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The GCC Innovation Playbook

Building the digital foundation for the next generation of GCCs



The Airtel Advantage for High-Performing GCCs

From Capability Centres to Innovation Engines



It happens when people, data, technology and infrastructure work as one.

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GCCs are becoming strategic innovation hubs

What began as a model for cost and scale is increasingly a model for capability, innovation, product ownership and business value.

FROM

Execution centres

Cost, scale and defined processes

TO

Strategic innovation hubs

Products, platforms and business outcomes

WHAT CHANGES

More ownership, more technology, more global responsibility

and new demands on the digital foundation



50%

of all global GCCs are based in India[1]

3x

revenue growth against 1.8x headcount growth in three years

96%

of GCCs set up after 2021 started with an innovation mandate[2]

That shift creates new demands on the digital foundation:

resilience, security, scalability and simpler operations.

The next phase of GCC growth needs a stronger foundation

There are **4 aspects** of the digital foundation.



INNOVATION

GCCs are taking on product, engineering and innovation mandates.



AI & DATA

AI increases the need for trusted data, secure access and scalable infrastructure.



DISTRIBUTED OPERATIONS

Teams, applications and workloads increasingly span HQ, GCCs, clouds and locations.



SCALE

GCCs need to add people, sites and workloads without rebuilding the foundation.

WHAT THE MARKET IS SIGNALLING

Over 70% of capability centres now run a dedicated AI Centre of Excellence. Engineering R&D centres are expanding 1.3x faster than IT centres.[3] By 2028, autonomous agents are expected to handle up to 30% of transactional workflows across enterprise platforms.[4]

The opportunity:

build an infrastructure foundation that keeps pace with the GCC's role in the enterprise.

From delivery centre to strategic innovation hub

As GCCs take on greater global responsibility, infrastructure must evolve with them.

1	2	3	4
Delivery Centre	**Capability Centre**	**Portfolio Hub**	**Innovation Hub**
Execute defined processes	Build specialised expertise	Own broader functions and platforms	Drive innovation and business outcomes

Increasing ownership, technology intensity and global responsibility

96% OF GCCs LAUNCHED SINCE 2021 START HIGH ON THIS CURVE[2]

They are set up with an innovation mandate from day one, which means the digital foundation has to be right from day one too, not retrofitted two years in.



Leadership takeaway:
the more strategic the GCC becomes, the more resilient, scalable and integrated its digital foundation needs to be.

GCC Maturity Stage Scorecard

Score your GCC on Leadership of business strategy, Expertise across core domains and Ownership of end-to-end outcomes. Twelve out of twelve is a full innovation hub. Whatever you don't tick is your development agenda.

	LEADERSHIP	EXPERTISE	OWNERSHIP
Digital-first charter	☐ Sets the global digital strategy	☐ Masters analytics, security and ML	☐ Controls global product lifecycle
Multi-functional centre	☐ Drives cross-functional collaboration	☐ Sets standards through CoE models	☐ Holds total process accountability
Cost-efficient	☐ Manages talent depth globally	☐ Drives independent and joint R&D	☐ Manages continuous global delivery
Scale	☐ Leads multi-city expansion	☐ Architects reusable automation	☐ Owns foundational enterprise systems

0–3 Delivery Centre | 4–6 Capability Centre | **7–9 Portfolio Hub** | **10–12 Innovation Hub**

Run it with your leadership team each quarter.

The unticked boxes become the brief for the infrastructure that has to support them.



What should GCC leaders build for next?

01	**KEEP OPERATIONS ALWAYS ON**	Design for resilience, not just connectivity.
02	**KEEP APPLICATIONS PERFORMING**	Build predictable, low-latency access for critical workloads.
03	**SCALE WITHOUT REBUILDING**	Plan capacity around the GCC growth roadmap.
04	**PROTECT EVERY ENVIRONMENT**	Make security and compliance part of the foundation.
05	**MAKE EVERY LOCATION WORK AS ONE**	Connect multi-city GCC hubs with consistent visibility and performance.

USE IT AS A WORKING BRIEF

Each of the five lines maps to a decision your infrastructure partner should be able to answer in one conversation, not five procurement cycles.

Three foundations of a high-performing GCC

A high-performing GCC requires three key things.

EMPOWER THE GCC

Clear ownership, expertise and decision rights, so the centre can act rather than wait.

MAKE DATA USABLE AND SECURE

Trusted data, governed access and secure data flows, with traceable lineage across environments.

BUILD FOR RESILIENT SCALE

Integrated connectivity, data centres, cloud, security and managed operations, sized to the growth roadmap rather than to today.

WHERE THE FOUNDATION BREAKS

OUTAGES

Single-route dependency stops GCC operations.

VENDOR SPRAWL

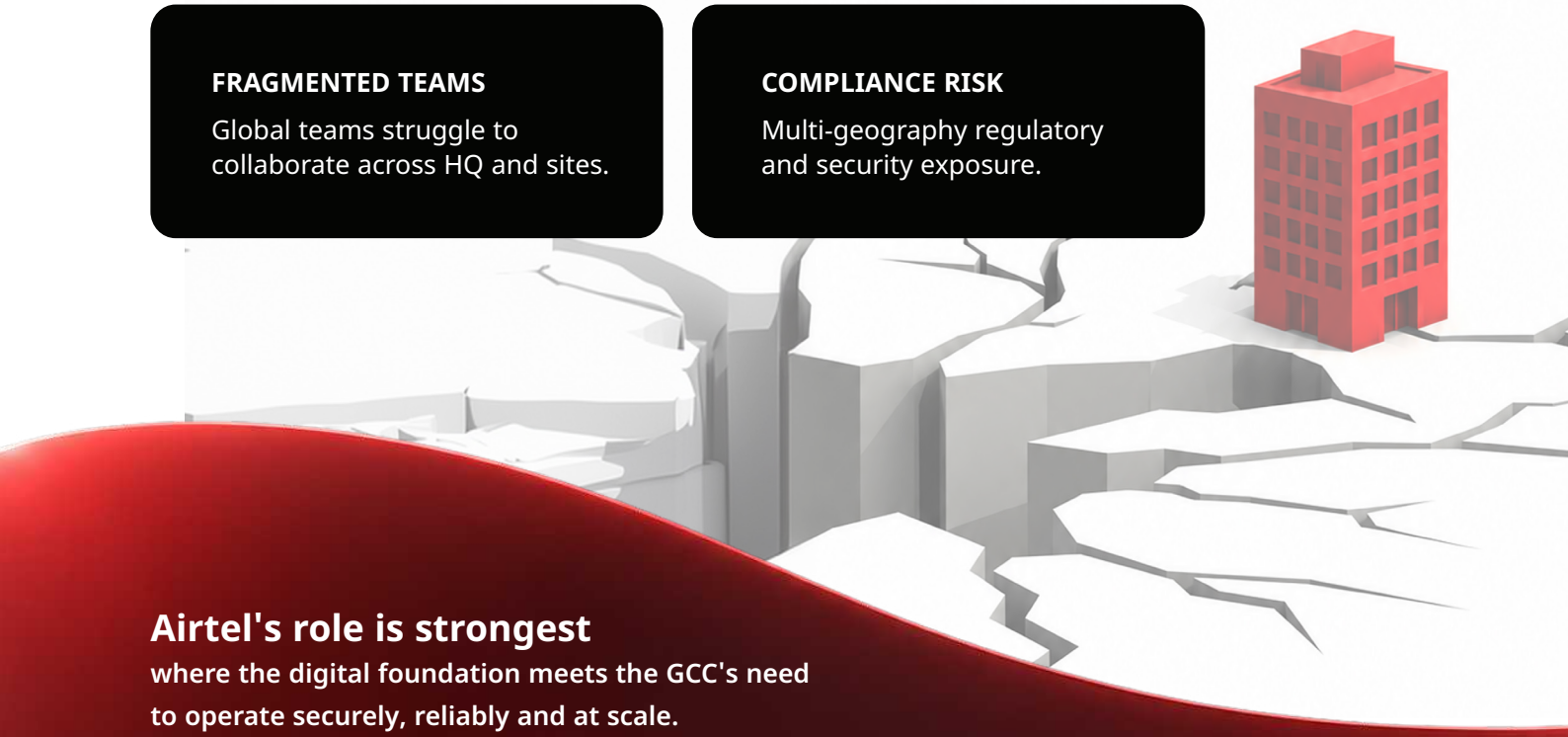
Multiple vendors slow resolution and blur accountability.

FRAGMENTED TEAMS

Global teams struggle to collaborate across HQ and sites.

COMPLIANCE RISK

Multi-geography regulatory and security exposure.



Airtel's role is strongest

where the digital foundation meets the GCC's need to operate securely, reliably and at scale.

One infrastructure partner from foundation to scale

Airtel provides a 4-layered full-stack for GCC's digital needs.

ONE ACCOUNTABLE PARTNER



SCALE
Business communications and managed operations that grow with the centre.

PROTECT
Cybersecurity and managed services across users, networks, applications and data.

CONNECT
Cloud, multi-cloud and workforce connectivity across every location.

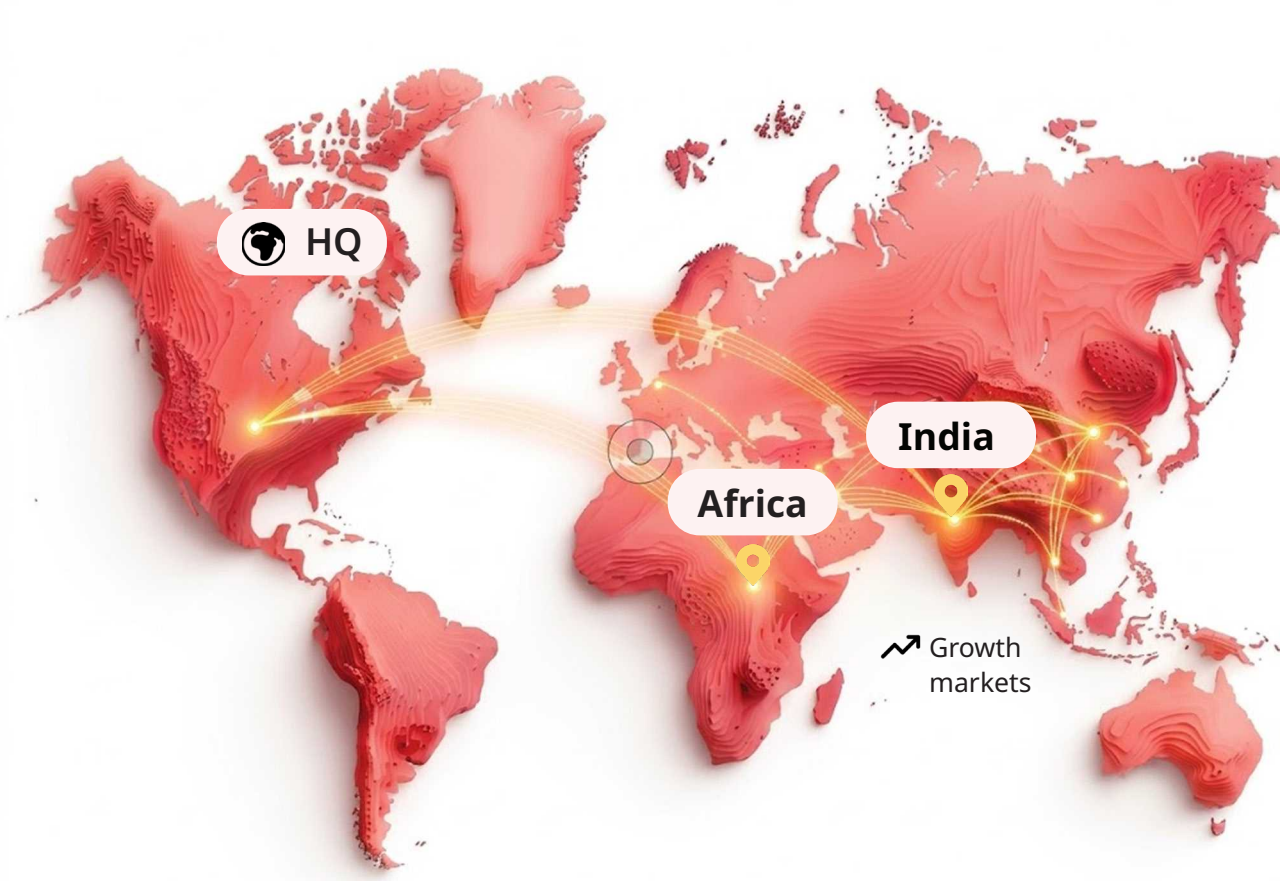
BUILD
Connectivity and data centres, the layer everything else sits on.

WHAT SINGLE ACCOUNTABILITY CHANGES

One lifecycle owner, one escalation path and one commercial relationship, instead of a vendor seam at every layer.

Build your digital corridor to the markets driving growth

Airtel is a trusted partner in emerging markets.



OUR SCALE

50+ countries • 75+ global PoPs • 34+ subsea cables • 440,000+ rkm subsea fibre • 430,000+ rkm terrestrial fibre (India)

India and Africa are not two separate stories.

For a GCC they are one corridor, and it should run on one network.

Keep critical business operations Always On

When a route is disrupted, critical operations should not stop. Design for diversity, automatic recovery and predictable performance.

99.95% UPTIME

Committed availability and continuous monitoring

MULTIPLE DIVERSE ROUTES

Geographically diverse fibre and subsea paths

FLAPLESS DC-TO-DC

Resilient connectivity for critical workloads

SELF-HEALING

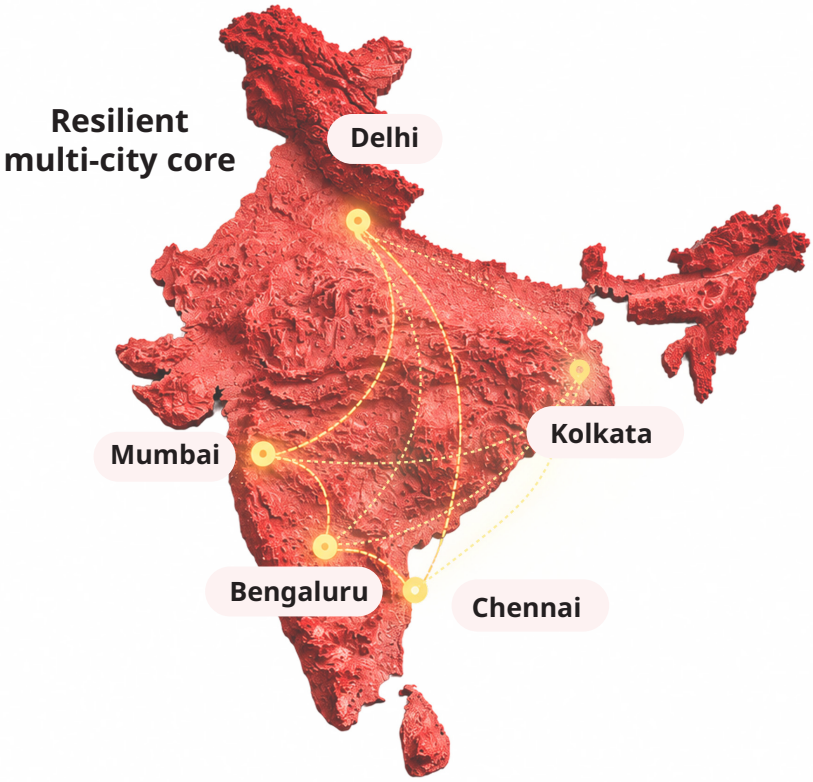
Automatic rerouting during disruption

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

Less downtime, fewer disruptions and greater confidence in business continuity, for the GCC and for the HQ depending on it.

Business continuity
starts with resilient routes, not with a recovery plan.

Make every GCC location work as one



WHAT IT RUNS ON

OPGW-powered NLD • Terrestrial fibre • Self-healing architecture • Integrated monitoring

Outcome :

Connect GCC hubs as one operating environment, with consistent performance and simpler management.

Airtel Business:
from foundation to scale

The managed full-stack of technology solutions forms the integrated infrastructure.

SCALE

Multi-cloud Connect • Data Centres and Colocation • Backup and DR

PROTECT

Managed Services • DDoS • Secure Internet / SSE • SOC / NOC • Firewall

CONNECT

CPaaS / UCaaS • RCS, WhatsApp business • Enterprise Voice and SMS

FOUNDATION

ILL / DIA • IPL • NLD • OPGW • MPLS • SD-WAN



MANAGED AS ONE

Single accountability across all four, with one escalation path, integrated monitoring and defined uptime commitments.

The point is not more products.
It is one connected infrastructure experience.

Proof from real enterprise environments

Airtel has delivered real impact across industries.

INDIA GCC LAUNCH

A leading US enterprise needed to establish its India GCC, while maintaining security, resilience and operational simplicity.

Accelerated go-live • one implementation partner • end-to-end accountability

AI SAAS SCALE

A leading AI SaaS platform needed more control, scalability, security and cost efficiency. Airtel combined colocation, connectivity and security.

Scalability • reliability • security • infrastructure cost optimisation

BANKING

Managed SD-WAN connected distributed branches with central visibility and direct control.

Stronger application performance • simpler operations

INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING

Managed firewall standardised protection across every location, with routing and security combined per site.

Consistent security • less manual management

COLLABORATION ACROSS HQ AND GCC

Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams, SIP trunks and Airtel IQ on one managed platform, so your global teams work as one across HQ and every GCC site.



Real Business Impact

TURNKEY INDIA GCC LAUNCH

An aggressive timeline, with secure connectivity and enterprise-grade security needed from day one, without juggling vendors

- Rapid deployment of India office infrastructure and connectivity
- Single-partner solution covering DIA and managed NIPS security
- Value-led commercials aligned to the customer's financial expectations

SCALED COLOCATION FOR AN AI SAAS PLATFORM

High infrastructure cost and limited control over rented VMs, with growing AI workloads and RBI and GDPR obligations to meet

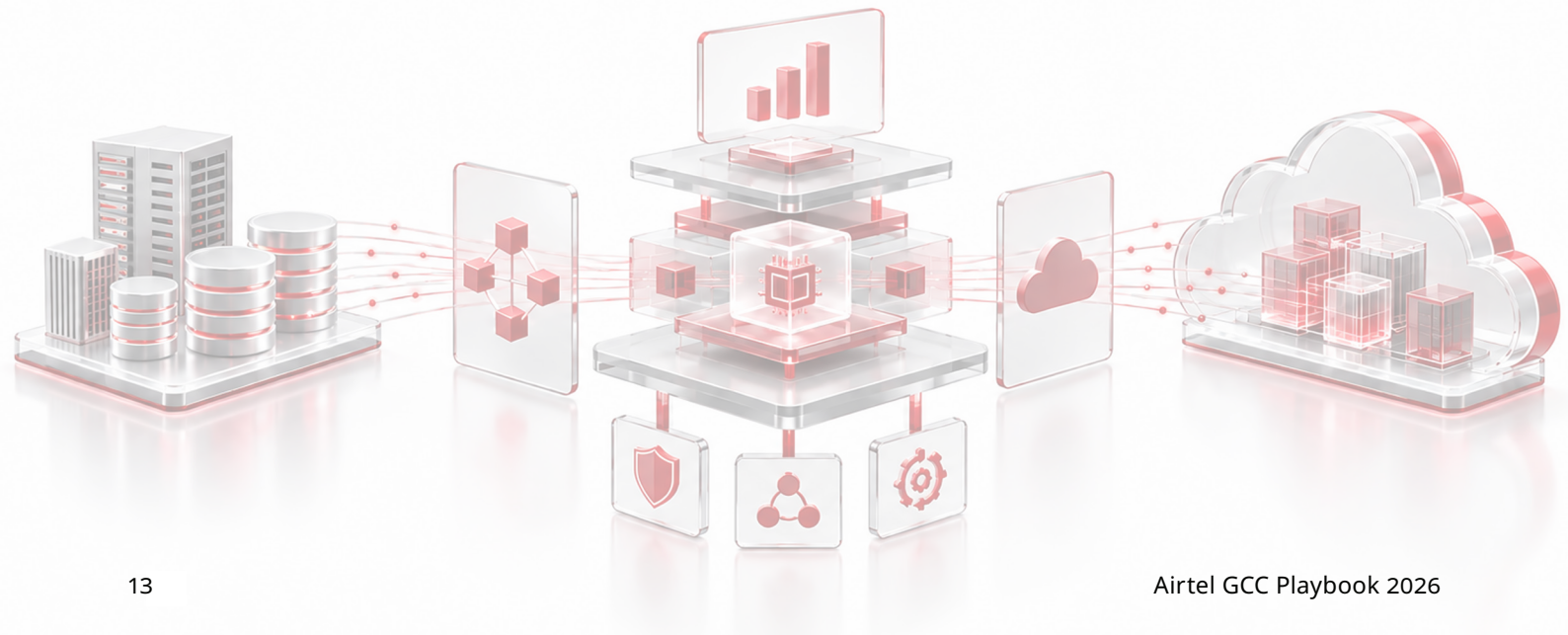
- Custom-priced dedicated colocation for cost optimisation
- Integrated Secure Internet bundle with firewall and NIPS
- Direct visibility through a Bengaluru data centre consultation

99.95% network availability

Go-live within the planned timeline, on a single point of accountability across connectivity, infrastructure and security

30% increase in application performance

Reduced jitter and latency for real-time R&D tools, with threats neutralised at carrier level before reaching the LAN



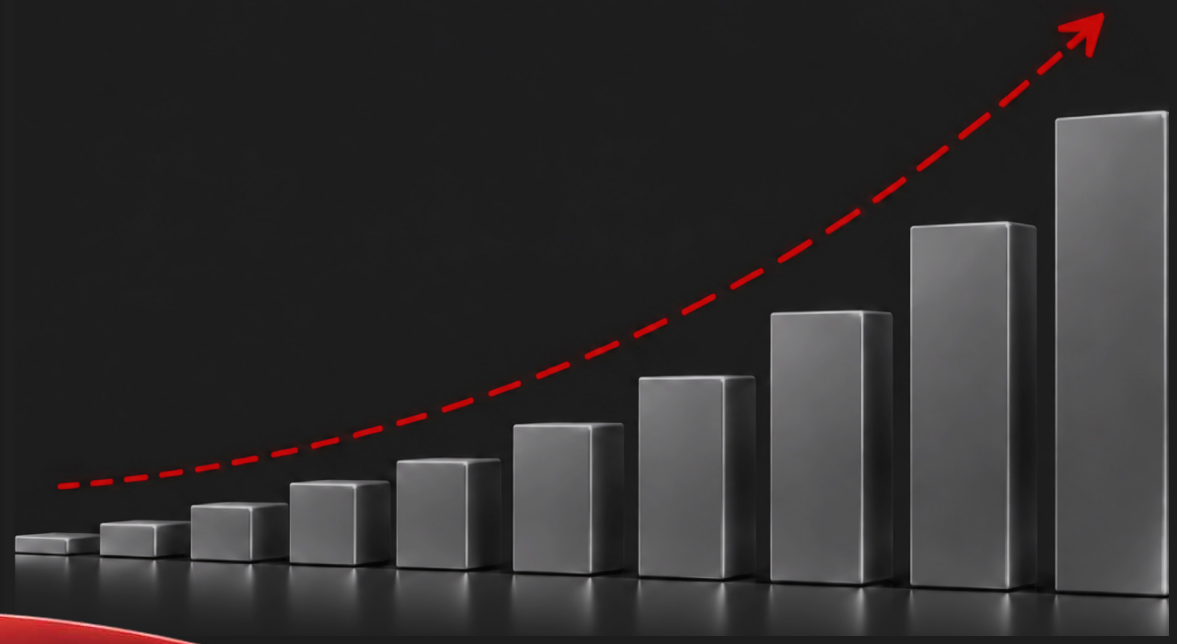
A digital foundation built for both HQ and GCC

FOR GLOBAL HQ

- Enter India and other growth markets faster.
- Connect global operations to GCCs.
- Reduce infrastructure complexity.
- Build confidence in resilience, security and scale.

FOR GCC

- Keep operations always on.
- Connect every location and workload.
- Scale without rebuilding.
- Simplify infrastructure management.



Build your digital corridor
to the emerging markets of India and Africa.

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