

Rocket Software Case Study :: Telkom South Africa

Rocket



SITUATION

Telkom SA Ltd. (TSA) is one of the largest communication services providers in Africa. Its network consists of local copper loops, microwave and fiber optic loops, and wireless connections, all of which support more than four million fixed access lines. Since 1999 the company has worked with Rocket Software to configure and monitor its SS7 switching devices, which are used to route all of South Africa's national and international phone calls. In order to maintain its world-class level of service, TSA needed a network management system (NMS) that could perform key functions not provided by the hardware vendors.



In particular, Telkom needed:

- A custom solution, that could be easily enhanced over time to fulfill new requirements
- Outstanding support, with virtually no downtime
- An application that would be easy to use by operators, and would enforce strong business rules and system consistency.
- A tool with powerful map capabilities so that all monitoring could be based on maps.
- A solution that would support the new SS7 over IP protocols
- The ability to display the NMS on the wall of the National Network Operations Centre (NNOC), which is the largest video display in the world.

SOLUTION

The SNMS application was first implemented by Rocket Software in 2001 using the Catalant framework - a technology originally developed by TCSI, which was acquired by Rocket Software in 2003 - and then a major upgrade was completed in 2007. This state-of-the-art framework has permitted rapid development and is highly customizable: several custom interfaces have been implemented, and the system has been customized to meet TSA's requirements. In addition, two GUIs have been implemented - one for operators to use and one for the company's huge NNOC wall display.

"We started working with Rocket Software's telecom unit in 1999, and it has been a major asset for us," says Juan DuPreez of Telkom." In the last two years their flagship Catalant framework has gained full maturity, which has enabled us to upgrade our system and get it working up to our standards. The SNMS application has made it so easy to make changes, it's much more user friendly, and it is easier to work with. We have had outstanding support from Rocket Software: they have listened very carefully to our requirements and have done an outstanding job customizing it to meet our needs. This system is an important asset in our ability to monitor and configure our SS7 network, which in turn is reducing the number of system outages and improving Telkom's ability to deliver outstanding service to our customers."

RESULT

In 2007 the new SNMS solution was deployed, and Telkom reports that the installation resulted in no data loss. In addition, many operators are now monitoring and configuring the SS7 network as well as the brand new SS7 over IP Network from their desktops, creating dramatic improvements in service. The advanced mapping capabilities allow Telkom to simultaneously display seven large maps on its NNOC wall, allowing system engineers to monitor the health of the network and pinpoint potential problems in a single glance. To allow even greater responsiveness, the user interfaces are deployed using WebStart, meaning that no client installation is required; as a result, users with remote access permissions can access the system from their homes or whilst they are out of the office (including while they are on their lunch break) to handle emergency situations and fix them before they escalate.

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