

LEADING THE IT INDUSTRY

A SEVENSEAS TECHNOLOGIES PUBLICATION

FORESIGHT

VOLUME 1

ACHIEVING
BUSINESS FORESIGHT
THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

SST CHAIRMAN
JAMES GACHUI
REMEMBERED

TECHNOLOGY
IN OUR LIVES

2011: THE CLOUD
FROM HYPE TO DEPLOYMENT

+
**NEWS &
REVIEWS**

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TRAINING

02 MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

FEATURES

04 TRIBUTE TO SST CHAIRMAN: JAMES GACHUI

**06 ACHIEVING BUSINESS FORESIGHT
THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

09 FORESIGHT PERSPECTIVES:
Kenya power and lighting company limited

10 SST TRANSFORMATIONS:
2011: the CLOUD from Hype to deployment

12 TECHNOLOGY: TECHNOLOGY@HOME

14 SST PARTNERSHIP IN ETHIOPIA

16 AUREOS
Private Equity in Technology Investment

20 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER CENTRE:
New certification courses available

22 K4LIFE: DISCOVER, TRANSFORM, UNLEASH

PEOPLE

18 SST MOMENTS

32 SST FAMILY GROWS

33 TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS

Bancy Gakuru

Anthony Katua

36 THE INTERVIEW

If I were a CEO by Adam Nyaga

REGULAR

24 TEA BREAK

27 NEWS

30 BOOK REVIEW

31 FILM REVIEW

CONTENTS

VOLUME 1



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2011 PROMISES TO BE THE YEAR OF TAKE OFF FOR IT IN KENYA

We've welcomed the year 2011 with pomp and colour and I bet no other service sector is more upbeat at the prospects ahead than my peers in the information technology field here in Kenya. The past year is one in which the seeds of various transformational initiatives and technologies were sown across the different industries and sectors. This year, well positioned players such as Seven Seas Technologies will reap from this and they are likely to see tremendous growth in revenues and shareholder value.

Recently, heightened levels of competition across varied private sector industries such as banking and telecommunications, have seen both service excellence, which plays a pivotal role in positive customer experience and technology innovation, become the key competitive frontiers. With this background, we expect to see significant investments in customer-facing IT projects, especially those that drive customer insight and support execution on the customer front-line, e.g. analytical and operational Customer Relationship Management (CRM) projects, business process re-engineering consultancies, business intelligence and targeted campaign management projects. Focus will also be centered on enterprise application integration using middleware platforms to create integrated IT ecosystems that enable organizations to share and exchange critical information across internal departments as well as with third parties.

Naturally, 2011 will also see the Cloud computing a concept already popular in the West take root in Kenya as organizations seek to gain the benefits of acquiring their IT infrastructure and solutions on a simple service subscription basis as opposed to engaging in costly, lengthy and risky projects.

On the energy utilities front, there is a major focus on increasing energy generation, efficiency, affordability and distribution to power up more Kenyan homes and businesses, for example through prepaid metering and rolling out energy-saving equipment to consumers. Foreseeably, there will be more investments in this area particularly on the IT infrastructure to support the increasing number of consumers and the enhanced uptime requirements. The Kenyan energy utility sector, especially the distribution bodies, are starting to have greater customer focus following specialization resulting from the segmentation of different tiers of the energy value chain by government (KENGEN, KETRACO, KPLC, REA, ERC). This will see investors moving in to fund customer contact centers and insight solutions.

In mature economies, Government is usually the largest consumer of IT services, however in our part of the world this has not always been the case. This seems to be changing for Kenya however, with the Government having strengthened its IT oversight and implementation bodies (E-Govt Directorate, ICT Board, Ministry of ICT, etc). Indeed, GoK is already executing a number of key IT projects which are lined up for the current



" This year, well positioned players such as Seven Seas Technologies will reap from this and they are likely to see tremendous growth in revenues and shareholder value."

2010/2011 financial year. The focus here seems to be on raising the levels of public governance, supporting government-wide initiatives to improve service delivery to the citizenry, and creating enablers for achievement of the Vision 2030.

Consequently, we expect to see heavy Government investment in fundamental IT infrastructures such as data centers, unified communications and information security, as well as some projects directly impacting how government services are delivered to the public and the corporate sector. This may well be the year when our government accelerates the journey to globalization of our top local IT companies. This can be achieved by giving them the experience and reference points necessary for them to build unique capacities that they can export to the rest of the continent and the world at large.

Implementing these massive government projects will need a significant scaling up of locally available IT skills. We therefore look forward to the government's support of initiatives by companies such as Seven Seas Technologies and the local universities in IT talent development, establishment and upholding of international IT standards and the outsourcing of IT projects to local home-grown companies like our very own. In return, we are keen to support Government in executing flagship Vision 2030 projects that have an IT component.

In the last couple of years we have seen a number of global IT companies establishing a local presence in our Kenyan market. As local players, we very much welcome this as these global giants can build value-exchange partnerships with local companies, through which knowledge transfer happens from them to the local companies. Vice versa, the localization of global approaches to fit the Kenyan context could also happen from the local organizations into the global ones. Out of this will also come capital infusion into local firms via private equity investments. Potential strategic partnerships, mergers and acquisitions would enable local businesses to expand on their investments and inject more cash-flow into the Kenyan economy

In addition to this we expect to witness wider regional engagements in the ICT market as solutions become

increasingly pervasive, take for example the growth of Safaricom's Mpesa platform outside Kenya. Neighboring countries are turning to Kenya in the area of thought leadership and pioneering of new technologies, they desire to experience the development injection that fueled rapid and agile economic growth through ICT and that can easily be replicated in their countries with the appropriate adoption of tried and tested frameworks. In addition to this the advent of the East African Community has created a far larger target market for organizations that are now under pressure to roll out their brand and products at unprecedented scale hence the need for more adept systems to run business and communicate effectively across the region. It becomes apparent therefore that the greater the aspect of regional growth experienced the simpler internal environments will have to become leading to the consolidation of disparate technologies into simple to use customer centric platforms in terms of ICT development.

END

Michael Macharia
Founder and Group CEO of SevenSeas Technologies Group
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IN MEMORIUM

REMEMBERING JAMES GACHUI

An avid reader, intellectual, serial venture capitalist, great mentor, risk taker, full of humility. These are but a few of the words that described our Chairman, the late Mr. James Gachui.

A graduate of University of Surrey, Guilford with First Class Honors in Chemical Engineering, Chairman in many boards and founder of Galana oil, Wananchi Group, Transcentury Limited and Jimana limited, Mr. Gachui was an avid businessman appreciative of the interesting growth opportunities that the Country was presenting and the corresponding tightness of growth capital in the Country and Continent in general.

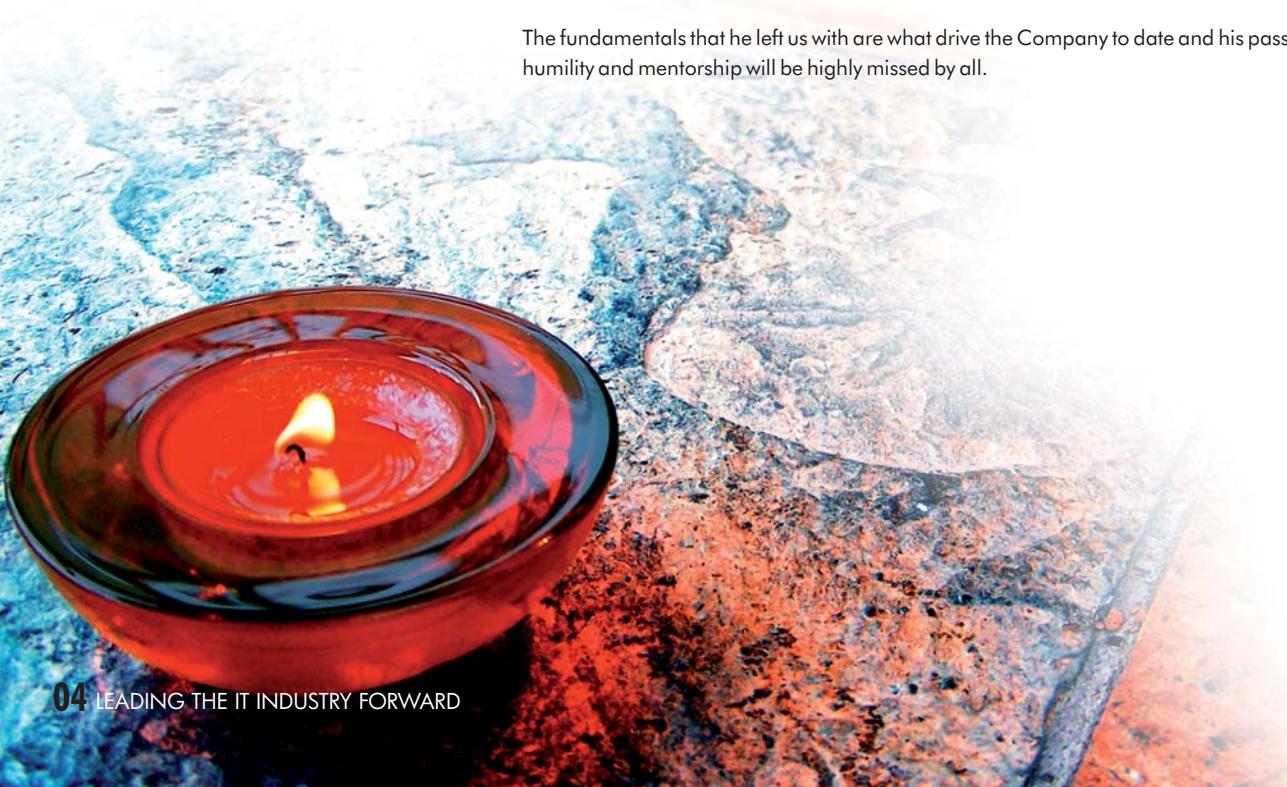
It is with these attributes that he identified Seven Seas Technologies as an ICT integrator that was set to grow rapidly and immediately invested in the Company. Being a start up business, this investment ensured best practice in Company business processes, boosted the Company's reputation, and brought in the right contacts for our business.

Mr. Gachui brought with him Corporate ethics and values that were well incorporated into Seven Seas Technology's culture. His passion for people and tenacity in business had an infectious effect on the staff and this in return enabled the Company to transform into the leading ICT integrator in the region that it is to date.

His fervour for transforming Seven Seas Technologies saw the amalgamation of private equity by bringing in Aureous Capital, a specialist emerging markets private equity firm with a \$400 to \$500 Million Africa fund covering investments in 50+ emerging markets in three investment regions Africa, Asia and Latin America.

This investment is what has seen Seven Seas Technologies move from an IT firm to a regional ICT integrator.

The fundamentals that he left us with are what drive the Company to date and his passion, humility and mentorship will be highly missed by all.



A TRIBUTE BY MICHAEL MACHARIA

DECEMBER 20, 2010

My relationship with James ignited 8 years ago on a business trip to India where we developed an instant liking for each other based of how we viewed various perspectives of life. But what humbled me then was the fact that I was a 26 year old young man with a 2 year start-up business and that James connected with me and gave me the attention that he would give his business peers. This was my first experience of his humility.

"His humility was so great yet his own light shone so bright"

He was a wonderful listener, a student of the mind and a student of the industry. He had an amazing capacity to absorb vast amounts of information and yet still remember every last detail. He had the ability to focus intently on you and your problems. That mind of his was always working, testing, searching and looking for even better solutions and yet was never looking for someone "better" to focus on in that moment than when he addressed you. He always made you feel as if you were the center of the universe. He was never too busy for you!

James joined me in my business without any meaningful financial numbers but he said to me, "Mike, all I have to do is share my experience with you and help you succeed. You have the drive so the rest is up to you, but I will be there to ratify your thoughts and ideas." He called me every weekday for the last 7 years before he was taken ill. He was and remains a great mentor.

I remember asking him what he considered being "success", and he said: "having a beautiful, spiritual and anchored family who care deeply for each other and pursue their own dreams successfully." This was his greatest success.

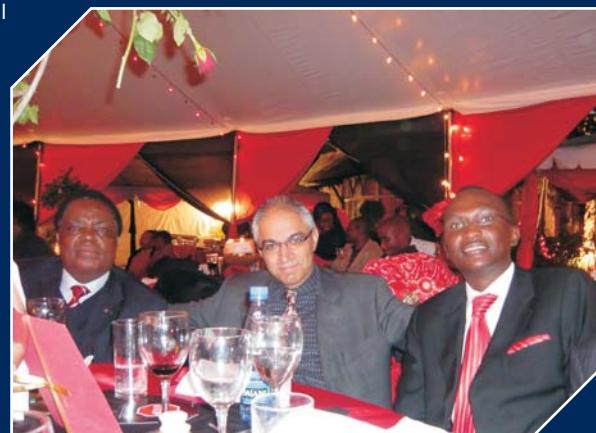
His opening statement to our conversation when I last visited him and gazing straight at me was "Mike, everything I did with God ahead of me, was extremely successful, even beyond my wildest dreams. Other ventures where I did not exercise this principle were only mildly successful." Immediately thereafter he switched to another discussion but this is a statement that remains with me.

As I look forward and see all of the bright teachers that have come into my life and I think of the light that James brought into mine. I am humbled to know that I have stood in the shadows of such great human beings who care so deeply about improving the human race and the welfare of our country. As I stand in those shadows, I take up that torch, grip it tightly and move gratefully forward. I continue what I learned from James, lighting up the shadows in which others stand and so play my role in making this community, this country of ours, that much better of a place.

On behalf of my wife Connie, my son Leo, the Aureos Board, partners and staff at Seven Seas Technologies, we thank you for letting us get to know you. Thank you for your passionate support of our vision and for always enforcing the fact that we should always do the right thing and be better people, despite economic success. Thank you for sharing your time, your energy and your passion with us so wholeheartedly.

God bless you James. You were, and always will be, our hero, mentor, energy giver and a great friend.

May your soul rest in eternal peace.



By Adam Nyaga

General Manager, Business Applications, SST

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ACHIEVING BUSINESS FORESIGHT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Would it not be a wonderful thing if, by some kind of magical power, all staff at our company automatically gained the ability to see the future whenever they walked in through our doors? Just imagine what power that would give us over our competition, our customers and our market environment!

This ability to understand the past and present and to see the future with clarity is the ultimate goal of a Business Intelligence (BI) practice, and it is possible to achieve it through a well thought out investment in technology. Depending on the level of technology investment and maturity of processes in an organization, you will find yourself in one of the three stages of BI maturity: **Hindsight; Insight; or Foresight.**

In the **Hindsight** stage, the organization is able to use various internal data sources to gather historical transactional information and then analyze it to answer questions such as "what happened?" At this point, an organization has invested in some data management and report generation capabilities to answer such questions as "how many new customers did we gain in the last quarter?"

By building on these capabilities through addition of non-transactional internal data such as employee information and product features, customer feedback and external data such as market survey, the organization is able to correlate information and can reach the **Insight** stage, where it is possible to answer questions such as "what is happening?" and "why is it happening?" At this point, we are able to get answers to questions such as "which profile of our call centre agents are able to provide quick resolution to customer queries?", "why is our customer retention poor in spite of us introducing new exciting products in the market?" etc. It is possible at this stage to also trigger automated responses to specific business events as they happen in real-time.

The ultimate level **Foresight** is achieved when you add predictive tools and processes to your business intelligence practice, making the organization capable to answer futuristic questions such as

Foresight

Pronunciation: /'fɔ:sait/

Noun

- the ability to predict what will happen or be needed in the future. *Example: we predicted our customers' response to the latest promo with amazing foresight, the uptake has been phenomenal!*

"what should we do?", "how will the market react?", "how will the customer respond?". At this level, for example, you can make real-time offers to customers based on your prediction of how they will respond, or you can analyze various possible responses to a competitor strategy and see the long-term impact to your business.

Over the last few years, we have come across many organizations in the East African market where we do our business, that are struggling with the challenge of developing these capabilities for foresight in their business. Just like in any other successful projects in business, the initiative to grow from hindsight to insight to business foresight must be driven by business imperatives, and must be holistic in its approach. The key areas that need to be developed include **Data Management; Presentation; Analytics and Integration.**

The number 1 challenge faced by many businesses in their quest to reach the Foresight stage is the state of **Data Management** in

their organization. A mature BI practice is built on a foundation of well organized large volumes of comprehensive and quality data. Putting this in place is typically both a business and technical challenge, and a good strategy needs to be put in place and executed to meet this challenge. Data management encompasses the sourcing, quality management, consolidation and protection of all relevant business data, and includes such concerns as data architecture, quality management, master data management, governance and security.

The **Presentation** of business intelligence information is equally a make-or-break area of focus. It is very important that stakeholders at all levels, operational or strategic, have quick and easy access to meaningful reports and graphical outputs from which it is easy to discern insights for the BI practice to be effective and produce business foresight. Apart from static reports, information should also be sent out as alerts or through "push" publishing based on a subscription model. Business dashboards specific to specific contexts e.g. executive information, production management, customer service, financial management, etc. are typically the focal point of your business foresight setup, since they are the key interaction point between the users of the information with the systems. As well, mobility has become a key enabler in today's business environment therefore the presentation of information must be possible "on-the-go".

"Predictive analytics provide an additional impetus by being able to look through historical and current information to accurately infer future trends and possibilities based on expected and unexpected events, providing the organization with the magical crystal ball powers that will keep them in a dominant position in the market."

The **Analytics** component is the one which unleashes the tremendous power of automated business intelligence. Through the use of technology tools and human inputs, it makes it possible to dig into the organizational data and correlate records to come up with relationships between various entities, transactions and business events, bringing out new perspectives from existing data for business stakeholders to infer meaning and to drive organization-wide accurate fact-based decision making. A good real-time analytics engine provides the business with a "finger-on-the-pulse" ability, where they can sense any subtle changes in business performance or changes in the business environment as they happen. **Predictive analytics** provide an additional impetus by being able to look through historical and current information to accurately infer future trends and possibilities based on expected and unexpected events, providing the organization with the magical crystal ball powers that will keep them in a dominant position in the market.

A key challenge for many organizations is what to do with the information they have in their hands. There is typically a breakdown in moving to the next step, once we have run analytics and can see which

direction we should be heading, or what steps we need to take in a very specific situation. You will often find that the action is either not taken, or is not done as was specifically required. In managing this transition between operational and analytical business modes, **Integration** is where the rubber meets the road. At organizational level, the analytical world, typically composed of business analysts (financial, technical, marketing, commercial, etc.), and the operational world, composed of the production floor, customer service staff, IT and technology departments etc. need to be in sync. At a technical level we must implement a robust middle-ware integration hub so that the systems in the analytical world can be integrated with those in the operational world, for real-time analytical decisions to translate into real-time operational actions. A typical example of this is in the concept of Next Best Offer, or Next Best Action, whereby the analytics number crunching predicts that a certain customer is likely to take up a certain product based on his current and historical usage patterns, but the operational staff interacting with this customer on a day to day basis will not be aware of this. The customer may then end up being approached by a competitor with this product, and it will become an opportunity cost for our business if the competition wins over this customer. In an integrated scenario, the analytical system would automatically push this information to the operational system, and when the customer is next served, an alert will be provided to the customer service agent to make an offer of the recommended product to the customer. Based on the response of the

customer, this information is fed back into the analytical system to improve its future automated decision-making.

So, with all these in mind, let's look at what needs to be done within the organization to move along the **Hindsight to Insight to Foresight** path with maximum benefit to the business:

From the business perspective, it is important to:

- Put in place processes that maximize gathering of quality data, e.g. during customer interactions, as part of marketing research, etc.
- Put together and enforce data governance, data protection and master data management policies.
- Create specialized analytics functions or centres of excellence across the various business divisions, with the right staffing, tools and processes.
- Enhance the value of fact-based decision making in all business processes.
- Integrate the analytical and operational worlds for smooth transition and real-time exchange of information.

Whereas from the technology perspective, it is important to:

- Design a comprehensive data architecture that can stand the test of time in the organization as part of a holistic Enterprise Architecture exercise which evaluates the organizational needs and creates a comprehensive and integrated blueprint for the IT environment.
- Select and invest in the business intelligence tools and technologies required to support the business imperative.
- Build an enterprise data warehouse and business intelligence ecosystem which is driven by business requirements, and which includes all components necessary to provide readily accessible, reliable, comprehensive, high quality data.
- Build the technical middle-ware integration platform which enables exchange of information and smooth transitions between the analytical and operational worlds in the organization.

In one interesting American example, the United States Post Office has over 200 years worth of experience yet still manages to damage, lose and misdirect numerous items each year. This is in contrast to Federal Express that only has been in business since 1973 with an on-time delivery rate of 98% plus. In this comparison, the United States Post Office has more experience than Federal Express, yet one can argue that Federal Express has learned more in their shorter existence, and consequently have far better performance than their competitor. Among various other factors, a mature BI practice has enabled FedEx to leapfrog its better-established competition

On a more local front, we have seen some of our customers who have made significant investment in BI sustaining their growth in revenue and profitability while maintaining the market share, even in the face of sustained and vicious competition from their rivals in the market. One of the secrets their competition is yet to discover is that these companies have invested heavily, both organization-wise and technology-wise, in driving the pervasive customer, market and financial insight and foresight across the organization, so that they are able to monitor business performance, analyze and make key interventions in a very timely manner, all driven by a strong BI practice.

Some key applications of Business Intelligence that will be covered in the Hindsight to Insight to Foresight transformation include:

- Executive dashboards.
- Financial Management Information System (MIS).
- Enterprise Performance Management and balanced score cards.
- Consolidation of Operational Reporting across the organization.
- Advanced predictive analytics such as financial modelling.
- Budgeting, planning and forecasting.
- Revenue assurance, anti money laundering, fraud management and other compliance/risk management applications.
- Analytical CRM and Marketing Campaign Management, Customer Segmentation, etc.
- Regulatory reporting.

Depending on the business priorities of each organization, you should target specific applications and then build the technology to support it, but always with an eye on the overall architecture that is able to support expansion, agility and growth of the BI ecosystem. The BI technology

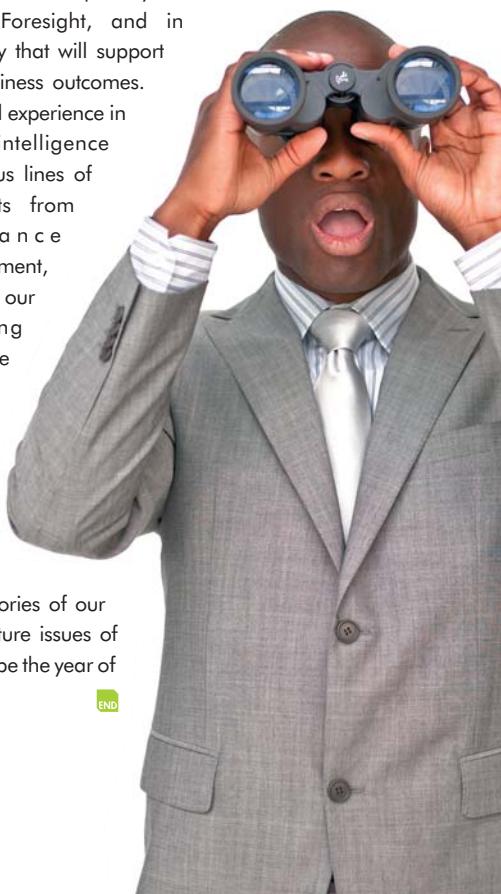
selection and implementation process to support this roadmap starts at the **business applications** level, moves deeper into the **analytics and presentation level**, then below this level to the **data storage and accessibility** level. Below this level is the **data management** level, and under that the **data sourcing, extraction, transformation and loading (etl)** and **data integration** level which is in the deepest part of the BI core.

There are various generic and specialized software applications business intelligence tools, such as *Oracle Business Intelligence Enterprise Edition (OBIEE)*, *IBM Cognos* and *SAP BusinessObjects* which are all market leading tools incorporating very comprehensive **analytics and presentation** capabilities. Some examples of the other more specialized software include Oracle's Mantas for anti-money laundering and *Oracle RealTime Decisions* for dynamic campaigns and next best activity business scenarios. Oracle database, IBM DB2, Teradata, and Microsoft SQL Server are some of the leading data warehousing products in the market, with some new emerging and innovative products such as EMC's Greenplum also coming up. Specialized database crunching server hardware such as Oracle's Exadata platform have also come up, also we have very innovative and reliable data storage, replication and archiving solutions from companies such as EMC. Advanced Master Data Management and Data Quality Tools are also available from the major vendors to support this key part of the BI ecosystem, as well as SOA integration middleware.

The companies that will be able to accelerate their progress on this journey are going to emerge as the market leader in their industry, able to target their customers accurately and optimize on their business performance. We at Seven Seas Technologies, through our own internal capabilities and via our global ecosystem of valued partners, have the ability to support our customers in making the right choices in their investment in this journey from Hindsight to Insight to Foresight, and in implementing the technology that will support the initiative for positive business outcomes.

Our collective know-how and experience in implementing business intelligence applications, covering various lines of business and departments from Finance, Performance Management, Risk Management, Customer Insight, etc., to our partnerships with strong vendors and mastery of the underlying technologies and tools put us in a leading position in this area of technology consulting.

We very much look forward to highlighting the business foresight success stories of our East African customers in future issues of the SST Foresight. May 2011 be the year of Business Foresight!



FORESIGHT PERSPECTIVES

KENYA POWER & LIGHTING COMPANY LIMITED

By Delano Kiulu Longwe

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VISION: TO PROVIDE WORLD CLASS
POWER THAT DELIGHTS OUR CUSTOMERS

MISSION: POWERING PEOPLE FOR
BETTER LIVES

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

KPLC stands head and shoulders above the crowd in terms of its incisive inroads into cutting edge ICT. The phrase from Star Trek "To boldly go where no man has gone before" captures the very essence on the mercurial KPLC ICT team ably led by Engineer Johnson Ole Nchoe the Chief Manager Information Technology and Telecommunications. In an interview with the Engineer here's what he had to say.

What has KPLC ICT team been up to?

Eng. Ole Nchoe: We have recently upgraded our core servers and installed a SUN (Oracle) M9000 enterprise server after a very rigorous and very competitive public tender with extremely stringent and high requirements Seven Seas Technologies were selected as our strategic partner for this deployment and they were able to deliver the project on time and professionallyas part of our business continuity plan and now as a result of this in case of any problems at Stima Plaza mission critical systems will continue to function and restores can be conducted away from the main production site. We have also upgraded our backup systems reducing our back-up window from 30 hours to 1 hour.

Philip Mwai the Chief Systems Administrator concurs, "We did not have any major hitches in the deployment of these projects".

KPLC becomes the first and only company in Kenya to deploy the M9000 Oracle's highest performance multiprocessor mainframe-class system.

Where do you see Kenyan ICT development vis-a-vis KPLC's role:

Eng. Ole Nchoe: KPLC plays a dual role.

- As a key input to socio-economic development of the country through provision of reliable, cost effective and stable power supply which is integral to development in Kenya for example the GSM networks spread across the country require stable power in all parts of the country.
- As a pacesetter implementing cutting edge technology and leading from the front for example KPLC became the first organization in Africa to deploy Exadata, Oracle's database crunching machine for its pre-paid services.

Going into the future power systems rely more and more on ICT and the Telecoms and ICT industries rely more and more on power so we see a lot of convergence. Apart from that with licensing from CCK KPLC now provides a fibre optic backbone to GSM Service providers and is evolving into a Carrier of Carriers. Of course KPLC will continue to provide reliable rates for high quality service to the GSM market. Going into the future we will see more of a merger between the Telecom and Power networks. In the network of the future we will also see a move to mobile devices with more and more applications being able to run on mobile devices.

Philip Mwai: Customers are increasingly moving towards mobile payment systems which can be done from anywhere

What are your plans for the future?

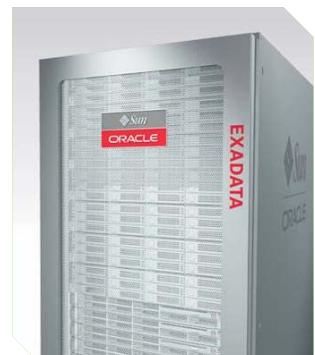
Eng. Ole Nchoe: We intend to roll out 500,000 prepaid meters by the end of 2011 on the Exadata platform.

For more info on KPLC go to: www.kplc.co.ke



Eng. Johnson ole Nchoe (BSc (Eng.), MBA (Nbi), R. Eng.)
Chief Manager, I.T. & Telecommunications

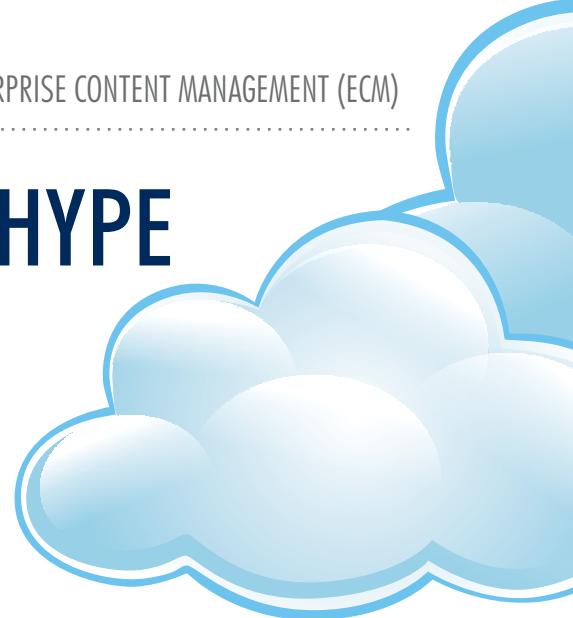
Copyright 2001 KPLC



Oracle's Exadata machine first deployed in Africa at KPLC. KPLC intends to rollout 500,000 prepaid meters on the Exadata in 2011

2011: THE CLOUD FROM HYPE TO DEPLOYMENT....

The year 2010 saw the Cloud get stage spotlight. We take a closer look at the silver lining.



The year 2010 saw the Cloud get stage spotlight, with Cloud computing success stories like those of Twitter, Facebook, Google Apps and Salesforce.com become common place among the large enterprise. Legacy data centers will continue to fade away and receive a facelift as virtualization and consolidation strategies evolve into Cloud computing strategies.

Tight IT budgets, increased consumer service expectations and cut-throat competition continue to put pressure on both private sector and government agencies - the next generation consumer is here. They're socially networked and demanding more from the organizations they do business with. They have more outlets for voicing opinions about their experiences than ever before. Engaging in proactive conversations with these consumers to manage and deliver on their expectations continues to become a critical factor to every company's success story.

In 2011, Cloud Computing offerings will continue to dominate and transform traditional computing models. One such offering is the Cloud ECM.

Enterprise Content Management (ECM) is a means by which an organization manages and organizes its information to increase productivity and enable better decision making. This information may exist in many digital forms: text documents, engineering drawings, XML, still images, audio and various other file types and formats.

ECM manages this content and the content from other enterprise applications, such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Enterprise Resource Planners (ERP), and Enterprise Portals, adding intelligence by creating schema, metadata and tags that make search and retrieval faster and more efficient.

ECM also manages the review, revision and approval process for any piece of content according to user defined business rules - a capability known as work flow and lifecycle management.

ECM controls the publishing of content through multiple channels. For instance, a single piece of content may be published simultaneously to a website, broadcast as a fax, printed as a text document or sent to handheld mobile devices.

ECM is generally considered to be an amalgamation of a number of distinct but interrelated applications - Enterprise Document Management (EDM), Web Content Management (WCM), Digital Asset Management (DAM), Enterprise Records Management (ERM), Business Process Management (BPM), Enterprise Content Integration (ECI) and Collaborative Content Management (CCM).

CLOUD AND THE ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT (ECM) STRATEGY.

BPM goes beyond workflow and lifecycle management to define, model, and manage all kinds of business processes consistently and reliably across multiple organizations, systems and applications. ECI technology, a subset of ECM, enables the integration of all content sources inside and outside the enterprise, regardless of content location or how content is accessed.

Collaboration technology, another subset of ECM, is becoming increasingly important in organizations. Working in harmony with BPM, this collaboration allows the participants in a business process to come together to optimize the process for mutual benefit. This brings partners, suppliers, customers, and agencies together in a controlled way and manages and leverages collaborative content such as discussion threads, voting results, and documents.

All of this functionality has one purpose - to leverage enterprise knowledge assets. How effectively organizations deal with mission-critical information and expose it as usable content to support employees, partners and consumers is becoming a recognized differentiator.



By Josephat Mbogoh
Software engineer, Business Applications
jmbogo@sevenseastech.com

"Cloud computing is a better way to run your business"

CLOUD AND THE ECM STRATEGY

Traditional Enterprise Content Management (ECM) software has always been complicated, slow and too expensive and therefore harder get to real business value. It involves a complicated software stack and a team of experts to install, configure, and run them. They need production, development, testing, and staging failover environments.

Cloud computing is a better way to run your business. Instead of developing, maintaining and running your content management applications yourself, you access everything you need through the web. You just log in, customise it, and start using it. That's the power of cloud computing.

An Enterprise Content Management Strategy or (ECM Strategy) simply means reviewing not only the technology aspects of an organization but the information governance, people and processes so that associated capabilities relate back to the strategy, ensuring that ECM solutions are most effective. Rapidly changing market conditions require organisations to quickly innovate, optimise their business and lower costs. The need for speed and precision increases daily.

An ECM platform integrated with Business Process Management (BPM) delivers the flexibility required to increase business agility and effectiveness, delivering critical decisions at the moment it matters most. Today's ECM strategies implemented on the cloud, commonly referenced to as infrastructure as a service (iaas), set to help organizations gain a competitive cutting edge.

Successful companies manage and deliver content for excellent customer service, reaping maximum workforce efficiency and double-digit return on investment. State and local government, financial services, healthcare and the energy sectors focus has to remain customer centric if they are to remain competitive and profitable.

Organizations are constantly looking for ways to cut costs, but don't realize that those cost cutting measures may also have positive environmental effects that can increase goodwill and shareholder value. Your organization can effect environmental change by moving printed information online.

How much money can your business save by reducing its reliance on paper? If an enterprise with staff of 10,000 sends and receives an average of two pages per day, they can save \$670,000 or more every year, digitizing documents reduces the need for paper. The more you digitize your paper and keep it online or in the control of your computer systems; the more money you save, the more secure your information is through controlled access. Leading industry analysts believe that 80 percent of business activities are supported by unstructured content. Yet bringing content management to an enterprise level can be challenging so by not taking a strategic approach, your organization may lack:

- Best practice use - Creating Value from Content.
- Enterprise information sharing.
- Project leadership.
- Streamlined decision cycle through collaborative decision management which enables decision making to the front line through "empowered" knowledge workers as opposed to top level decision makers only.
- Competitive Advantage: The level playing field is, in fact, not level at all. There is actually a steep slope. How well a company manages its content and its processes online, dictates where they are on the slope - rising to the top or sliding to the bottom.

For any organization, **information management** is a major challenge. But it's also fundamental to achieving success, both now and in the future. Taking advantage of Cloud Computing offerings will drive and take your organization to new profitability levels and win the confidence of your stakeholders, notwithstanding the most important person in our business - the customer.

END

TECHNOLOGY@HOME

By Solomon Thuo
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Let's travel back in time and picture how our homes used to look like more than ten years ago. I am sure the first thing that comes to your mind is your seating room entertainment devices or your kitchen electronics depending on where you spend your time more. Most seating rooms or lounges used to have a monochrome or black and white television set (yes, I bet Father Christmas was known to be a black and white guy), a radio set receiving amplitude modulated (AM) stations and always had a cassette slot, a fixed wired phone on the table and of course a video cassette recorder (VCR).

These devices have always served as forms of entertainment, sources of information and communication channels. While these gadgets used to serve us faithfully, they had various limitations. The TV didn't project life in its full colour, the technology couldn't allow for many clear channels and the worst feature was the curved screen that made it difficult to watch news if seated at a corner. The radio was good but also lacked clear channels due to interferences, selecting a certain track from the cassette player were hard and tedious. The phone refused to be mobile at all and limited you to calling during office hours or else calling your few friends who were blessed to have one at home.

I know I have not mentioned much about the kitchen but we all know you had to be more creative since there were no microwaves to warm the food fast, blender for instant fresh juice, toaster or sandwich maker for sizzling hot breakfasts. I almost forgot to tell the bachelors that there were no washing machines!

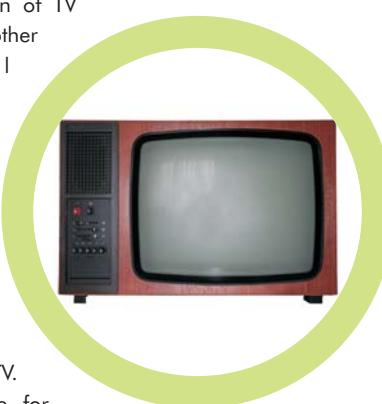
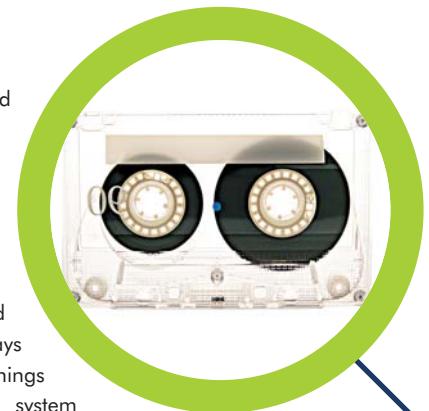
In the recent past technology has evolved to change the way we do things at home, communicate with the outside world and even entertainment at home. We have come to enjoy surround entertainment systems in our homes, watch digital satellite TV with global channels, watch live events, download and watch movies from the internet in the comfort of our houses, experience live streaming of music, experience graphics in games like we have never seen before.

The biggest technological advancement that has really changed our homes is the discovery of the internet protocol commonly referred to as IP. Internet protocol is the method by which devices exchange data with each other, for instance your laptop uses this protocol to

download emails from a centralized storage so that you can view them. There were other protocols that were used before IP but did not receive the broad and universal acceptance that IP had. This has seen almost any device that communicates with another device being designed around the protocol. One of the greatest ways that IP has changed the way you do things at home is through the television system specifically in the way your TV receives the programs/channels that you watch. "IP has brought and will bring internet to your TV". IP Protocol has improved your home communication and the TV experience tremendously.

Traditionally, TVs receive channels over the air; the channel information is transmitted from the broadcaster as analogue signals and carries no more information. For you to receive the signal you normally mount antennae on top of your house and tune the TV. Some mid technological advancement have also enabled digital transmission of TV via satellite or other terrestrial transmission. Digital transmission enables more channels to be transmitted over the shared medium (Air) and also allows for interactive TV. The best example for digital TV in Kenya currently is DSTV and also some other local stations as government moves to phase out analogue transmission.

Television can now be transmitted using the IP protocol to form what has come to be labeled as IPTV. IPTV is currently being rolled out in Kenya by some telecommunication companies and we should expect to experience it in the next couple of months.





IPTV enables the transmission of "rich" TV channels in the same medium as internet and movies. This means that you get only one connection from one service provider and you will be able to access internet from any PC or laptop in the house, use phone services and also enjoy a rich TV experience. The connection to the service provider can either be wired or wireless; satellite, WiMax wireless technology, Wi-fi, Fibre or pre-existing cable infrastructure and other technologies currently being developed. Have a look at the following diagram depicting typical IPTV connection in your home.

Why IPTV in my house?

Interactivity:

IP allows the TV viewing experience to be more interactive and personalized. For example, an interactive program guide that allows viewers to search for content by title or actor's name, or a picture-in-picture functionality that allows them to "channel surf" without leaving the program they're watching. Viewers may be able to look up a player's stats while watching a sports game, or control the camera angle. They also may be able to

access photos or music from their PC on their television, use a wireless phone to schedule a recording of their favorite show, or even adjust parental controls so their child can watch a documentary for a school report, while they're away from home.

Video-on-demand

IPTV technology permits someone to browse an online program or film catalog, to watch trailers and to then select a selected recording. The play-out of the selected item starts nearly instantaneously on your TV or PC. Video-on-demand enables you to watch your favourite movies at any time you want from the comfort of your lounge without having to download it (pirate) or buying it as a DVD. The service provider allows you to pay for the IPTV service as a bundle and you are able to access all the movies, music, documentaries and other content. IPTV eliminates the need to run a parallel infrastructure to deliver live and stored video service.

IP-TV convergence/integrated services

As I mentioned earlier IPTV is delivered together with internet and voice delivery. This would enable you to get On-Screen Caller ID on your TV and the ability to handle it (send it to voice mail, etc.).

Gaming

IPTV also enables you to play games with your friends from the comfort of your houses. For instance if you have a friend who lives in Karen, another one in Garden Estate and another one in Imara, you can start a game from each of your television sets and play as if you were seated in the same room. You can then save your game stats and restart from where you left the following time. Isn't this wonderful?

IPTV was first experienced in 1999 in Canada, other developed and developing countries have followed suit. It's now time for Kenya to have the great experience.....

END

THE ETHIOPIAN ICT INDUSTRY

Over the past 20 years, the world and Africa particularly has witnessed an 'ICT Explosion' that has revolutionized the way we live and work. Ethiopia has not been left out of this phenomenon. ICTs have already proven to be a very potent force in all areas of the economy (education, government, knowledge economy, etc) through the provision of new and highly innovative solutions to different problems.

With the second largest population in Africa, Ethiopia has a very large ICT market with large bandwidth for growth.

ICT industry in Ethiopia started to explode with the introduction of the Internet in the country a few years ago. Even though the telecom industry is fully monopolized by one provider owned and run by the government, the ICT industry has witnessed phenomenal growth in terms of market penetration and the range of companies engaged in the sector, selling everything from computer accessories, telephony equipment to software. We have companies that sell servers and high-end equipment. Then we have companies that build end-to-end customized business software and data management applications for different sectors of the market. The presence of the largest technology firms in the world Microsoft, Oracle, HP Dell, Apple to name but a few also adds spice to the range of solutions on offer.

We now have organizations of all sizes adopting IT. Banks are adopting Core banking solutions. Insurance companies are buying and implementing integrated insurance software for General business and life business operations. Educational institutions are adopting e-learning and procuring MIS packages for back-office management. Perhaps a more pronounced way to indicate the rapid adoption of ICT in Ethiopia to note that the Government is spearheading this adoption in different sectors of the economy as witnessed by the decree that most hotels must acquire computerized Hotel Point of Sale solutions. Another decree that each organization must have a Cash Register machine with wireless links to the Customs and Revenue Authority or the central bank making it mandatory that all banks adopt and implement core banking solutions.

All of the initiatives mentioned above have stimulated the market for ICT within the country. The demand for ICT skills is growing so rapidly the Government created Ethiopian Information Communication & Technology Development Authority (EICTDA) and Information Network Security Agency (INSA) to spearhead the development of

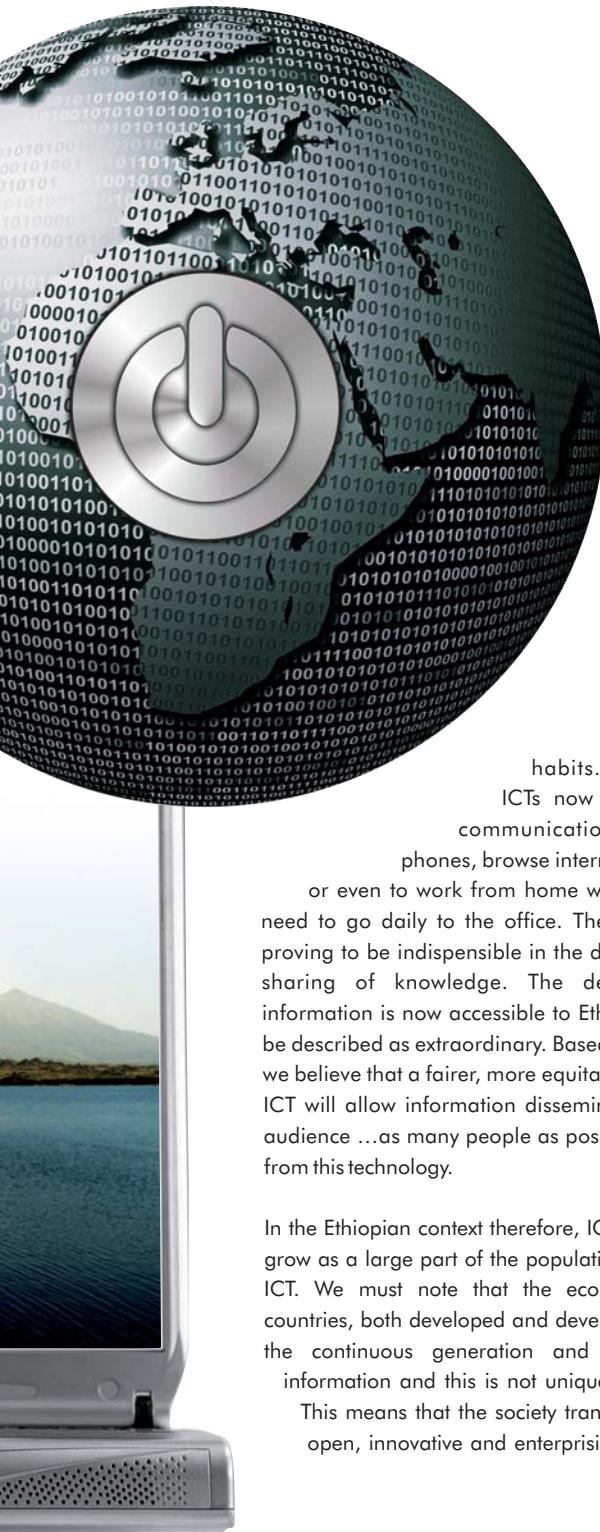
programs designed to create skills and foster greater ICT awareness and adoption within the country.

It is clear that with the ever growing ICT market in Ethiopia and as organizations build and implement high speed networks, the need for advanced ICT training is visible. The demand for certified professionals (CCNA, ODBA, etc) has also grown.

ICT has become a very potent force not just in terms of introducing new ideas but also in terms of introducing alternative and unprecedented technical solutions within society. In this context, we may note the deep cultural transformations that have occurred within the country, resulting in fundamental transformation of attitudes and



"society transforms to a more open, innovative and enterprising one that spurs creativity and growth"



habits. For example, ICTs now allow people to communicate easily using phones, browse internets using phones or even to work from home without having the need to go daily to the office. Then also, ICTs are proving to be indispensable in the dissemination and sharing of knowledge. The degree to which information is now accessible to Ethiopians can only be described as extraordinary. Based on this actuality, we believe that a fairer, more equitable distribution of ICT will allow information dissemination to a wider audience ...as many people as possible must benefit from this technology.

In the Ethiopian context therefore, ICT will continue to grow as a large part of the population is yet to adopt ICT. We must note that the economies of many countries, both developed and developing depend on the continuous generation and consumption of information and this is not unique to Government.

This means that the society transforms to a more open, innovative and enterprising one that spurs

creativity and growth. New Banks and insurance companies are being formed that will buy large data networks, and application software infrastructure. These will require enterprise-level data stores, unbreakable hardware such as blades that will allow organizations to offer services 24/7. Government departments are replacing legacy systems with modern more up to date ones! Supermarkets, Hotels, Trading organizations are all adopting data management solutions of differing sizes.

The sole national telecoms provider has greatly expanded its services and telecoms national bandwidth, thus offering organizations a wide range of solutions. We have large telecoms organizations such as Orange, ZTE, Huawei to name but a few. In the future, we may very well see independent competing telecoms organizations, national ISPs and other organizations.

In conclusion it clear that the link between ICT and the knowledge economy and how this will spur future growth in Ethiopia. As the country strives to bridge the much 'talked-about' digital divide between Africa and the developed west and strives to meet the millennium development goals (MDGs), we will see great expansion in the national ICT infrastructure, typified by the sale of large ICT projects accompanied by a more rapid adoption of ICT by the general population across the country. Companies that sale enterprise-level ICT solutions most especially stand to benefit in the short run as Government, Private Organizations and industry require and demand ever more stable and secure solutions.

With the above understanding of the Ethiopian ICT market, SST has geared itself to move forward with the technology industry growth. To achieve its target and support the ICT industry growth, SST has partnered with NET&COM PLC, a company well established with many years of experience in doing business in Ethiopia.

SST will soon deploy a state-of-the-art Queue Management System for Ethiopian Airlines - the leading Airline in Africa.

SST understands the ICT revolution from its many years of experience and sees the essential aspect of advanced technology training. With this in mind SST has committed to setup a state-of-the-art training center with certifying professionals to meet the ICT growth in Ethiopia.

SST will also organize various workshops in order to give exposure and awareness to the Ethiopian ICT professionals in line with the growing demand in the various technology sectors.

END

AUREOS: PRIVATE EQUITY IN TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT

Question: What is Private equity?

Answer: Private equity refers to a type of investment aimed at gaining a significant or controlling shareholding in a company, in the hope of then being able to work with the company, to generate a high return for all shareholders. As the name implies, the companies in which private equity funds invest, are generally not listed on public stock markets.

Question: Who is Aureos?

Answer: Aureos is a specialist emerging market private equity firm, providing growth capital and expertise to help build the next generation of sustainable businesses. Returns are maximised and risk mitigated by focusing on growing the earnings and improving the operational efficiency of the companies with which Aureos partners. The growth of markets like China and India and the potential of other emerging markets is reflected in Aureos' funds under management. They have risen from \$72m in 2001 to over \$1.2bn in 2010 and over 250 transactions have been completed to date. Aureos now has 29 offices, including four regional hubs, and over 90 investment professionals. These offices cover investments in 50+ emerging markets in the three investment regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Question: What types of investments is Aureos interested in?

Answer: Aureos primarily makes equity investments and frequently facilitates debt financing to support these investments. Aureos typically looks to help enhance a company's financial structure, governance, systems and controls, as well as strategic development. Various Funds managed by Aureos have invested in telecommunications, financial services, mining, agribusiness and infrastructure, as well as oil and gas services.



From left to right; Mr Sikand, Mr Njoka (Aureos and SST Directors); Mr Macharia (CEO,SST)

Question: Does Aureos invest in Information Technology Companies?

Answer: Yes it does. One of the companies is Seven Seas Technologies, one of the biggest integrators in the region with branches in Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda.

Question: Why is IT a magnet for private equity?

Answer: The increased interest in emerging economies, such as Kenya, is driven by a growing vibrancy in sectors such as Information Communication and Technology (ICT), value addition in agriculture, infrastructure and expanding financial services to meet growing transactional needs.

Private equity capital injection is different from, say accessing funds from a commercial bank. The latter is focused on the company repaying their loan whereas a private equity fund puts in funds, shares in the risks and is much more interested in the long term growth and success of that business. For example, Seven Seas Technologies has grown significantly to become the biggest integrator in the East African Region, during this current period of Aureos Africa Fund's investment.

Question: What does Aureos look for in a company before investing?

Answer: To access funds from Aureos, one requires a business that is profitable and has a growth plan. Given that Aureos will have to carry out due diligence, proper accountability and book keeping is critical. Aureos has different strategies, some which include provision of growth capital, as well as facilitation of mergers and acquisitions.

Aureos works closely with business owners and managers to help them to exploit opportunities to expand their businesses regionally, or even internationally, and thereby increase their net worth. It is therefore important that the business owners and managers exhibit a culture of collaboration, as well as a culture of measuring performance against targets that they set.

Question: What can you advise young Kenyan IT entrepreneurs?

Answer: Aureos' strong belief is that, if an entrepreneur has grown the business to where it is, then that entrepreneur is quite capable of delivering the next level of growth with the right support. It is therefore important for the business to seek the right support structure to enable sustainable growth.

A good private equity partner can empower the management team in a business to do what they do best. A partner such as Aureos seeks to understand what is needed, provide the right support internally and externally, through its local and regional office network.

Aureos recognizes the regional economic initiatives taking place and advises Kenyan IT entrepreneurs to ensure that they position their businesses to provide service sector expertise.

END

PEOPLE



PROCESSES WORKSHOP | SANKARA HOTEL/ TRIBE HOTEL | DEC 2010



GARISSA ICT OUTREACH

ITSMF LAUNCH



SST AND KTC OFFICES



SST SALES MOMBASA WORKSHOP 22/11/2010



TEAMWORK - BID TEAM

VALUES DAY | WINDSOR | NOV 2010

SST MOMENTS



CHRISTMAS PARTY AT KIBAGARE

STANDARD CHARTERED MARATHON



MENTORSHIP LAUNCH DINNER

MO FAYA BY ERIC WAINAINA



SST X-MAS BASH - 10TH DEC 2010



LONG SERVICE AWARDS



TEAM BUILDING



Enterprise Architecture is more than the aggregation and the interrelationships of various architectures such as Business, Application, Data and Technology. It is a conceptual approach that assists organisations with the understanding of their own structures and the way they work. It provides a map of the enterprise and is a route planner for business and technology changes.

Most companies have enterprise wide concerns such as:

- Better alignment between IT and Business
- Enable business transformation
- Identification of Business needs and requirements
- Proactive stakeholders management
- Improved quality of services
- Optimize the created value
- Reducing costs and profit increases
- Reducing duplication of information systems and operational processes
- Seamless integration and interoperability
- Security and availability of services
- Integrity of the information
- Focus on what is reusable or what can be shared
- Better return on existing investment, reduced risk for future investment
- A more efficient IT operation
- Faster, simpler and cheaper procurement

As a result, Enterprise Architecture can be used as a blueprint for an existing/target business capabilities gap analysis and as an

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THE VALUE OF ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE TRAINING TO BUSINESS

approach for strategic, acquisition, and capital investment planning. Architecting the Enterprise training is focused on the essential elements required for developing results-driven Enterprise Architecture programs that are designed to meet these business requirements.

Architecting the Enterprise courses clearly explain Enterprise Architecture's vital role in enabling or constraining the execution of business strategy. Our training provides clear explanations on the use of Enterprise Architecture, through real life examples and interactive exercises, and a proven-effective structured process for designing and implementing effective Enterprise Architectures based on TOGAF.

Accordingly, Architecting the Enterprise's experienced instructors work with you. Our training provides practical ways on how you can maintain your valuable customer base, win repeat business, whilst measuring your organization's ability to meet customer expectations.

At the end of our training, you will be able to:

- Understand the concepts related to Enterprise Architecture and TOGAF
- Identify the benefits and the added value of Enterprise Architecture
- Understand why and how to build an Enterprise Architecture based on TOGAF
- Identify the challenges of implementing an Enterprise Architecture, including the organizational and technical issues
- Identify, organise and develop the elements of an Enterprise Architecture program using TOGAF
- Identify the steps to create and improve an Enterprise Architecture practice
- Understand typical symptoms of an Enterprise Architecture dysfunctions and how to avoid them

About Knowledge Transfer Centre

Knowledge Transfer Centre (KTC) is a leading provider of internationally recognized ICT and technology related business training, delivered in partnership with global technology vendors and service delivery partners. For more information visit <http://www.ktc-africa.com/>



VARIOUS COURSES AVAILABLE FROM KTC

SUN SOLARIS

Unix Essentials Featuring Solaris 10 operating System	4 DAYS
Intermediate System Admin for Solaris 10 operating System	5 DAYS
System Admin for Solaris 10 operating System	5 DAYS
Sun Cluster 3.2 Administration	5 DAYS
Solaris Volume Manager Administration	5 DAYS
Network Administration for the Solaris 10 Operating System	5 DAYS

JAVA

Fundamentals of the Java Programming Language	5 DAYS
Java Programming Language	5 DAYS
Java Programming Language Workshop	5 DAYS
Object Oriented Analysis and Design	5 DAYS
Web Component Development	5 DAYS
Advanced Business Component w/Enterprise JavaBeans Technology	5 DAYS
Java 2 Enterprise Edition Development	4 DAYS
Developing J2EE Applications	5 DAYS
Architecting and Designing J2EE Applications	4 DAYS

SYMANTEC

VERITAS Storage Foundation 5.0 Administration	5 DAYS
VERITAS Cluster Server 5.0 for Solaris	5 DAYS
VERITAS Cluster Server 5.0 for Solaris	5 DAYS
Veritas NetBackup 6.5 for Solaris, Administration	5 DAYS

ITIL

ITIL Foundation Version 3.0	3 DAYS
ITIL Foundation Bridging	1 DAY

ORACLE DATABASE ADMINISTRATION

Oracle10g: Introduction to SQL	5 DAYS
Oracle10g DBA Workshop I	5 DAYS
Oracle10g DBA Workshop II	5 DAYS
Oracle 10g Performance Tuning	4 DAYS

ORACLE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE / ANALYTICS

Oracle BI 10g: Analytics Overview	1 DAY
Oracle BI Suite EE 10g R3: Create Reports and Dashboards New	3 DAYS
Oracle BI Suite EE 10g R3: Build Repositories New	5 DAYS
Oracle BI Server Administrator 10g: Build Repositories Rel 1	5 DAYS
Oracle BI Applications 7.9: Develop a Data Warehouse	5 DAYS
Marketing: Server Architect (Siebel 7.7)	3 DAYS
Marketing: Marketing Manager (Siebel 7.7)	2 DAYS

LINUX

Red Hat Essentials	5 DAYS
System Administration	5 DAYS
Networking & Security Administration	5 DAYS

CISCO

CCNA	
Interconnecting Cisco Networking Devices Part 1	5 DAYS
Interconnecting Cisco Networking Devices Part 2	5 DAYS
CCNP	
Implementing Cisco IP Routing (ROUTE)	5 DAYS
Implementing Cisco IP Switched Networks (SWITCH)	5 DAYS
Troubleshooting and Maintaining Cisco IP Networks (TSHOOT)	5 DAYS

CCVP	
Cisco Voice over IP	5 DAYS
Cisco Voice over IP fundamentals	5 DAYS
Implementing Cisco Unified Communications Manager Part 1	5 DAYS
Quality of Service (QoS)	5 DAYS

Implementing Cisco Unified Communications Manager Part 2	5 DAYS
Troubleshooting Cisco Unified Communications Systems	5 DAYS
CCSP	
Securing Cisco Network Devices	5 DAYS
Securing Networks with Cisco Routers and Switches	5 DAYS

Securing Networks with PIX and ASA	5 DAYS
Securing Networks with ASA Foundation	5 DAYS
Implementing Cisco Intrusion Prevention System	5 DAYS
CSE	
Cisco Sales Essentials	3 DAYS

JUNIPER

ROUTING COURSES	
Advanced Juniper Networks Routing In The Enterprise	5 DAYS
Operating Enhanced Services For Junos Software	4 DAYS
Configuring Juniper Networks Routers	5 DAYS
Operation And Troubleshooting Of Juniper Networks Routers	3 DAYS
Advanced Policy	4 DAYS

FIREWALL/SECURITY COURSES	
Configuring Juniper Networks Firewall/Ipsec Vpn Products	3 DAYS
Integrating Juniper Networks Firewalls/Ipsec Vpns Into High-Performance Networks	3 DAYS
Advanced Juniper Networks Ipsec Vpn Implementations	2 DAYS
Attack Prevention With Juniper Networks Firewalls	1 DAY
Advanced Vpns	3 DAYS

SWITCHING COURSE	
Operating Juniper Networks Switches in the Enterprise	4 DAYS

SIEBEL

Core Consultant Course (Siebel 8.0)	15 DAYS
Siebel 8.0 New Features	3 DAYS
Siebel 8.0 Essentials	10 DAYS
Implementation Case Study (Siebel 8.0)	5 DAYS



For more information on the various courses and the dates the courses are running, go to: <http://www.ktc-africa.com/>

By Betty Macharia

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CHANGING THE TALENT HORIZON

In the race of supply and demand, Knowledge 4 Life steps forward to Discover, Transform and Unleash the potential of the future talent into the IT industry.

The last few years have seen Kenya shifting rapidly from an agricultural to industrial to a service-based economy. The telecommunication sector has transformed the Country in the way we communicate with each other, send and receive money and eased banking transactions. As a result, the industry has and continues to expand investment in technology so as to be competitive and to meet the demands of the industry. We are seeing the Financial sector spending in upgrade of their core systems and applications with the introduction of mobile banking in partnership with the telecommunication companies, the Manufacturing sector keeps investing in more production lines and upgrading of their production and distribution systems, and the public

Companies in the market expect recruitment and retention of talent to become tougher. Given this highly competitive talent environment, the need to provide fulfilling and challenging career paths is pressing. The inability to build a skilled workforce can seriously hamper commercial expansion. Today, Companies are competing to attract and retain skilled workers, both domestically and globally. Talent management is a new but increasingly critical part of the business. However, one sector has been left behind and is not moving at the same pace with the rest. The educational sector has seen expansion of Universities and Institutions of higher learning where more

Colleges have been chartered into Universities so as to meet the large numbers of students that are demanding higher education. Nevertheless, the expansion has only been in increase of capacity but not in development and upgrading of the curricula. Teacher training institutions have also not introduced and exposed the teachers to Information Technology. With the curriculum not being developed to incorporate IT and the teachers not being trained on the same, we have seen the students not being exposed beyond the borders in the fields of Information Technology or Computer Science.

Are the Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning doing enough to catch up with the rest of the Industry?

sector too has improved their services to the "Mwananchi" and is in the process of upgrading their systems in line with the vision 2030 and has introduced the Directorate of e-government and Kenya ICT board to advice and implement the various transformational objectives of this sector.

However, most IT Companies could, until recently, count on an abundant supply of labour to support their growth. International expansion and competition is creating an entirely new set of workforce challenges. Despite healthy population growth in many developing Countries, and the large numbers of young people entering their workforces, competition for talented employees continues to increase.

This brings on the debate: are the Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning doing enough to catch up with the rest of the Industry? What needs to be done? Where do we come in?

Bridging the talent gap in the markets is only going to get tougher. There is no shortage of workforce entrants in most the markets, but concerns run deep that their skills will not meet their future



*Left: One of our trainers
Below: SST CEO, Mike Macharia inspiring young minds*



employers' requirements. Executives see a burgeoning gap between the skills and talent the domestic universities provide and what industries need, and believe this will exacerbate talent shortages in their country. Companies are beginning to think about collaborating with partner organizations in order to improve workforce skills.

We at SevenSeas Technologies have used this research to leverage on our Knowledge Transfer Center to transform University students into skilled talent that the industry needs. This has meant taking the students through a five day preliminary course to create a better understanding of the current market trends and certification courses available, thus enabling the students to make an informed decision on what certification roadmap to undertake to satisfy their future career choices.

Knowledge for Life also partners with universities advising them on what sort of curricula should be developed in order to bridge the gap between the skills and talent domestic Universities provide and what the Technology Industry needs.

END



FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS FROM THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE PROGRAMME

"I remember one afternoon Mohammed Shariff Aden had come to the University of Nairobi, School of Computing and Informatics for a courtesy visit putting on the blue SevenSeas Technologies shirt. He was a first class student and very brilliant so I knew this was a big company and later with my research found out that it supports Safaricom a lot. Since then I wondered how I would join such a company with only my software development skills. Two years down the line my dream came true. Thanks to the K4life program. It opened an opportunity for me and even though I didn't possess the skills the company needed, it paved the way for a brighter tomorrow. I was able to demonstrate my strengths and eventually hired as a software engineer. I can comfortably sit back and quote David Bailey "A positive attitude can really make dreams come true". K4life made me believe this."

Daniel Mainye
Software Engineer

"If I had to pick one phrase to sum up K4Life's impact on my career then it has to be "eye-opening". K4Life opened my eyes to vast opportunities that lay in the technology world by giving that snapshot view and the inspiration of seeing young professionals, not too much older than me, who were right in the thick of things as it were. There was also enough guidance from the trainers to ensure that I did not get overwhelmed by the opportunities I now saw and that I was focused enough to pick a field and focus my energies to an area where I can really excel."

Timothy Muchai
Software Engineer

"The elevator makes its way up Bandari plaza and the young university student inside is filled with anticipation at the thought of the day's events. Fast forward ten minutes and the student is sitting in an air conditioned room, listening with rapt attention as the trainer expands his mind to the plethora of career paths and options available to him. Six weeks later the student is now conversant with industry practices, standards and general conventions, he now has an idea as to what he would like his career to be and is indeed fully employable."

I was the student above and I can't even begin to quantify the extent to which the K4life program has aided me in my professional life. It provided a much needed bridge to span the gap between what is taught in University and the skills needed by employers across the board. All in all I would highly recommend K4life to anyone willing to expand their horizons and increase their marketability to potential employers.

Eric Chege
Software Engineer

"My one and half months at K4Life program were truly memorable. The program gave me the opportunity, not only to understand what it entails working in a fast paced environment successfully, but also to learn from the enormously talented tutors from Seven Seas Technologies. The facilities offered at the training center (KTC) are unmatched by any other residential training center in the region. It gave me the industrial training that I had not received during my undergraduate course. During my time at K4Life program, I was able to develop my self-awareness, confidence, and communication skills. It provided numerous opportunities to work with others and establish shared goals as well as monitor and reflect upon my experiences. It contributed significantly not only to my personal and professional growth, but it has also given me a network of friends. In short, I now know who I am (career)."

Wycliffe Omwenga
Software Engineer

FOR A LAUGH...

TECHNICAL SUPPORT CONVERSATIONS:

Tech Support: "What version of the Mac OS are you using?"
Customer: "Word 6.0."

Tech Support: "What browser are you using, Netscape or Microsoft?"
Customer: "Netscape."

Tech Support: "Could you read to me what it says at the top of the window?"

Customer: "'Global Travel Conference - Microsoft Internet Explorer'."

Tech Support: "Are you installing on a Mac?"

Customer: "No, I'm using a 3.5" thingee on a disk."

Tech Support: "This has Windows 98 on it -- did it have Windows 98 or 95 on it when it was sent out for repair?"

Customer: "I think it had Office 97."

Tech Support: "How much free space do you have on your hard drive?"

Customer: "Well, my wife likes to get up there on that Internet, and she downloaded ten hours of free space. Is that enough?"

Customer: "I keep getting an error message whenever I try using the MSDOS mode in Windows 95."

Tech Support: "Can you describe what happens?"

Customer: "Well, I keep getting a black screen with an error message saying, 'C:\WINDOWS>!'."

Tech Support: "which drive is your CD ROM?"

Customer: "the top one."

Customer: "Do I hit 'F' and '8' at the same time?"

Tech Support: "Your password will be...a small 'a' as in apple, a capital 'V' as in Victor, the number '7'"

Customer: "Is that a capital '7'?"

Tech Support: "Ok, let's try once more, but use lower case letters..."

Customer: "Uh, I only have capital letters on my keyboard."

MURPHY'S LAWS RELATIVE TO HARDWARE:

Law of Inconvenient Malfunction: A device will fail at the least opportune possible moment.

Law of Cable Compatibility: If you choose a cable and a connector at random, the probability that they are compatible is equal to zero.

Law of Hardware Compatibility: The probability of a given peripheral being compatible with a PC is inversely proportional to the immediate need for that peripheral.

Law of Bad Sectors: The probability that an untested diskette will have bad sectors is directly proportional to the importance of the data written onto the diskette.

First Law of Selective Gravitation: When an object is dropped, it will fall in such a way as to cause the greatest possible damage to itself and/or other objects on which it lands.

Second Law of Selective Gravitation: The tendency for an object to be dropped is directly proportional to its value.

Law of Reality Change: Unalterable hardware specifications will change as necessary to maximize frustration for personnel affected by said specifications.

Law of Noise: Noise bursts occur so as to cause the most, and/or most serious, errors in data communications, regardless of the actual amount of noise present.

Law of Expectation: Consumer expectations always outpace advances in hardware technology.

Law of the Titanic: If a device cannot malfunction, it will.



WORDS THAT SHOULD BE IN THE DICTIONARY - BUT AREN'T:

Acronymny

A redundancy created by following an acronym with the final word of that acronym, like DNS server.

alpha geek

The most knowledgeable, technically proficient person in an office or work group.

Analog-retentive

Those people who obstinately cling to outmoded technology.

AlzIMers

Forgetting who you're talking to and typing in the wrong IM window.

Animousity

Vigorously clicking your pointer device because a page is loading too slowly. See also: screen spasm - pages that try to load simultaneously on your computer screen as a direct result of your animousity.

AOL-WOL

Disappearing from an IM conversation without notice.

Backronym

An IT term whose letters once had no meaning, but have since come to stand for something-or-other.

bee break

The act of sneaking off to the bathroom in the middle of dinner, concert or work to scroll through one's BlackBerry.

Blamestorming

Sitting around in a group, discussing why a deadline was missed or a project failed and who was responsible.

Bluetooth fairy

Someone who walks around with a blinking Bluetooth headset permanently affixed to his ear. (Remember the kid's song "Little rabbit foo-foo?")

Blurker

Someone who reads a blog or blogs regularly but never comments or contributes to the discussion.

cellphonic appraisal

The activity that occurs when a ringing cell phone causes everyone in the room to check and see if it's theirs.

Crapplet

A poorly written or totally useless Java applet.

Cinderellaware

Software (demo or shareware) which becomes useless after a trial period unless the user pays for and registers it.

cube farm

An office filled with cubicles.

Cylences

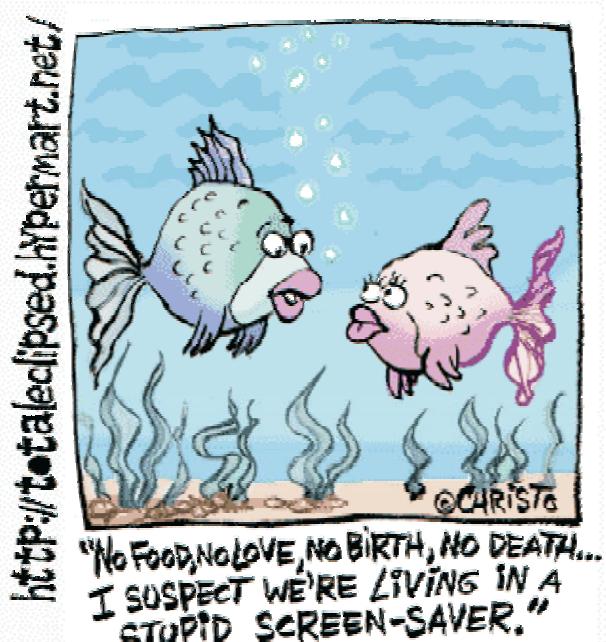
Long gaps in a phone conversation that occur because one person is also reading e-mail, IMing or cybershopping.

Cellopain

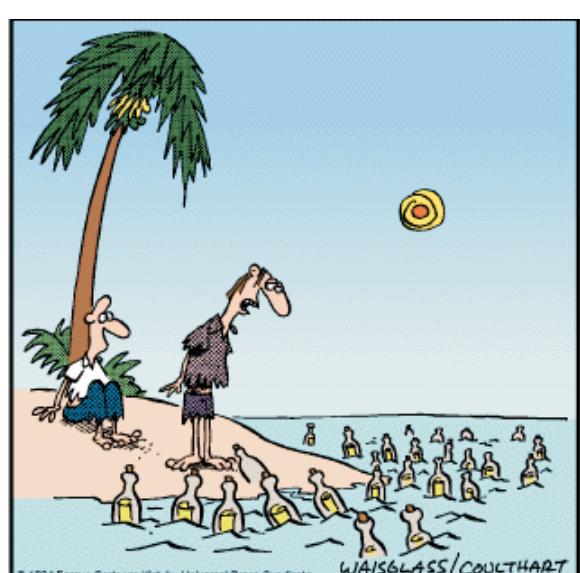
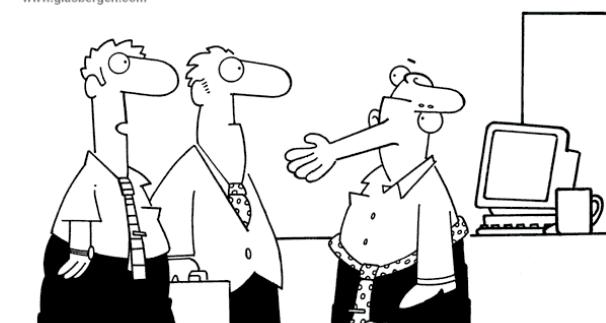
The person who talks loudly and obliviously on a cellphone in a crowd.

CrackBerry

Slang for BlackBerry, often used in the sense of a "CrackBerry addict," or one who is always checking and responding to emails on the handheld device.



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HAPPY NEW YEAR

The sun sets o'er the horizon,
Signaling end of a season,
Voyagers take stock of time,
Spent along making a dime.

Feted with pomp and glamour,
The year took off with clamor,
With high hopes of prosperity,
Foundations laid for posterity.

Performance targets set forth,
Figures required a higher notch,
The team equipped with apt tools,
Work cut out on fixed rules.

On the road they set out,
One by one on accounts mapped out,
Meetings held to pitch a sale,
Equipment or service on either scale.

In trickles, drops, torrents POs cometh,
Projects delivered each passing moment,
Additions to the team warmly welcomed,
Additions to families warmly celebrated.

The constitution finally promulgated,
Public opinion equally crafted,
Citizens' hope of a new era,
Pegged on the precious paper.

Darkness covers this passing year,
Signaling the dawn of a new year,
With hope we all await another day,
To make the difference a better way.

We all desire to see a change,
To right a wrong of yesterday,
Tis' time for us to take a step,
Be the change we crave each day.

1		6			7			5
	4					6		
3			1			7		
						9	4	
9				5	3			
			2					
	2	6	7					
		2			4	8		
6		9		8	1		2	

THE CAMEL RIDE

A millionaire sought to demystify how on earth a camel could pass through the eye of a needle than for him to enter the kingdom of God.

He summoned his accountant, his software engineer and his sales executive and asked them to give him a conclusive answer.

The accountant started, '*It is like reporting high sales turnovers but very little profit after tax.*'

Then said the software expert, '*It is like a tiny micro chip processing large volumes of data.*'

Frustrated at not getting the right answer, he told the sale exec, '*Now you tell me how I am going to get there!*'

The sales exec coolly said,
'Simple! Take a camel ride.'



Sudoku solution

6	5	3	9	4	8	1	7	2
7	1	9	2	3	5	4	8	6
4	8	2	6	7	1	5	3	9
5	7	4	8	2	9	3	6	1
9	6	1	4	5	3	8	2	7
2	3	8	7	1	6	9	5	4
3	2	5	1	6	4	7	9	8
8	4	7	5	9	2	6	1	3
1	9	6	3	8	7	2	4	5

CUSTOMER TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS & NEWS

Service Oriented Architecture

(SOA) has made the provision of bank services much more accessible: loan processing now takes hours, to be processed, not days; cash transfers between banks now takes split seconds. Credit information is now easily exchangeable across banks, Mobile Money accounts are now accessible via web browsers, making cash transactions from mobile phones wired to a personal bank account easy.

Finally, we can pay for goods and services through cashless transactions. Surveys reveal that people are using debit cards (ATM Cards) more often than credit cards.

This is because credit card service providers have reduced the credit limits for their customers.



Business Availability Centre:

Our customer, a leading provider of converged communications solutions in Kenya, recently deployed the HP Business Availability Centre (HP BAC). The main business driver for the BAC is to monitor system performance and availability from an end user's perspective and to provide notification of problems before service-level agreements (SLAs) are broken. It has a consolidated dashboard that provides visibility on the applications, users, and supporting infrastructure from a business perspective.

Seven Seas Technologies was awarded unified computing & cloud computing network integration partnership. This achievement is a great step for Kenyan organizations that are seeking for professional deployment and support of consolidated datacentre and server infrastructure.



Datacentre unified computing is the latest technology in data processing that allows for unification and simplification of the traditionally disintegrated components in today's datacentres. Unified computing allows organizations to change the economics of the datacentre since it ensures less equipment deployment that occupies less space, saves energy and takes less time to deploy. This technology is a perfect match for those organizations who are seeking ways of consolidating and virtualizing their datacentre and server infrastructure. The technology ensures less server and carbon footprint.

Success Story using Cisco IP Solutions

Seven Seas Technologies recently deployed the next generation of signalling transfer point solution from Cisco for a telecommunications provider in Kenya. The solution, called the Cisco IP Transfer Point, is a comprehensive carrier-grade product for transporting signalling traffic.

The Customer's network has been growing fast and needed to handle additional signalling traffic: "We are proud that our company can successfully handle a Cisco ITP deployment. We have demonstrated our technical and project management abilities, to help our customers bridging legacy and IP networks" said Michael Macharia, founder and CEO of SST.

SMS Firewall Deployment

Traffic Control Protect, is a multi-protocol message router to filter out a range of undesirable messages that seek to attack or defraud subscribers or network infrastructure. This solution was recently deployed for a leading provider of converged communication solutions in Kenya. "We are proud that our company can successfully deliver Traffic Control Protect solutions. We have demonstrated our technical and project management abilities, to help our customer have a more secured network by intercepting and blocking fraud messages and unwanted contents such as spamming, spoofing and flooding" said Michael Macharia, founder and CEO of SST.

Global HP Software Partner of the Year Award

It was a moment of immense national pride following our selection for the award of HP software partner of year 2010 award. To win the highly coveted award from HP, one of the world's leading enterprise software developers. "We have underlined our intention to remain as the industry leader in technology solutions in the African region". CEO Michael Macharia had this to say about the award; "The news from Barcelona this morning, confirming our win in such a

highly coveted and prestigious global convention speaks volumes of our international recognition. It is also a clear vote of confidence in Kenya as an emerging tech centre rivalling in India and even Silicon Valley itself."



BIGGEST EXADATA INSTALLATION IN AFRICA:

Our customer was seeking to improve their competitiveness and lower their overall IT costs through a complete package of scalable, secure, and redundant servers, storage, networking, and software. In partnership with Oracle, Seven Seas Technology shall deliver solution in what is the biggest Exadata implementation in Africa.



In order to automate and consolidate contracts lifecycle our client required a

solution that would provide best-in-class contract management. This includes reduced data-entry and duplication as well as fast, efficient and accurate reporting. They were also seeking to provide instantaneous reports to improve the organization's effectiveness on a real-time basis. Our solution, licensed by Upside Software, was selected due its rich functionality and suitability to the customer as well as our capability to execute the project to our customer's expectation.

Ethiopian Airlines is implementing a solution that will help it run an efficient customer service division and reduce customer waiting time in their booking offices. The solution shall also ensure the right employees are available with the right expertise to deal with any enquiry, while keeping queues to a minimum.

The solution being implemented by Seven Seas Technologies, shall enable Ethiopian Airlines measure service delivery. It shall also provide feedback from the clients, enabling Ethiopian airlines.



K4Life

The K4Life programme is now in its second round. This time Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology is the target. A total of 60 students from this University are currently undergoing training on various introductory courses including; Networking essentials,

Security fundamentals, database fundamentals, storage fundamentals, Unix essentials, IPVoice fundamentals and Business applications.

SST HAS SIGNED A DISTRIBUTOR PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH Q-MATIC

Q-Matic. Q-Matic is a global company based in Sweden and the leading provider of Queue Management System or Customer Flow systems. The partnership covers the East African Region of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia. Customer Flow Management is all about managing the flow of customers and their experiences from their initial contact with a company, through to service delivery. It also includes capturing their opinion after they have received the service. The target market for Customer Flow Management systems include the retail Market (Telcos, travel agencies); banks; utility companies and the health sector.



Misys (LSE: MSY.L) and SST have signed up a strategic partnership for banking and financial services solution. Misys is a global leader in banking and financial services products. This partnership will extend our service and product portfolio

to enable us penetrate the transactional core of the bank, seeing as we already have products and services that cover other important areas such as electronic channels, call centre, business intelligence, CRM and application/process integration.

This partnership brings together SST's transformational thinking and Mysis' innovative products to form a formidable team. The Mysis team is headed by Erin Smith, their Managing Director for Africa.

Seven Seas Technologies (SST) has been awarded the prestigious and highly specialized Cisco Authorised Technology Partner (ATP) designation.

The accreditation is an invitation-only program that follows a rigorous review process. It allows Cisco partners to develop and demonstrate expertise in specific advanced or emerging technologies through specialized training. In a communiqué confirming SST's accreditation commencing January 12th 2011, Cisco ATP Program Cisco Partner Manager, East Africa Mr Shain Rahim explained that SST had demonstrated a desire to develop expertise in this market. "The Cisco account management team will continue working together to develop and enhance our mutual capabilities to support Seven Seas Technologies and your customers," Rahim said. And added: "In recognition of this achievement, Cisco will recognize your company as having achieved this ATP designation in the Cisco Partner Locator."



EMC Corporation (NYSE: EMC), the world leader in information infrastructure solutions, has introduced a new family of unified storage systems. The new solution consolidates the industry-leading features and functionality of EMC CLARiiON and EMC Celerra into a single, powerful family of unified storage arrays that scale from entry-level to datacenter-class systems. Known as the VNXe series, this solution is designed specifically for small and medium-sized businesses, department level storage solutions for enterprise, and remote or branch offices. It combines breakthrough simplicity with advanced performance, availability, and efficiency benefits.



Bank of Africa has contracted Seven Seas Technologies build a Private Cloud for the Bank. The solution, comprising a High Availability Storage Area Network is based on a virtualised blade server environment, tiered storage. This solution shall allow the bank improve its operational efficiency while reducing the spend on servers and storage.

iHub Nairobi's Innovation Hub for the technology community is here! It is an open space for the technologists, investors, tech companies and hackers in the area. This space is a tech community facility with a focus on young entrepreneurs, web and mobile

phone programmers and designers. It is part open community workspace (co-working), part vector for investors and VCs and part incubator.



Ushahidi is a non-profit software company that develops open source software for information collection, visualization and interactive mapping. The organization uses the concept of crowdsourcing for social activism and public accountability, serving as an initial model for what has been coined as 'activist mapping' - the combination of social activism, citizen journalism and geospatial information. This kind of everyone-as-informant mapping is shaking up the world, bringing the Wikipedia revolution to the work of humanitarians and soldiers who parachute into places with little good information. Ushahidi has become a hero of the Haitian and Chilean earthquakes and may have something larger to tell us about the future of humanitarianism, innovation and the nature of what we label as truth.



THE LITTLE BIG THINGS: 163 WAYS TO PURSUE EXCELLENCE

By Tom Peters



The Little BIG Things has 538 pages. It may be a lot to read, but it's not meant to be read from front to back. Open the book every day and see what you get. Take one idea that resonates with you; add it to the way you think and act. In this book you have 163 ways to pursue Excellence with a capital "E."

The Little BIG Things is not about mediocrity, being everything to everyone, victimhood, martyrdom, whiners and complainers, and the toxic waste dumps they seem to create and we increasingly allow. And to all those marketers, companies, and consultants thinking that people 18 to 44 are the demographics to go after and hire because any age over 44 is too tired, too worn out, and not energetic enough, look at these statistics: "People age... 55 or older are more active in online finance, shopping, and entertainment than those under 55 (Forrester Research) and American women over 50... control an enormous and growing share of that enormous share of our total wealth."

Description

The book has a simple theme: *the little things are actually big.*

This book is about:

- The little things that are really big things like clean restrooms in your store and sending flowers to people to thank them for doing their job.
- Excellence with a capital "E" but not success.
- Abolishing the word "guru." Count me in. I want to get rid of the word because most of what they say is gobbleygook and lots of companies overpay these so-called gurus when they could draw a higher level of intelligence from those who work within their walls. Can you spell "stupid"?
- Opportunities, being green, failure, careers, not lifetime employment (well, except for unions and government officials), dealing with an economic downturn, you, being fit, energy, enthusiasm.
- Your stories, your R.POV (remarkable point of view), your responsibilities, and being accountable for the choices you make.
- Kindness, civility--yes, civility--and thoughtfulness.
- Smart work, not stupid or hard work; more responsibility and more accountability; character, not imitation of character; engagement; professionalism; and, oh, yes, can't forget attitude.
- Design, what works, what doesn't, and experimentation.
- Being resilient and knowing you will excel if you choose to and work at it.
- The real meaning of diversity, not skin color, gender, or religion.
- The exchange of ideas, listening, real conversations, curiosity, creativity, asking questions, having fun, working together, and, yes, more attitude.
- Being a born again sales hound because we are all in sales, sacred trust starting with you, leadership, listening, and service. Does he mention the word "success" in a positive light? Yes, he does I'm mentioning it--as an acronym, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
- Two words, like "Thank you" and "Yes, please."
- Big change, little change, all starting with just one step, one idea.
- Real people like you and me; "We Power"; recognizing we are all are working together if we want this planet to be safer, happier, and more productive.
- Taking initiative; being passionate; showing up; seizing the moment; taking time for you, your family, and being personal by committing to "Acts of Deliberate Relationship Enhancement."

FILM REVIEW

By Delano Kiilu Longwe

SKYLINE**Genre:** Mystery & Suspense, Science Fiction & Fantasy**Rated:** PG-13**Running Time:** 1 hr. 40 min.

After a late night party, a group of friends are awoken in the dead of the night by an eerie light beaming through the window. Like moths to a flame, the light source is drawing people outside before they suddenly vanish into the air. They soon discover an otherworldly force is swallowing the entire human population off the face of the earth. Now our band of survivors must fight for their lives as the world unravels around them.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Sci Fi Horror
- This movie will not end the way you think
- Amazing daytime visual special effects
- A very scary plot for the ordinary planet earth resident

The movie Skyline is an Indie flick the term assigned to an Independent Film production which essentially means that it was produced on a small budget, in this case \$10 million, and not directly through a major studio. Universal was involved in the distribution though.

The cast is a lot of familiar faces from regular TV series like the movie hero "Jarrod" Eric Balfour (24), "Terry" Donald Faison (Scrubs) and "Elaine" Scottie Thompson (NCIS, CSI: Miami, CSI: NY, Ugly Betty).

The movie breaks the traditional Hollywood mold of feel good Sci-Fi thriller and propels the viewer, once it gets away from its slow start, into the most visceral SciFi Horror to hit our screens in a long time. In terms of genre this is a movie that will be understood by technology die-hards and compels one into totally disruptive way of thinking with its vast array of epic visual special effects and never seen before apocalyptic scenes. The dialogue is very poor, which is entirely fine considering the fact that it lulls the viewer into a typical day in modern Los Angeles, and the actors are convincing in their ordinariness.

What becomes pretty obvious is that humanity is as usual entirely unprepared for the sudden eventualities and suffers the consequences.

Without letting away too much of the plot, Directors Colin and Greg Strause (Hydraulx) have pulled off a major daylight special effects Blockbuster for a tenth of what Major Studios spend. The movie made \$11,692,415 on its opening weekend, not surprising considering the fact that the brothers Strause also did the visual effects for *Avatar*, *Iron man 2*, *Incredible Hulk*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *AVP*, *Terminator 3*, *X-Men Origins*, *Jumper*, *X Files* and more.



TOP 10 BOX OFFICE

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 | LITTLE FOCKERS |
| 2 | TRUE GRIT |
| 3 | TRON LEGACY |
| 4 | YOGI BEAR |
| 5 | THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA:
THE DAWN TREADER |
| 6 | THE FIGHTER |
| 7 | TANGLED |
| 8 | GULLIVER'S TRAVELS |
| 9 | BLACK SWAN |
| 10 | THE KINGS SPEECH |

PEOPLE, MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

NEWLYWEDS



Fredrick Kariuki's Family



Edward Waithaka's Family



Solomon Thuo's Family

NEW ARRIVALS



Anthony Katua's Family



Maryanne Kariuki's Family



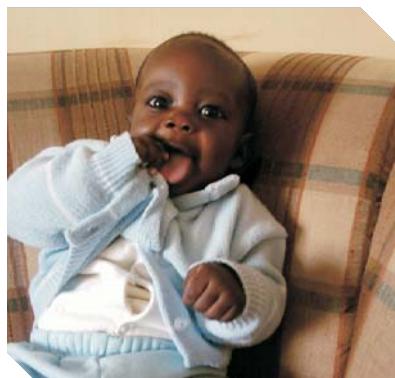
Chris Tioko's Family



Michael Macharia's Family



Shiros's Family



Evans Ogolla's Family



Qualifications: MBA (HR), Higher Dip HR

TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS:

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

BANCY GAKURU

CHIEF TALENT OFFICER

What words would describe you best? Passionate, energetic, tenacious and fair.

Walk us through your typical day. I usually get up at 5.15am and head straight to the gym. I report to work by 7.30am latest, have my breakfast and start off the day by reviewing my daily plan. I believe good planning improves my execution capacity and I always end my day at 7.00pm on average with a clear plan of my activities for the next day. Often I do 2 hours of socializing before going home.

What inspired you to join Seven Seas Technologies? I would say it's about grabbing the right opportunity at the right time. I was convinced to join Seven Seas Technologies when I met the CEO. I was impressed by how differently he looked at the most simple things and I knew working here was going to be a completely different experience for me.

What has been your greatest lesson at SST thus far if any? While more often than not we look to work for multinationals, young local companies such as SST give one unbelievable autonomy in decision making. In most multinationals most decisions are made beyond the managers' sphere of influence who just execute. In contrast, at SST, I stay challenged because my decisions and advice to management impact the company and consequently many people's lives. As such, I have to be on top of my game which has positively impacted my personal and professional growth.

To what can you attribute your success? My parents have played a big role in my success, my father has guided me a lot along the way. He has taken time to walk me through the expectations of the various positions I have held and to date I consult him constantly on some work challenges. My mom on the other hand has taught me everything about etiquette and I have found these lessons apply in every aspect of my life. I have been lucky to work with very good employers where my abilities were recognized and I was challenged. I have a very supportive network of friends and a personal mentor whose role cannot be undermined. Over and above this, I have input a lot of personal effort in my career path through constant learning and facing challenges head on.

What exactly is the role of the Chief Talent Officer at SST?

My role is to ensure that we get the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. I support line management to ensure that there is alignment between employees' expectations and personal development needs and the organization's strategy. It is about building a support framework that ensures the organization has as many people with the capacity to be effective employees and leaders in the organization.

How do you achieve this?

By ensuring that there is alignment in the entire talent life cycle; ensuring SST joiners are persons aligned to the role and culture of the organization, ensuring the career planning process is followed so as to offer employees an experiential career path and incrementally fostering a culture of ownership. Talent review forums and follow through are key to ascertaining the actualization of employee aspirations and organizational objectives.

What in your opinion is the role of an employee in talent management?

Employees have a responsibility to their own career development by initiating career discussions with their managers and following through their development plans. It is important to be clear on what one wants and where there is no clarity to seek guidance from a mentor. I feel sometimes employees need to understand that career growth is neither a promise nor a guarantee and they need to play a key role in assessing their own skills, values, interests and development needs and most important identifying how these can be aligned with the organizational needs so that they are viably realized. Being successful in the current role is also very important as that builds more confidence of the supervisor in the employees' abilities.

What are your plans for the future at SST? I see SST being a place where employees can have experiential careers and the company can optimize its returns through people such that SST is a case study on talent management. We are implementing innovative management strategies rather than doing things the 'done way'. I look forward to facilitating this, documenting it and articulating critical transformational lessons in my work experience such as the difference between CEO Owner and CEO Employee and other such pertinent issues.

What is your advice to young people wanting to join the Talent field?

Talent management is about enabling the organization to achieve its objectives through people. This being the case and people being the most difficult resource to manage, Talent Management is not a stroll in the park as some may assume. Solid knowledge of financial metrics, an understanding of human psychology and an in-depth understanding of the success factors in one's industry of operation are but a few of the paramount factors of success. For new entrants in this field, if you treat your employees like you would your most valuable customers, you will never go wrong. Question, explore, travel and read. This expands your perspective of people, life and all else.

How do you unwind? I treasure my relationships and having quality time with the most important people in my life is the best form of unwinding for me. My friends and family have been a great support. My colleagues at SST are great, the senior management and indeed the CEO are always there when I need support.

END



TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS:

STAFF PROFILE

ANTHONY KATUA

TEAM LEADER - INTELLIGENT REAL ESTATE

1. What is your typical day like?

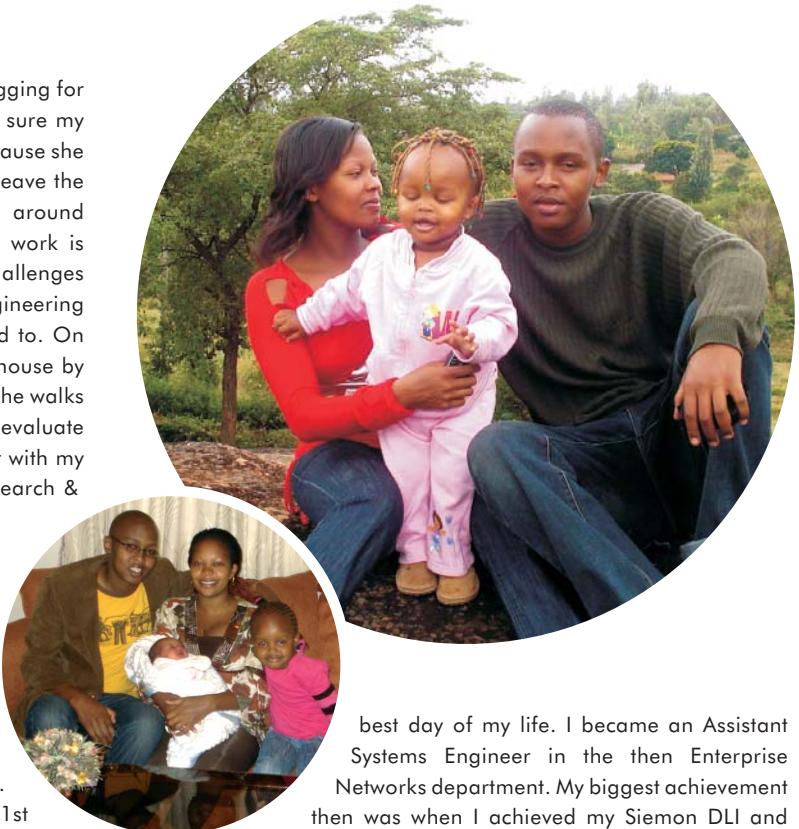
I normally wake up at 5.30 in the morning. I go jogging for around 30 minutes at least twice a week. I make sure my daughter is awake just before I leave the house because she has to be in school by 7.30am in the morning. I leave the house at around 6.45am and get to the office around 7.20am ready for daily operations meeting. My work is quite involving since I have to lead and address challenges of my team and at the same time make sure my engineering work (presales & implementation) is well attended to. On average I leave the office at 7pm and get to the house by 7.35pm. I take around 30 minutes with Tiffany as she walks me through what she has done in school and also evaluate her daily school homework. I have 1 hr for dinner with my family and the rest time is set for my studies, research & relaxing. I go to bed at around 11pm.

2. When did you join SST?

I Joined SST in June 15th 2002 at a young age of 20 yrs

3. Describe your journey in SST your first job to the current one

I joined the company as an office assistant in 2002. I was very elated when I got the job since it was my 1st permanent job and was very happy in what I was doing. I used to perform my duties diligently with passion. Whilst still doing my duties I joined a driving school in view of advancing my career. Later on I was promoted to do both admin tasks and driving. I used to like IT from when I cleared my high school and used to admire engineers and thus I kept reading about IT and attending company tech forums on Saturdays. I had only done a few computer packages then. One day whilst I was on my duties, the CEO asked me where my interest was in terms of career advancement and I told him I dreamt of being an engineer. He told me to continue working hard and keep attending tech forums (these are sharing sessions organized for engineers to keep informed of market trends in technology) to broaden my IT knowledge. I kept his word and in 2006 I was transferred to the technical department. That was the



best day of my life. I became an Assistant Systems Engineer in the then Enterprise Networks department. My biggest achievement then was when I achieved my Siemon DLI and passed my CCNA certification. My dream was coming true and I kept pushing hard. I was then promoted to Systems Engineer in the IRE department between 2007 and 2008. My aim was to keep working hard, growing and learning more. Between 2008 and 2009 I got promoted again to a Senior Systems Engineer in the same department. When I joined the company and discovered how young the CEO was, I had one vision in my mind to be as successful as the CEO one day in life. At the beginning of the year 2010 was promoted to Team Leader position in the IRE department. It has not been an easy journey and I owe my progress so far to God, hard work, support from the CEO, my mentors including my colleagues Kimani, Solomon, Waithaka, SST Company in general and my wife for encouraging me. I am still working hard and striving to get there. As the saying goes, you can never appreciate up if you have never been down. I am sure that one day I will be there, up there.



"In SST there is a clear growth roadmap for people who want to be successful"

4. IT is quite a dynamic industry and people change jobs quite often, what is the one thing that has kept you in SST for all those years?

First, passion to be successful and enough role models/mentors within the organization. In SST there are clear growth roadmaps for people who want to succeed unlike other firms where you're just tied to your position. There are no limits for anyone; you can be who you want to be in the organization as long as you work aggressively. The working environment is the best with young energetic people who support each other on a day to day basis. Also the desire to give back to the company because of what it has done to me and also mentor other people within the organization who have the desire to advance their careers.

5. What has changed in the way the company operates?

SST has managed to stand out as a unique organization from the rest of the competitors because of innovation and differentiating itself from other IT companies. The company has changed in many ways operational wise and size in terms of growth. The company used to operate on a single hierarchy where the CEO used to supervise everyone. There were no structures, policies, processes and departments. Right now all these have been put in place. We used to operate in a single small office, now we've occupied multiple floors because of growth. The company also boasts of very rich talent, the best in the IT market.

6. What can you say have been your most enjoyable moments over the years?

The moment I became an Assistant Systems Engineer and of course the awards I've received throughout my stay at SST.

7. How do you see SST in the coming years?

This company is growing day by day and we are headed to be an international firm just like Microsoft, IBM, Cisco or any other international company. The firm has the right team and right leadership to get it there, yes we can. We are moving from a hardware company to more of a services company and this gives the company an excellent growth roadmap in the country and region. The company has also partnered with the right vendors and most clients want to be supported and associated with the best vendors in the world. This gives SST an advantage in customer/vendor relationship.

8. What are some of the challenges you have faced along the way?

Some clients/competitors try to poach you after you have done some good work for them but because of having a clear focus, I know I can achieve much more at SST. Spending sleepless nights reading for certifications and sometimes with short deadlines.

9. Do you think the Corporate Strategy is in sync with Industry expectations and why?

Yes. We are venturing in new technologies everyday due to aggressive creativity and innovation. IT is a dynamic industry and the only thing that can keep you going is innovation, service excellence and going the extra mile. Flexible strategy we are able to adapt to and anticipate changes in the business environment

10. What would be your advice to those joining SST?

SST is the place to be especially for people looking for career growth and personal development. The secret is to be patient and work aggressively to reach the next level and attain your goals/targets. There is room for advancement for everyone.

END

MY NEW YEAR'S WISHLIST (IF I WERE CIO ...)

By Adam Nyaga

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The year 2010 has been a tremendous year for the ICT industry in Kenya, ending with a World Bank report that shows this industry is now officially the fastest growing sector in this country, above agriculture and tourism, among others that have been the traditional strengths of our country. Just like in the blockbuster movie Inception seen earlier this year, I will attempt to plant some food for thought in the minds of our CIO's, around which they can build their battle-plan for the year ahead, 2011.

Let's take to the clouds ...

Public or private, cloud is the new technology trend. There will be early pace-setters, and there will be the usual latecomers, and then those who just never get it. Depending on where among these you fall, your company will either achieve or miss out on the opportunity to build a sustainable, cost-efficient ICT platform for infrastructure and applications. Mind you, cloud is not necessarily good for everything and everyone, but it is imperative that every CIO examine the concept carefully to identify the opportunities that will make their CEO's and boards go gaga in the year 2011.

What happened to Strategic IT?

Once upon a time, IT was it! We had the CEO's ear, we were the focal point of the whole organization, we had budgets from here to Timbuktu and back. This positioning of IT in the organization has however been eroded over time, and we even hear of such things being touted as IT as a commodity, and the IT divisions becoming more operational than strategic. We need to reclaim the glory of IT, and have IT strategically driving business again. The tail must wag the dog, once again, but how? Let's start by doing a comprehensive Enterprise Architecture exercise for our organization. This will reveal how IT can strategically support the organization to achieve its objectives, and once a strategic architecture roadmap (one of the outcomes of the EA exercise) is approved and endorsed at executive level, we shall once again find ourselves running strategic programmes for our various enterprises. Let's also build the strategic capacities of our IT divisions, by training and employing more professionals in the areas of enterprise architecture, business analysis and programme/project management. Ask yourselves, how many certified architects, analysts and project managers do you have in your teams compared to engineers/developers?

Customer-centricity

Every business has got various stakeholders, but without a doubt, the customer is always king. With this in mind, we must use the year 2011 to turn our companies into the most customer-centric organizations in the market, and the difference will tell directly on our P&L's and balance sheets at the end of the year. How much IT investment are we making in this direction? Does each of our organizations have a CRM programme running? How about IT

operations, we must be able to identify the impact of each and every IT operational area and system on our customers, and put special focus on those that directly affect how our customers are served, and how they ultimately perceive our organization. How well do we know our customers, especially the key ones? Do we have a strong Business Intelligence and Customer Analytics practice in our company? It is key to building a brand around service excellence!

Integration

Now, this one is all about collaboration and innovation. While the previous point on customer-centricity will win you market-share, this one is all about mind-share. As CIO's, we can help our organizations integrate internal departments and external 3rd parties in a such a way as to create very robust partnerships for innovation and execution. From idea generation to execution and launch, in the shortest time possible and with the least pain ... this is what differentiates the market leaders from the rest. This will naturally draw other innovators and entrepreneurs into collaboration with your organization, and you will soon find that your company is always first-to-market, winning the minds of existing and new customers, and a vicious cycle of success. How to do this? Organize and equip your IT teams around innovation, and invest in platforms and technologies such as Service oriented Architectures (SOA) which enable quick execution on integration projects. Build a collaboration/innovation center of excellence in your IT, and it will draw in the other departments.

Information Security

Heard of CableGate and Wikileaks? Or a random Russian with 300 ATM cards merrily trotting about town, ATM to ATM? We can do all manner of good stuff as CIO's, but it only takes one major lapse to bring it all down. As our organizations all go electronic, and everything important in our company is sitting in the very datacenters that we run, and flowing on the very links that we provision, we must assure our companies and all other stakeholders that whatever lies therein is safe from the vagaries of this world. From smart security for our buildings, to data encryption, to secure links, intruder detection etc, let's invest resources in ensuring that we are not next in the line on Wikileaks, or whatever other mischief somebody is planning without our knowledge out there.

Ultimately ...

Congratulations to the CIO's of this country for carrying our industry a notch higher in the year 2010. We at Seven Seas Technologies see lots of opportunity in the coming year to address the different areas that we have talked about above, through our array of service offerings and ecosystem of valued partners in technology consulting, from technology infrastructure, to training, to business applications. We thank our customers that have supported us all through the year, with whom we have undertaken the challenging but successful projects that have helped us grow to the position of leading local IT company in Kenya.

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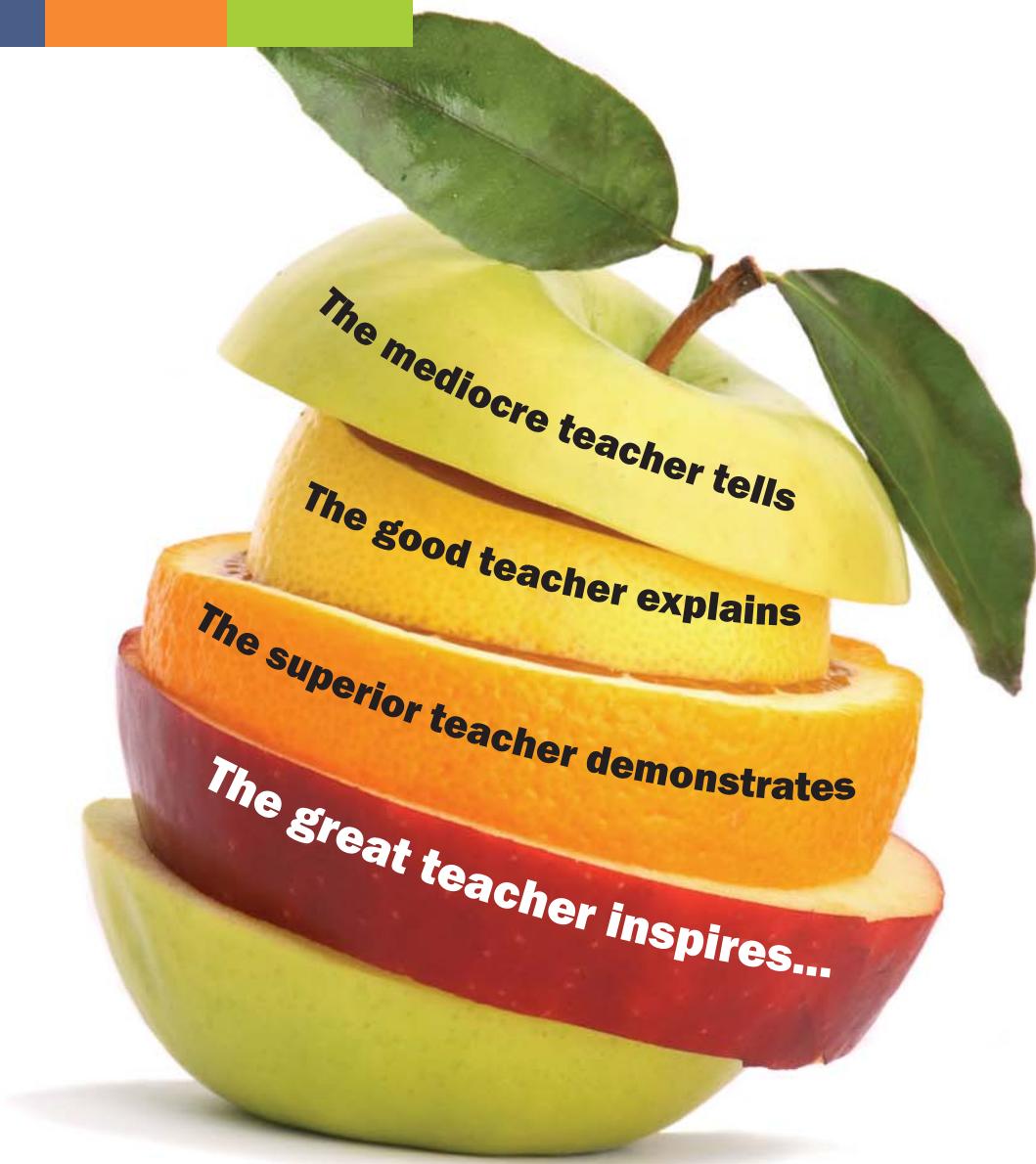


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