CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Built a telco cloud that prepares the company for delivering 5G services

Streamlined management with consistent infrastructure across operations

Implemented a foundation for expanding telco cloud functions and extending to the edge

Tigo Accelerates Its 5G Journey by Building a Telco Cloud with VMware

5G network technology is here—and telecom service providers across the globe are rapidly preparing to roll out 5G services. For Tigo, implementing a telco cloud is a key step. To build that cloud, the company first simplified its complicated multi-cloud environment. It then established a consistent infrastructure across its Latin American operations and business units with VMware reference architectures. Tigo now plans to extend its network to the edge so it can deliver responsive customer experiences while reducing costs.

Beginning the 5G journey

For Tigo, delivering 5G services to businesses and consumers in Latin America and Africa will be essential for supporting the company's mission: building robust digital highways that connect people, improve lives, and develop communities. With the promise of fast connections, greater capacity, and low-latency performance, 5G network technology will benefit users while creating a range of new use cases for businesses and communities.

The Tigo leadership team recognized that rolling out 5G services would require important modifications to the company's network infrastructure. "5G is way more than a change in the access network technology," says Xavier Rocoplan, Millicom's executive vice president, and chief technology and information officer. "It requires a lot of capability from the core of the network to move workloads around. The network from the inside has to be different. For that, telco cloud is a fundamental enabler."

Tigo is the principal brand for Millicom—a leading provider of cable and mobile services, dedicated to emerging markets in Latin America and Africa. Headquartered in Luxembourg, the company has more than 22,000 employees and serves approximately 52 million customers with a cable footprint of more than 11 million homes.

INDUSTRY

Telecommunications

HEADQUARTERS

Millicom is headquartered in Luxembourg with a United States corporate office in Miami, Florida.

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Before moving forward with a telco cloud, Tigo first needed to simplify and unify its fragmented multi-cloud environment. That effort would be critical for optimizing agility and efficiency across the company's nine Latin American operations and three distinct business units—B2B, IT and telco. As it is with many telecom companies, the IT groups from these distinct geographic operations and business units were functioning independently. "Most of the operations were deploying cloud architectures on their own," says Rita Fuziol, director of data center, cloud and infrastructure. "There was no central governance, operating model, or single technology that would allow us to standardize our services."

Building a telco cloud with VMware

The Tigo team began to unify cloud governance, centralize administrative operations, and standardize job roles. The team was then ready to make some architectural decisions. "We needed to standardize and consolidate the infrastructure underneath all these business units—the internal organizations that were consuming the resources," says Fuziol.

The Tigo team began evaluating potential technology partners and their solutions. "We decided to have a common cloud stack, and with that decision, VMware became the main vendor," says Fuziol. Her team recognized that with a broad portfolio, VMware could deliver "very good platforms, very good solutions, and a solid roadmap to allow us to keep moving into that future network transformation that was needed for 5G."

Tigo created a converged telco cloud platform, named Iridium, using the VMware Telco Cloud reference architecture for telco plus the VMware Validated Design reference architecture for IT. Tigo Cloud services for B2B use the same VMware Cloud™ stack: Tigo technical capabilities built into Iridium are reused for Tigo Managed Services offered to Tigo B2B Cloud customers. Employing a single, consistent VMware infrastructure enables Tigo to streamline management across business units and regional operations.

Accelerating telco cloud transformation, improving availability

Selecting VMware is helping speed the telco cloud transformation across the enterprise. "VMware offered us the best integrated package with a telco cloud platform that will allow us to convert all these business units at the same time," says Fuziol. "We can create the standard processes that enable the efficiencies we are looking for."

In addition, establishing a consistent infrastructure across operations and business units will help the company improve uptime. "We can take advantage of multi-availability zones to provide not just high availability but also disaster recovery plans for all of our applications," says Fuziol.

> "With VMware, we've undertaken a technology transformation while also changing our processes, governance, and operating models. We're becoming more agile and efficient, and gaining the cloud skills we need to embrace new features in the future."
>
> RITA FUZIOL
> DIRECTOR OF DATA CENTER,
> CLOUD AND INFRASTRUCTURE, MILLICOM

Looking ahead

With the first elements of a telco cloud in place, the Tigo team is already planning on branching out. "Our plan is to keep evolving this network toward the edge," says Fuziol. By moving content closer to users, the company can reduce latency and provide more responsive user experiences. At the same time, edge environments reduce backhaul load and associated backhaul costs by minimizing the need to transmit data long distances to and from users.

The team also expects to expand the VMware Telco Cloud Platform™ to host new 5G applications. "We are looking at supporting applications that require lower latency, higher bandwidth, and delivery closer to users," says Fuziol.

The strong partnership with VMware is helping Tigo to fast-forward to 5G. "We're very thankful for the support we have seen," says Fuziol. "With VMware, we've undertaken a technology transformation while also changing our processes, governance, and operating models. We're becoming more agile and efficient, and gaining the cloud skills we need to embrace new features in the future."

@Millicom #Tigo prepares for #5G by building a #TelcoCloud on @VMware.