

# Can we communicate better in a digital era?

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Data leaks, even if accidental or unintentional, can have serious financial repercussions for organisations. A forecast by Juniper Research suggests that the global annual cost of data breaches could reach more than \$2.1 trillion in 2019, due to the rapid digitisation of consumers' lives and enterprise records.



Source: [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com)

McAfee research shows that internal threats are responsible for 43% of data loss, half of which is intentional and half accidental, while 64% of security professionals feel that data loss prevention technology could have prevented data exfiltration events.

It is, therefore, self-evident why the popularity of enterprise communication platforms is on the rise, with some of these applications providing the ease of use of WhatsApp, while allowing an organisation to have governance over the data.

Consider that if an employee leaves an organisation and they've been using WhatsApp for their business communication, all that data leaves with them. On the other hand, if they are part of the company domain on a unified enterprise communication platform, that data can be erased from their devices as soon as they leave.

## **Be careful of where the data lives**

This is especially pertinent to entities such as government agencies, which must strictly adhere to financial and legal regulations and must be very careful where their data resides. If you're using something like WhatsApp, that data resides in another country that may have access or legal rights to it. This is obviously a real issue.

However, with some of the recently developed messaging applications for enterprises, your data will be co-located as close to your billing address as possible, which means that you can choose and specify where it is hosted.

We've seen some of these apps coming out recently and taking the corporate world by storm and some have been snapped up by large vendors that are working on evolving them to meet all enterprise requirements.

From an uptake point of view, interest has been huge among corporates. In South Africa, this uptake has largely been driven by companies with large workforces that need to communicate with their employees yet have the benefit of having control over their data, who sees what, who gets what and the ability to erase this data, when needed.

## **Benefits should not be overlooked**

The financial benefit of using some of the platforms should also not be overlooked. Many of these applications do not charge licensing fees and it doesn't always make sense to subscribe to a service when you have thousands of employees. The costs implications could be significant.

However, it is unlikely that any one enterprise messaging app will dominate in any significant way. There is currently a proliferation of these platforms, but most fizzle out, or get taken over by established vendors.

Even WhatsApp will see a massive reorganisation soon, as it tries to monetise the platform. This means that they will probably lose half of their users and the next great messaging platform will come along.

It's a constant evolution and no one is likely to dominate any corner of the market for more than a couple of years. That's the nature of software – it's extremely competitive.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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