PERSONAL STATEMENT

IT Department Performance & Strategic Vision

Document Information

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Position: IT Officer
Reports to: Head of Business
Prepared for: Chief Executive Officer

Period Covered:
May 21, 2025 - December 16, 2025

Date: December 16, 2025

Company: Grato Engineering Global LTD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since joining Grato Engineering Global on May 21, 2025, I have established the company's first dedicated IT department, implementing foundational systems and policies that have transformed our operational capabilities. Over seven months, I have designed and deployed a comprehensive Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system serving 27+ daily users, developed two specialized management systems ready for deployment, established the company's first IT Policy, and created technology infrastructure positioning Grato for scalable growth.

This statement outlines accomplished work, lessons learned, measurable impacts, and strategic vision for digital transformation through 2030.

1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

1.1 Professional Background

- **Education: Software Engineering, University of Bamenda**
- **Previous Experience: Solo Developer at a design company**
- **Start Date at Grato: May 21, 2025**
- **Current Role: IT Officer (Sole IT Department)**

1.2 Organizational State Upon Arrival

When I joined in May 2025, Grato operated without:

- Dedicated IT Officer or management structure
- Formal IT policies or governance
- Centralized digital systems
- Automated business processes
- Standardized technology infrastructure
- Asset tracking or inventory management
- Data backup and disaster recovery

All operations relied on manual processes, disconnected spreadsheets, paper forms, and ad-hoc communications—creating significant inefficiencies and scaling limitations.

2. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2.1 Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System

FULLY DEPLOYED & OPERATIONAL

Custom-built ERP system integrating all core business functions into a unified platform.

Deployment Metrics:

- Daily Active Users: 27+ employees across all departments
- Modules Deployed: 15 integrated modules
- System Uptime: >99% operational availability
- Training: 1 company-wide session, 2 departmental sessions

Integrated Modules:

1. Petty Cash Management
2. Project Management
3. Budget Management
4. Internal Communications
5. IT Portal
6. HR Portal
7. Leave Management
8. Inventory Management
9. Invoicing System
10. Suggestions Module
11. File Sharing Portal
12. Fixed Asset Registry
13. Purchase Requisition
14. Supplier Management
15. Incident Reporting

Business Impact:

- Process Automation: Eliminated 15+ manual approval processes
- Data Centralization: Single source of truth for business data
- Time Savings: Reduced approval cycles by approximately 60-70%
- Transparency: Real-time operational visibility for management
- Compliance: Established audit trails for all transactions

Cost Comparison:

Grato Engineering Global LTD

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Custom ERP vs. Commercial Solutions

Custom Development Cost: ~10,000 XAF total investment

Odoo Enterprise (50 users): 24-36 million XAF/year + 15-25 million implementation

Savings: Over 99.9% in first-year costs

2.2 Technician Reporting System

90% COMPLETE - READY FOR TESTING

Comprehensive field operations platform for technician site visits, maintenance tracking, and asset monitoring. Note: This is an independent system, not integrated with ERP.

Technical Scope:

- Sites Managed: 150+ telecommunications sites
- Operational Clusters: 7 regional clusters
- Technician Users: 10 field technicians

Core Capabilities:

- Site Visit Management - Digital scheduling, tracking, and records
- Generator Management - Status tracking, runtime, fuel monitoring
- Parts & Inventory - Parts usage recording during visits
- Fuel Management - Level monitoring, consumption tracking
- Maintenance Tracking - PM/emergency/refueling operations
- Data Quality - Validation, quality scoring, automated reporting
- Approval Workflows - Supervisor review and authorization

Expected Benefits:

- 80-90% reduction in reporting time
- 70%+ improvement in data quality
- Real-time visibility for management
- Standardized data capture

2.3 Fleet Management System

90% COMPLETE - READY FOR TESTING

Vehicle management platform for tracking, maintenance, and optimization of Grato's fleet.

Fleet Scope:

- Total Vehicles: 7 vehicles (1 per cluster)
- Clusters Covered: 7 regional clusters

Projected Benefits:

- 20-30% reduction in vehicle downtime
- 15-25% extended vehicle lifespan through proper maintenance
- 10-15% maintenance cost savings
- 95%+ inspection compliance rate

3. IT INFRASTRUCTURE & OPERATIONS

3.1 Telecommunications & Connectivity

- **Managed SIM cards for 20+ employees (MTN, Camtel)**
- **Integrated Starlink for enhanced connectivity**
- **Deployed range extenders achieving 100% office coverage**
- **Cost Optimization: 15-20% reduction in telecom spending**

3.2 IT Asset Management

- **Achieved 90% IT asset utilization**
- **Investigated equipment misuse cases**
- **Minimal stock strategy with just-in-time ordering**

3.3 Subscription & Service Management

- **Managed Odoo, Hostinger, Render API hosting**
- **Email server optimization and storage expansion**
- **Cost Management: 10-15% reduction through consolidation**

3.4 Technical Support

Resolution Times:

- Software issues: 24-48 hours
- Hardware (in-house): 2-3 days
- Hardware (external): 1-2 weeks

4. POLICY, COMPLIANCE & GOVERNANCE

4.1 IT Policy Development

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT: Grato's First IT Policy

Policy Coverage:

- Acceptable use of IT resources
- Email and communication guidelines
- Password and access control
- Data security and confidentiality
- Software licensing
- Internet usage policies
- Incident reporting procedures
- Disciplinary measures

Impact:

- Reduced cybersecurity exposure
- Established regulatory compliance framework
- Increased employee security awareness
- Protected company technology assets

5. TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

5.1 Employee Training

- **1 company-wide session on ERP and IT policy**
- **2 departmental sessions for specific workflows**
- **95%+ ERP adoption rate achieved**
- **Increased employee self-sufficiency**

5.2 Professional Development

- **Fire Safety Certification completed**
- **Attended technical meetings with IHS client**

6. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

6.1 Server Infrastructure Feasibility Study

Collaborated with Rodrigue Nono (Supply Chain) to conduct comprehensive feasibility study for on-premise server infrastructure. Recommendation: Deploy server with 3-year ROI timeline, reducing long-term hosting dependency.

6.2 System Review & Continuous Improvement

- **3 new ERP features added post-deployment**
- **Regular bug fixes based on user feedback**
- **Security updates and performance optimizations**

7. LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Most Important Technical Lesson

> *"Building with user adoption in mind is as important as technical excellence. Balance capability with user-centered design, prioritizing training and change management equally with coding."*

7.2 What I Would Do Differently

- **Earlier stakeholder engagement in system design**
- **Phased rollout - deploy core features first, then expand**
- **More beta testing with real users before full deployment**

7.3 Key Surprises & Realizations

- **Organizational change often harder than technical coding**
- **Strong relationships with department heads critical for adoption**
- **Business requirements evolved rapidly; systems needed flexibility**

7.4 Key Mistakes & Growth

- **Over-engineering early features, delaying deployment**
- **Insufficient initial training, requiring follow-up sessions**
- **Solo approach occasionally caused capacity constraints**

These mistakes taught project management, communication, and sustainable work practices that improved subsequent projects.

8. FUTURE VISION & GROWTH PLAN

8.1 Top 3 Priorities for 2026

Priority 1: Technician Reporting System Deployment (Q1 2026)

- User acceptance testing with technicians
- Comprehensive training program
- Gradual 7-cluster rollout

Priority 2: Fleet Management Launch (Q2 2026)

- System deployment across clusters
- Driver training and workflow implementation
- Maintenance schedule establishment

Priority 3: Server Infrastructure (Q3-Q4 2026)

- Hardware procurement and installation
- Data migration from cloud
- Backup and disaster recovery

8.2 New Technologies (2026 Roadmap)

- **Mobile Applications (Q2) - Offline-capable field interfaces**
- **Analytics & BI (Q3) - Executive dashboards, predictive analytics**
- **Cybersecurity (Q3-Q4) - Enterprise firewall, MFA, security audits**
- **Disaster Recovery (Q4) - Automated backups, recovery drills**
- **AI & Automation (Q4-2027) - Support chatbot, automated reporting**
- **IoT Integration (2027) - Real-time generator monitoring, GPS tracking**

8.3 IT Department Growth Plan

Short-Term (2026):

- IT Support Technician
- Contract Network Engineer
- Cybersecurity Consultant

Medium-Term (2027-2028):

- Full-time Developer
- Data Analyst
- Formal Help Desk

Long-Term (2029-2030):

- Complete IT team structure (10-12 people)
- Specialized roles: Security, Cloud, DevOps, UI/UX

8.4 Personal Certifications (2026)

- **Cloud (Q1-Q2): AWS Solutions Architect, Azure Fundamentals**
- **Cybersecurity (Q2-Q3): CompTIA Security+, CEH**
- **Project Management (Q3): PMP or PRINCE2**
- **Data Analytics (Q4): Google Data Analytics, Tableau/Power BI**

8.5 Digital Transformation Vision (2025-2030)

2025-2026: Foundation & Stabilization

Deploy core systems, establish governance, build infrastructure. Outcome: Modern, integrated digital platform.

2027-2028: Optimization & Intelligence

Implement analytics/AI, automate workflows, integrate IoT. Outcome: Data-driven decision-making, proactive operations.

2029-2030: Innovation & Competitive Advantage

Predictive maintenance, AI-assisted operations, emerging tech. Outcome: Technology as strategic differentiator.

9. MEASURABLE IMPACT & METRICS

9.1 System Performance

ERP System:

- 27+ daily active users
- >99% uptime
- <2 second response time
- 95%+ user adoption rate

Technician System (Projected):

- 10 field technicians
- 150+ sites managed across 7 clusters
- 300-400 monthly visits expected

Fleet System (Projected):

- 7 vehicles tracked
- 100% inspection compliance target
- 20-30 fault reports/year expected

9.2 Infrastructure & Support

- **Internet Coverage: 100% (expanded from ~60%)**
- **Data Storage: Increased by 230%+**
- **IT Assets: 70+ items tracked, 90% utilization**
- **Resolution Times: 24-48 hours (software), 2-3 days (hardware)**

10. COST SAVINGS & FINANCIAL IMPACT

10.1 Cost Optimization (2025)

Key Cost Savings Achieved

- Telecommunications: 15-20% reduction through negotiation and consolidation
- Subscriptions: 10-15% savings via annual pricing and right-sizing
- Process Efficiency: 60-70% faster approvals, 20-30 hours/week saved
- Custom ERP: 99.9% savings vs. commercial solutions like Odoo Enterprise

10.2 Projected Savings (2026+)

- **Server Infrastructure (2027+): Eliminates cloud costs, 3-year ROI**
- **Fleet Management: 20-30% downtime reduction, 10-15% maintenance savings**
- **Technician System: 5-10% fuel optimization, 15-20% parts waste reduction**

10.3 ROI Assessment

IT investments in 2025 have delivered measurable efficiency gains and risk mitigation. Systems enable 2-3x business scaling without proportional IT cost increases, with compounding returns expected in 2026+.

11. CHALLENGES OVERCOME

11.1 Technical Challenges

- **Built three major systems simultaneously as sole developer**
- **Overcame user resistance through training and demonstration**
- **Cleaned and standardized historical data from spreadsheets**
- **Used open-source technologies within budget constraints**

11.2 Organizational Challenges

- **Created IT Policy and processes from scratch**
- **Balanced competing priorities through stakeholder meetings**
- **Managed daily support while delivering strategic projects**
- **Investigated equipment issues, improved prevention systems**

11.3 Personal Growth

- **Evolved from developer to IT leader with organizational responsibilities**
- **Learned to prioritize, avoid burnout, and ask for help**
- **Established trust through consistent delivery and transparency**

12. PERSONAL REFLECTION

12.1 What I'm Most Proud Of

- **Systems genuinely improve how employees work**
- **Established functioning IT operation in seven months**
- **No major outages, breaches, or security incidents**
- **Evolved from developer to IT leader**

12.2 What Motivates Me

- **Seeing technology enable employee and business success**
- **Building lasting infrastructure for company growth**
- **Continuous learning and diverse challenges**
- **Direct organizational impact**
- **Trust and autonomy from leadership**

12.3 How Grato Changed Me Professionally

Transformation: From solo developer focused on technical execution to IT leader with strategic, organizational perspective.

Key Transformations:

- Technical !’ Strategic: From "how to build" to "what to build and why"
- Individual !’ Organizational: Expanded to organizational impact
- Perfection !’ Progress: Balancing excellence with pragmatic delivery
- Reactive !’ Proactive: Anticipating needs and planning ahead
- Technical Skills !’ Leadership: People skills as important as technical

12.4 My Commitment to Grato

Seven Core Commitments

1. Long-Term Vision - Building IT foundation for next decade
2. Ownership & Quality - Treating every system as my own
3. Continuous Improvement - Never settling, always optimizing
4. Transparent Communication - Honest updates about progress and challenges
5. Cost-Consciousness - Responsible stewardship, delivering value for every XAF
6. Knowledge Sharing - Documenting and training to avoid single points of failure
7. Strategic Partnership - Aligning technology directly with business goals

These seven months have been transformative. Grato gave me opportunity, trust, and autonomy to build something meaningful. I'm committed to ensuring that foundation serves the company for years to come.

13. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Summary of Achievements

In seven months, Grato's IT function achieved:

- ERP system fully deployed serving 27+ users
- Two specialized systems ready for deployment (90% complete)
- 100% office connectivity and 90% asset utilization
- First IT Policy published and enforced
- Comprehensive training and support
- 15-20% telecommunications savings, 10-15% subscription savings
- Server feasibility study and 2026-2030 roadmap

13.2 Immediate Recommendations (Q1 2026)

1. Approve Technician System Launch - Enable immediate field operations improvement
2. Approve Fleet Management Launch - Reduce vehicle downtime and costs
3. Prioritize Server Decision - Long-term efficiency and data control
4. Consider IT Team Expansion - Reduce single point of failure risk
5. Invest in Cybersecurity - Protect data and reputation proactively

13.3 Strategic Recommendations (2026-2030)

- **Treat IT as strategic investment enabling 2-3x growth**
- **Build IT team gradually and proactively**
- **Embrace data-driven decision-making culture**

13.4 Final Thoughts

Grato stands at a digital transformation inflection point. The foundation is built; now we execute the vision. With continued support and strategic investment, IT capabilities will be a significant competitive advantage.

I'm honored to lead this transformation and committed to its success.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IT Policy Document

[Complete IT Policy as published and distributed - Available upon request]

Appendix B: Server Feasibility Study

[Complete study and recommendations prepared with Rodrigue Nono - Available upon request]

This statement represents my honest assessment of work completed, lessons learned, and vision for Grato's technology future. All metrics are based on available data and industry practices. I welcome discussion and collaboration on any aspect of this document.

— Marcel