

Absa Bank



South African bank improves customer and employee productivity and efficiencies with full visibility of Digital Experience using Alluvio™ Aternity from Riverbed.

Absa Bank, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Absa Group, offers a range of retail, business and wealth management solutions to customers across South Africa.

With more than 600 branches and over 5,000 ATMs (Automated Teller Machines), the bank found it challenging to gain visibility of its customer and internal business processes. By leveraging Alluvio Aternity (part of Alluvio Unified Observability portfolio) from Riverbed, Absa Bank gained clear visibility of its customer journey and improved the overall employee and customer experience.

In Brief

Challenges

- Lack of visibility of colleague and customer journeys across major bank platforms
- Reactive (rather than proactive) to issues negatively impacting colleagues
- Difficulty in isolating issues to application, device or infrastructure, leading to expensive and disruptive War-Room scenarios
- Extended resolution times for issues leading to unnecessary business impact

Solution

- Alluvio™ Aternity Digital Experience Management (DEM)

Benefits

- Improvements to customer experience through enhanced visibility of customer and colleague journeys
- Significant reduction in number of War-Room incidents through immediate domain isolation
- Improved resolution times through better visibility and a proactive approach to issues impacting business productivity
- Faster banking processes enabling improved performance and productivity of customer-facing employees

Absa Bank is one of the largest financial institutions in South Africa, with over 4.4 million digitally active customers. The bank is a very well-known brand within Africa, determined to help people with their financial needs and serve small businesses and large corporations alike.

Challenge:

Lack of visibility across internal and external business processes

Banks often endure challenging IT environments from regulatory compliance to increased levels of competition, security breaches and maintaining great levels of customer service.

Aston McDonald, Chief Information Officer: Everyday Banking Physical Channels, Absa Bank, explains, “Providing both our employees and customers with the best possible experience is key for us. That is why we wanted to develop a deeper understanding of how we could support our employees and provide them with a stable and productive IT environment. We also wanted to look at our customer journey in detail, so we know what we need to do to stay ahead of our competitors.”

Ultimately, delivering a seamless and secure digital journey for employees and customers was a key priority for Absa Bank.

Solution:

Creating better IT efficiencies for employees and customers

After assessing several solutions, the bank decided to deploy Alluvio Aternity Digital Experience Management (DEM) to achieve its digital experience goals. McDonald continues, “We wanted to understand exactly where we could improve our services and customer experience, so we deployed Alluvio Aternity across our employee devices, which covered 45,000 users.”

“Alluvio Aternity gave us complete visibility and enabled us to monitor our two main banking applications. These were complex, legacy systems, which meant that employee processes were manual and inefficient and that had a knock-on effect on our customer experience,” states McDonald.

“After we had implemented Aternity across employee devices, we were able to closely monitor our applications and see what tasks our employees were spending their time on at an individual level. We were then able to vastly improve employee and customer processes such as opening new accounts.”



“Alluvio Aternity has enabled us to have complete visibility across our entire network, allowing us to see from a 40,000 foot view what is happening across our whole estate. I can drill down to any single individual in any branch and see exactly what their user-experience is like.”

More recently, Absa has improved the ATM experience customers receive. Previously, without clear visibility of its ATM estate, the bank was unable to understand which element of the customer journey it needed to improve – whether it was speeding up printing receipts or dispensing money.

Aternity automatically identified digital experience hot spots across the ATMs where customers were experiencing issues and provided recommendations to improve their experience.

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Aston McDonald

Chief Information Officer: Everyday Banking Physical Channels,
Absa Bank

“Alluvio Aternity provided me with a before and after picture, and that insight was vital to my team,” added McDonald. “With the before picture, we could immediately see there was a delay in printing the transaction statement. After we made the required changes to speed up the printing process, we could see it was faster by five seconds.”

Alluvio Aternity, part of the Alluvio Unified Observability portfolio from Riverbed, has clearly helped Absa Bank to achieve their main objective – to deliver an excellent end-user experience.

Benefits:

Improved and more efficient banking processes

Absa Bank’s initial motivation behind deploying Aternity was to improve productivity and stay ahead of its competitors. As the team started to explore the solution further, they realized that Aternity could provide them with several additional benefits.

Apart from vastly improving efficiencies of core banking applications and speeding up processes at ATMs, Alluvio Aternity helped Absa Bank improve resiliency and remediation.



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Faster incident response and tracking

The initial purchase of 16,000 licenses, increased to 20,000 to include licenses for employees and has very recently expanded even further from retail banking to the corporate banking division, as well. McDonald explains, “Our retail banking business team helped the corporate banking division move directly to implementation without requiring a proof of concept, since the retail side of the business had already experienced fantastic results with Alluvio Aternity.”

The corporate banking division immediately saw how the Alluvio Aternity solution helped to streamline their operations. “We have a significant number of laptops in use across the team and the Riverbed solution warned us that 1,800 of the laptops in use had failing batteries,” says McDonald.

“This early alert and insight allowed the team to order new batteries and rectify the issue before it even happened. By implementing Alluvio Aternity across all branches, we can now have the insight to solve any major incident within the hour, instead of taking an entire day. It has reduced customer

and employee frustrations enabling us to prioritize incidents and plan ahead, and as a result, Riverbed has really improved our resiliency and agility as a company.”

Absa Bank has also successfully achieved its goal of providing its staff and customers with banking services that run seamlessly. “We want to continue providing excellent digital experiences to our end-users and we are confident we will achieve that with Riverbed and the Alluvio Aternity solution,” concluded McDonald.

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Riverbed – Empower the Experience

Riverbed is the only company with the collective richness of telemetry from network to app to end user that illuminates and then accelerates every interaction so that users get the flawless digital experience they expect across the entire digital ecosystem. Riverbed offers two industry-leading solution areas – Alluvio by Riverbed, an innovative and differentiated Unified Observability portfolio that unifies data, insights, and actions across IT, so customers can deliver seamless digital experiences; and Riverbed Acceleration, providing fast, agile, secure acceleration of any app over any network to users, whether mobile, remote, or on-prem. Together with our thousands of partners, and market-leading customers across the world, we empower every click, every digital experience. Learn more at riverbed.com.