

Africa's internet growth driven by content demands

Teraco has made a significant investment in a new, programmable switching platform, from Arista Networks, an industry leader in software driven cloud networking, increasing the speeds and capacity of its Internet eXchange at NAPAfrica.



Lex van Wyk

The migration comes four years after the initial launch of the internet eXchange point (IXP) and is based on the growth and demand for content across the African continent. It will also further boost the standing of NAPAfrica, which is currently rated within the top 20 largest global IXPs by membership.

Teraco CEO, Lex van Wyk says that NAPAfrica is not only Africa's largest IXP, but a leading industry player, having established and pioneered the role of peering and the importance of a continent-wide IXP: "The growth has been phenomenal since the launch in 2012 with over 140 GBPS of traffic and 200 members, including the top largest content owners such as Google, Microsoft, Netflix, Akamai, Cloudflare, etc. NAPAfrica is now a critical component of Africa's Internet ecosystem and we expect the growth to continue as investment into Africa becomes a more viable business case."

Given its vital role, Van Wyk says that migration to a more robust network with Arista was a natural progression and logical approach: "The Arista platform supports port speeds of up to 100Gbps and we anticipate deploying our first ports in November."

Of the Teraco migration, Mark Foss, senior vice president of global operations and marketing for Arista Networks says, "Arista is growing its presence in Africa and is delighted to work with one of the biggest data centres on the continent. This is a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of Arista EOS (Extensible Operating System) and Africa is considered a key market for expansion."

Notwithstanding the investment, Teraco, will continue to offer the NAPAfrica service at a 100% discounted policy in its contribution to grow content on the continent and passing the benefit of accessing the internet to anyone colocated and connected to Teraco. "This obviously represents a significant investment for the exchange, and I would like to thank Teraco for the continued funding," says Foss.

Moving forward, Teraco's Van Wyk says that as pioneers within the data centre space, innovation runs deep and remains key to the company: "The NAPAfrica migration with Arista is yet another innovative approach by Teraco and we look forward to growing the available content and establishing new standards within the IT service sector."

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