

PACIFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS BUILDS OUT BIG FOR THE CLOUD

Dubai-based automation solutions company Pacific Control Systems is building what it claims will be the largest data center in the Middle East.

It is also developing a dedicated cloud computing laboratory at the Vienna University of Technology that will focus on cloud solutions for the construction industry.

The data center will include 60,000 sq ft of computing space at a cost of US\$85m. The company also plans 24 'command centers' for cloud services provision to the international building industry by the end of Q3 2013 for its cloud services.

The dedicated cloud computing laboratory



being built with the university will focus on enhanced virtual software services to support efficient energy and facility management in buildings and infrastructure.

Pacific Controls Chief Executive Dilip Rahulan said that virtual robots (called Gbots) will be used for remote management. Developed by Pacific Controls, Gbots are

part of a virtual service which Rahulan said could revolutionize the way managed services are delivered for the construction industry. "Gbots are the new paradigm for the virtualization of managed services. The intelligent, autonomous, self-learning software agents will be deployed across networks for diverse automated services," Rahulan said.

MIDDLE EAST

IP and content distribution services will be increased in the Middle East, with telecommunications operator **Saudi Telecom** and **Level 3 Communications**, a provider of fiber-based communications services, agreeing to provide 10Gbps ports at various points of presence (POPS) across Europe. The deal will also offer US and European customers access to the Middle East market and vice versa.

UGANDA

Uganda reported an 'Internet blackout' on 7 March due to two cut fiber connections between the country and Kenya. Local reports attributed the blackout to "sabotage", saying the cables, which link Ugandan telecommunications to undersea cables connected to the rest of the world, were cut. **EASSY** cable and **TEAMS** run both networks.

WEST AFRICA

Regional networking and cabling infrastructure supplier **Main One** signed a deal with **Cisco** for its Internet Protocol Next Generation

Network Solution to expand services across West Africa. It said demand for high-bandwidth secure network capacity is surging. It plans to develop network and application service offerings for private and public communications networks.

SOUTH AFRICA

Government-owned **Telkom South Africa** appointed a new CEO – Nombulelo (Pinky) Moholi – but said it is still seeking candidates for its leading operator role in the data center and its CFO. An engineer by trade, Moholi takes the place of Jeffrey Hedberg.

Altech Technology Concept is rolling out a network in Cape Town that will be launched alongside a Durban line in June as part of a R30m investment for broadband services. The network will be housed in the **Teraco** data center in Isando, east of Johannesburg.

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NORTH AFRICA NET USE CONTROLLED

Governments in the Middle East and North Africa troubled by recent protests have been cutting or controlling Internet access in an effort to stop the flow of information coming in and out of their countries.

In February and March, the Internet in Libya was completely shut down. The Internet in Yemen was also thought to be under tight control with filtering put in place, and Algeria forced the shut-down of its Internet to prevent the organization of protests, according to Arbor Networks.

Arbor Networks Chief Scientist Craig Labovitz said some cuts to connections went even further than the Internet. In some countries, phone lines had also been disrupted.

Arbor Networks has been carrying out analysis of connectivity

and service provision in the region using real-time data from providers from around the world to identify cuts to services.

"Overall, our data shows pronounced changes in Internet traffic levels in the Middle East [since the protests have started]," Labovitz said. "While network failures and other exogenous events may play a role in decreased traffic volumes, we observe the changes in Bahrain and Libya are temporally coincident with the onset of recent protests."

A number of Bahrain-based telecommunications companies blamed the slowdown on "overloaded circuits" and extremely high use.

Protestors turned to Twitter to air news from the uprisings and to disseminate information about upcoming protest events.