not be able to do the same for others," he concludes.

**Liquid Telecom – the better communication backbone for business**

Switch to Liquid Telecom

For more information call Centre on 0860 636 835

**LIQUID**  
TELECOM