

LEADING THE IT INDUSTRY

A SEVENSEAS TECHNOLOGIES PUBLICATION

# FORESIGHT

VOLUME 2

**CONNECTED KENYA**  
INNOVATING AROUND  
THE CITIZEN

E-BANKING AND  
**EMPOWERING**  
THE CITIZENS

**CITIZEN BARAZA**  
TRANSFORMING KENYA

**AWARDS**



HP Software partner of the year - Africa 2010 | Cisco  
Service Provider Partner for Emerging African  
Markets 2011 | VMware Africa Channel Partner of the  
Year 2011 | Cisco Innovation Partner of the year 2011





# IRE | INTELLIGENT REAL ESTATE

Raising building performance and value

## INTELLIGENT REAL ESTATE

The Seven Seas Technologies Intelligent Real Estate division offers IT services integration with Building's systems under one common IP network to provide satisfied occupants, while reducing energy, maintenance and operating expenses of the building. Our service offering extends to commercial buildings, hotels, hospitals, campuses and residential estates.

We offer our expertise in designing, deploying and managing cabling and network infrastructure as a converged resource that is utilized and shared by multiple systems including Corporate IT, lighting, Access Control, Surveillance, Elevator Controls, Air Conditioning, Alarm Systems etc for management, security, safety, control and improved productivity of the occupants.

### ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY, SAFETY AND SECURITY FOR BUILDING OCCUPANTS

As an occupant of an intelligent building, you will enjoy:

- High speed and reliable internet access
- Enhanced network security
- Enhanced quality of communication through IP telephony and unified communications
- More flexibility resulting from wireless or mobility solutions within the premises
- Improved building security and safety

### IMPROVE SERVICE LEVEL, OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES AND USER EXPERIENCE

As a developer, owner and/or property manager, you are bound to benefit in terms of:

- Reduced capital costs during construction due to single open standards cabling infrastructure
- Centralized and remote monitoring, maintenance and control of the building environment
- Robust, scalable and secure networks for voice, video and data which improves occupants' productivity
- Inter-operability of devices and networks ensures efficient access to critical real-time data
- Improved physical security through video surveillance, access controls and asset management
- Secure platform for consistent and real-time communication to multiple devices
- Reduced building operational costs due to increased savings on power, gas and water utilities

Smart buildings are safer, more productive for occupants and efficient for owners.

Smart buildings simply work better, cost less to operate, and provide more value to their stakeholders.

PROJECT OFFICES | UGANDA | RWANDA | ETHIOPIA



TECHNOLOGY  
CONSULTING

PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT

SERVICE  
MANAGEMENT

TRAINING

4th, 6th & M3 floors, Bandari plaza, Woodvale Grove, Westlands | P O Box 14462 - 00800 Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: (+254) 20 4451226/27/28/29/30 (+254) 20 4268000 | Fax: (+254) 20 4451231

E-mail: bidmgt@sevenseastech.com | [www.sevenseastech.com](http://www.sevenseastech.com)

# CONTENTS

VOLUME 2

## FEATURES

- 02 MESSAGE FROM THE CEO**
- 04 CONNECTED KENYA**
- 07 SST TRANSFORMATIONS:**  
Customer Experience Transformation
- 09 FORESIGHT PERSPECTIVES:** Bank of Abyssinia
- 11 MULIKA CRIME**
- 12 TECHNOLOGY@HOME**
- 14 LARGEST INDIGENOUS CLOUD PLATFORM: ARTICLE**
- 16 INTERVIEW WITH KATE GETAO**
- 17 LEADERSHIP IN IT TRENDS**
- 18 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER CENTRE**
- 20 CITIZEN BARAZA**
- 22 SST INCUBATION PROGRAM**
- 23 E-BANKING AND EMPOWERING THE CITIZENS**
- 25 DIGITAL VILLAGES**
- 26 SALES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

## REGULAR

- 28 TEA BREAK**
- 30 NEWS**
- 33 FILM REVIEW**
- 34 BOOK REVIEW**

## PEOPLE

- 35 SST FAMILY GROWS**
- 36 SST MOMENTS**
- 38 TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS**  
Gilbert Arum  
Dennis Chege
- 42 FIESTY FUSION ON VALENTINE'S DAY**
- 44 MY COUNTY 2.0 (IF I WERE SENATOR)**



## CONTACTS

**HEAD OFFICE:**  
4th, 6th & M3 floor, Bandari plaza,  
Woodvale Grove, Westlands, Nairobi, Kenya  
T: (+254 20) 4451226-30  
F: (+254 20) 4451231

**UGANDA OFFICE:**  
Seven Seas Technologies  
Ruth Towers, Clement Hill, Kampala,  
Uganda  
T: (+256) 414-341215/6 | 414 - 348826

**ETHIOPIA OFFICE:**  
2nd Floor Bawa Center (MaxView Fitness)  
Bole Subcity, Kebele 11, H.No. 0440  
P.O.Box 2964, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

[Info@sevenseachtech.com](mailto:Info@sevenseachtech.com)  
[www.sevenseastech.com](http://www.sevenseastech.com)

**Visit us at:**  
 Twitter:  
[foresightmag](https://twitter.com/foresightmag)  
 Facebook fan page:  
[Foresight Magazine](https://www.facebook.com/ForesightMagazine)  
 Linked in:  
[Foresight Magazine](https://www.linkedin.com/company/foresight-magazine/)

# Innovating around the citizen

Welcome once again to our second edition of the Foresight Magazine. We would like to say thank you to our readers, customers and partners for the positive feedback which has come in for our first edition, which was well received in the market. We intend to make this magazine a quarterly tradition of Seven Seas Technologies, through which we shall stay in touch with the industry and the community around us. This quarter's overarching theme is ICT and the citizen. In this edition you will find various perspectives which showcase how IT is already being used, or can potentially be used, to uplift the life of citizens by creating public good.

Inspired by the recent Connected Kenya Summit that took place in Mombasa, I would like to share my vision of innovating around the citizen and how we can all, in our different industries, do our bit to uplift the livelihoods of the citizen through ICTs. The conference itself brought together various government and private sector stakeholders for 3 days to discuss and showcase various initiatives on the theme "Innovating for the Citizen". The Government, through representation by senior officials from various Ministries and agencies, showed a lot of commitment to use ICTs to enhance service delivery and create new value for citizens. Equally, the private sector showcased interesting concepts and innovations which they have developed which target the citizen. Of key interest this time around was the participation of, not just ICT companies, but also banking, healthcare and educational institutions, who are all using ICTs to innovate around the citizen.

The way I see it, as businessmen and entrepreneurs, we must all move beyond the realm of the customer and start to see the citizen. Ultimately, an uplifted citizen makes a far better customer. A great wave of recognition for social entrepreneurship is sweeping across the globe, and businesses are being recognized, rewarded and thriving, not just on a good revenue and profitability basis, but also for the amount of social good they create. At Seven Seas Technologies, we are looking at various ways to bridge the gap between business entrepreneurship for wealth creation and social entrepreneurship for creation of social value and public good. One example of such initiatives is our Incubation Centre where we shall host individuals who are

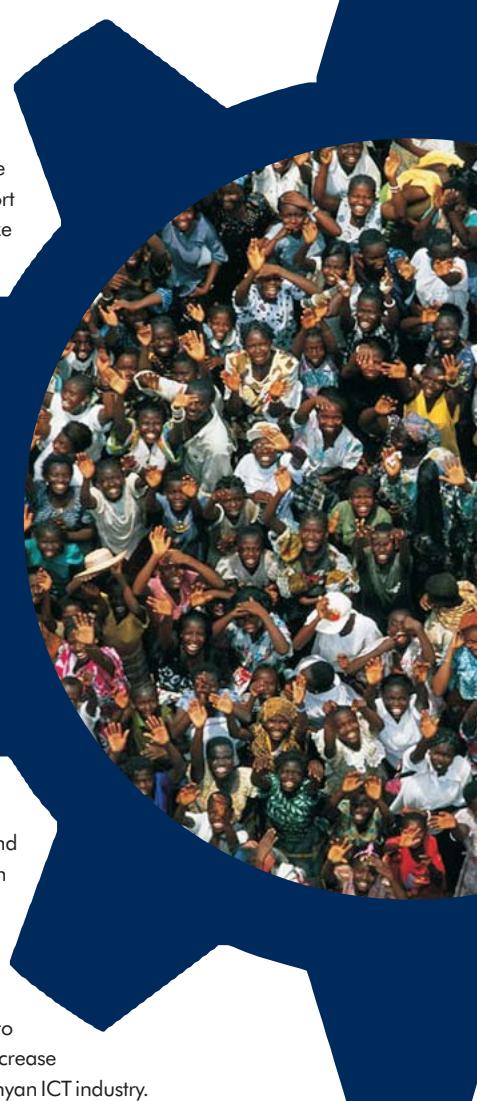
coming up with smart and viable technology innovations and support them to deliver and commercialize their ideas

through our well established business platform such as office facilities, accounting and marketing, etc, as well as providing mentorship and business training to these individuals.

Our K4Life programme is also helping to bridge the IT skills gap in the market by nurturing soon-to-graduate IT and Engineering students through industry-relevant training and mentorship. The vision of this programme is to eventually create a lively talent market for the ICT industry from entry level to advanced skills, which will help increase the global competitiveness of the Kenyan ICT industry.

Seven Seas Technologies is currently engaging with various arms of government and collaborating with some of our private sector industry counterparts to implement some technology projects which will improve the citizens' engagement with their government, such as the Citizens Portal and the Citizen Baraza.

I would like to encourage other private sector players to dedicate substantial time and resources to innovating for the citizen, whether it is in IT, banking, healthcare, education or any other sector. By finding creative ways to integrate the very same commercial services that they provide to customers with important public services, we can create a new momentum of social





**"As businessmen and entrepreneurs, we must all move beyond the realm of the customer and start to see the citizen."**

entrepreneurship which will uplift social life and key economic sectors, generating the kind of environment in our nation in which our businesses can thrive and grow.

It is also important that we, local entrepreneurs, come together and collaborate in order to be able to build teams and consortiums which have sufficient capacity to deliver the large projects required for social good. At the moment, the local IT industry lacks a common voice and a sense of collaborative organization which would enable it to lobby for government support and also create the capacity to compete and deliver large-size public projects. We as Seven Seas Technologies are taking the initiative to bring together local IT companies and create an umbrella we call the Kenya ICT Forum (KE-ICT) that will serve this purpose, and we would like to encourage the participation of all local ICT organizations in this venture.

Similarly, I would like to call upon the government to continue to provide all the support necessary to firms and organizations which are engaging in innovating for the citizen. The current spirit of open dialogue and collaborative development of technology services for social good should be encouraged, as well as the various ongoing efforts in Government to embrace ICT and to open up to the industry through providing access to government data and such. Further support for local ICT organizations to enable them grow to be innovative and competitive on global markets will be needed, because every successful innovation for the citizen in our country is a potential export to other countries, creating more employment and economic value locally.

With this message, I would like to sign off and wish you all happy reading!

END



By John Kuria and Adam Nyaga

Sector Manager and Alumni, SST

Email: jkuria@sevenseastech.com

# CONNECTED KENYA

**"We at Seven Seas Technologies look at ICT as a key enabler and potentially a pillar for Kenya to achieve Vision 2030. The thought and work put into creating innovative solutions, which once implemented, will push our country a notch higher."**

**A**s has now become an annual tradition, the Connected Kenya Summit organized by the Kenya ICT Board was held in April 2011, and this year the bar was raised even higher than before with a huge turn-out of stakeholders, amazing presentations and discussions. Seven Seas Technologies, proud Gold sponsor for the 4-day event, theme this year was "Innovating around the Citizen". The purpose of this annual summit is to create and enhance the dialogue between the Government and the private sector ICT industry with a view to ultimately increase the use of ICTs to improve the provision of public services and uplift the lives of Kenyan citizens.

We at Seven Seas Technologies look at ICT as a key enabler and potentially a pillar for Kenya to achieve Vision 2030. The thought and work put into creating innovative solutions, which once implemented, will push our country a notch higher.

As a country, Kenya's goal is to become a middle income economy by the year 2030, as per our national Vision 2030 strategy. A number of key Vision 2030 projects have been initiated to build the strength of each of the 3 pillars of the vision, namely, Economic, Social and Political. ICTs will play a major role in many of these flagship projects, having been identified as one of the key enablers that will make the Vision 2030 a reality. According to a World Bank economic report, "Kenya at the Tipping Point", the sector has outperformed all other segments of the economy since 2000, growing on average by 20 percent annually and propelling the combined transport and communications sector into the economy's second largest contributor after Agriculture, which has traditionally been the strength of Kenya's economy. As a key player in the Kenyan ICT scene, Seven Seas Technologies is proud to be associated with this dramatic growth of the industry, which coincides with our own coming of age. Seven Seas Technologies was founded in the year 2000 and has grown just as dramatically in those last 10 years. We believe that continued growth of ICT in Kenya is key for the young and tech-savvy population of this country in helping drive innovation, entrepreneurship and creation of employment, as well as creating new avenues for investment in our economy.

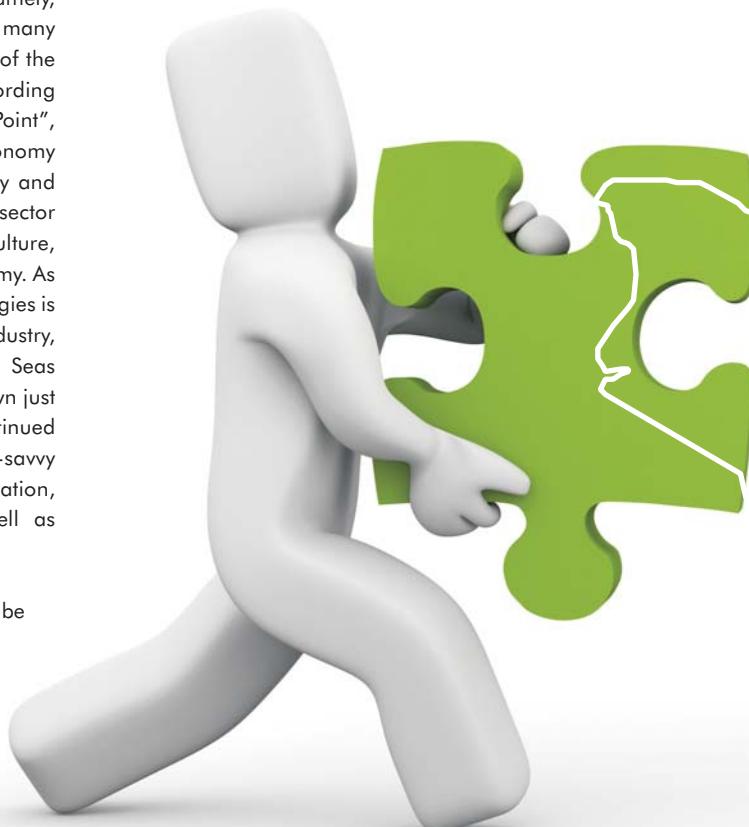
There are still some key challenges that we feel need to be addressed to harness the power of ICT in Kenya. Foremost is the scarcity of IT talent, the limited size of the local market, and the current lack of competitiveness of

Kenya in the global ICT market. It is vital to address these challenges as a nation to avoid wasting the potential of the sector and stunted growth.

In line with the Vision 2030 aspirations and our own passion for the industry, Seven Seas Technologies was proud once again to participate at the Connected Kenya Summit 2011, and showcase various innovations with the theme of innovating for the citizen. Many of these innovations have evolved from the experience we have gathered while helping transform our customers' businesses by using technology to deliver citizen-centric services and facilities.

## Citizens Portal

The Citizens Portal is an extension of the concept of Customer Relationship Management (CRM), which has proven to be effective in improving customer service provision in private business. It provides a single-window-of-service mode for providing government services to citizens through multiple channels, including physical offices of government agencies, call centres,



internet, mobile, email/fax/letter facilities, digital villages, post offices and so on. Through the implementation of the CRM system, the Government of Kenya will be able to improve the reach of its services by making use of electronic channels such as internet and contact centres, as well as increasing the depth of service offered through any one outlet thus making it possible for citizens to get a single-stop service from any government office or online portal they access.

Further innovative structures show how the Government CRM approach can be improved using a Public Private Partnership model which combines the commercial and technical strength of private sector ICT companies, like ourselves, with the service strength of government agencies. Citizens will be required to pay a premium rate charge through their phones or internet access to use specific services of the Citizens Portal, which will in turn create a commercially sustainable business model for operating the PPP structure. The Government may choose to subsidize or fully fund certain services depending on how critical the service is.

**"Capital isn't so important in business. Experience isn't so important. You can get both these things. What is important is ideas. If you have ideas, you have the main asset you need, and there isn't any limit to what you can do with your business and your life."**

— Harvey Firestone

The Citizens Portal includes a tier of different service provision channels, some of which are manned such as government offices and call centres, and others that are electronic such as internet and mobile. Behind all the channels is a common CRM platform that includes various service delivery and issue

resolution features which is shared across all channels for consistent and smooth service delivery. Behind this shared service platform, each participating ministry and government agency will second some officers into a cross-functional team that is able to fast-track their response to service requests made by citizens via the various channels of the Citizen Portal. Any issues that need further escalation to Ministry or Agency offices will be pushed by this team, and progress will be tracked on the portal for feedback and service analytics purposes.

The implementation possibilities for the Citizen Portal are vast and therefore create business opportunities for numerous entrepreneurs and ICT innovators while achieving a key government objective of providing improved service to the Citizen. We hope that the eventual implementation of the Citizen Portal will be fast-tracked to transform public services and increase the confidence and trust of the citizen in his government.

#### Citizen Baraza

The citizen's engagement with the Government has emerged as an important challenge. While there are formal structures designed to ensure that the will of the people prevails in the governance of the country, these structures, such as our national Parliament, are not sufficient to provide a voice for all citizens. While many Kenyans have useful opinions or ideas on issues from national to local level, there is no established channel through which these ideas and opinions can be funnelled, filtered, improved upon and ultimately adopted. This leads to public frustration and a growing disconnection between the Government and its citizens.

Kenya boasts a wealth of entrepreneurial and innovative spirit which is evident in the various world-leading products and services we have produced such as MPESA. These resources, if channeled correctly, can lead to a whole new national culture of value creation for common good.

To address these challenges, we expanded our knowledge of the corporate practice of innovation and idea management, to come up with a concept of a Citizen Baraza, which is a forum for bringing together the citizens and the Government to create a vibrant idea market and innovation factory.



**"Just as energy is the basis of life itself, and ideas the source of innovation, so is innovation the vital spark of all human change, improvement and progress"**

Traditionally, anyone who wanted to call the citizens together to a forum, would beat a rhythmic drum to convene the people and they would then discuss and agree on ideas that affected them. The Citizen Baraza is an electronic format of this traditional assembly. We foresee this concept evolving into a smarter version of a type of 'Facebook for Government' which would form a popular point of contact between the citizens and their government with similar popularity and success.

The Citizen Baraza will provide various electronic channels to bring citizens together, including internet and mobile via popular social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Government/BPO call centres, digital villages and the like. Behind these channels is an idea management platform, which includes the portal that users log into to create or update ideas or comment on those already added, as well as vote on them for ranking purposes. The platform will be administered by an Ideas Assessment Board which will filter through various ideas and proposals created to eliminate any inappropriate material, and will also provide functionality and access for interested parties from the Government and the investor community amongst others, to review the most popular or high impact ideas for the purpose of implementation. Beyond the creation and voting for ideas, the platform provides the functionality to allow enrichment of the ideas by multiple stakeholders, as well as adoption of the ideas for implementation either by government or by private investors.

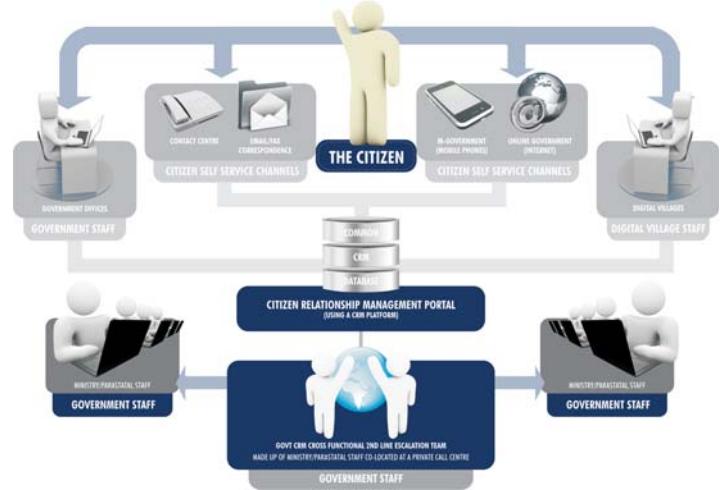
### The Mulika Series

Crowd sourcing is the new way to generate meaningful data and information from the public using electronic media and tools. Owing to the wide reach of mobile and internet technologies among the citizens, it is now much easier to source reliable information and even record events in real-time using mobile devices. About 60% of Kenya's population now has direct access to mobile telephony and a significant portion of that, mobile internet as well, which creates a huge opportunity for government and private players to utilise this readily available data so as to provide enhanced services for citizens and create new entrepreneurial avenues.

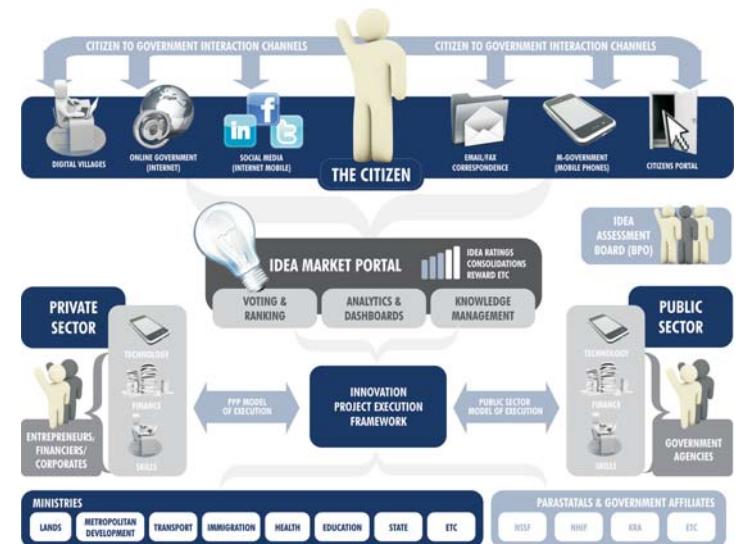
Seven Seas Technologies has created a cloud-based application development platform that integrates the electronic channels and telco providers and includes a comprehensive application infrastructure for running various processes such as Service Oriented Architecture(SOA), Business Intelligence (BI), Business Process Modelling engine (BPM), content management and graphical mapping and dash-boarding tools for information display. The platform will also be connected to various government and non-government data sources.

We hope that this platform will help establish a community of application developers who will create applications that combine crowd-sourced data with government and other relevant data sources for common and public good.

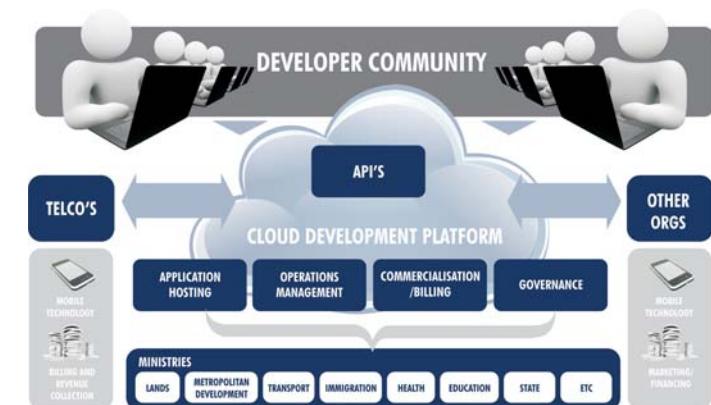
### Citizens Portal



### Citizen Baraza



### The Mulika Series



SST TRANSFORMATION

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRANSFORMATION

"A Customer Experience is an interaction between an organization and a customer across all moments of contact." Put simply, it is the experience a customer has when dealing with an organization.

By Josephat Mbogo  
Software Engineer, Business Applications, SST  
jmbogo@sevenseastech.com

**M**illions of dollars are spent on capturing customers through brand and marketing campaigns but somehow nowhere near as much is focused on Customer retention campaigns. Customer retention is not only a cost effective and profitable business strategy, but a must do in today's business world.

Given that a big chunk of sales revenue comes from your existing customer base, the 80/20 rule applies in that 80% of your sales revenue comes from about 20% of the existing customers. With these statistics, why are sales and marketing campaigns consistently designed for the new customer?

Facing increasing competition and tough times for business, becoming a market place enigma for startups and existing establishments demand that enriching the Customer experience is a key competitive differentiation strategy and is increasingly being adopted by businesses worldwide. It is one of the most effective areas an organization can still differentiate itself and become innovatively competitive.

Just one poor customer service experience could hand over your hard earned customer to your competitor.

While many organizations are keenly aware of the value of excellent customer service, few can accurately quantify its direct impact on their bottom line which is a company's net earnings, net income or earnings per share (EPS). Therefore, there is a need to turn the customer experience into an emotional engagement that adds value to their brand and

results in increased customer intimacy and loyalty.

Great brands have customer service policies that make life easy and provide help for customers when things go wrong. Great brands strive to make customers feel good and offer peace of mind with every interaction.

## Choosing the right strategy

Choosing the right strategy means selecting a value discipline that fits within your existing capabilities and culture and then striving relentlessly to sustain it. These strategies should seek to transform your organization's culture to be more customer-centric.

It is with this in mind that many successful companies around the globe are adopting the 'Web 2.0 signatures' to reap the benefits of Web 2.0 technologies. For example, tightly integrating Web 2.0 technologies with the work flows of their employees and creating a



networked organization, linking themselves with customers, suppliers, partners, and outside experts.

The journey towards Customer Experience Transformation could mean taking these simple steps.

**"You are what you repeatedly do.  
Excellence is not an event - it is a  
habit". - Aristotle**

#### **Provide diverse communication channels**

Customers have unique and varied preferences on how they would like to interact with your organization. The more communication channels you provide, the more likely it is that you will cover a customer's preferred channel. These channels could include chat and co-browse or better still, knowledge based self care.

With social media revolutionizing the way people interact in their social circles, it can also transform how you deliver customer service.

#### **Staff Engagement**

Aligning employee incentive programs such as employee recognition and reward programs to customer metrics is a great way of improving morale, organizational performance and the overall customer experience. Setting up online communities that let employees connect and engage with customers through blogs, social networking tools and getting the staff well connected to the organization strategy and culture, positively impacts on customer service.

#### **Building a knowledge base**

Understand the needs and wants of your customers continually and model this information into a knowledge base. Grant your staff and agents rapid access to this knowledge base to ensure consistent experiences and the right support is provided to your customers with each interaction.

#### **Customer Centric Decision Model**

With each business decision your organization makes, the focus should be on the impact it creates on the customer experience. This impact should be a key factor in your decision-making if improving the Customer experiences is a core objective of your business.

#### **Customer Experience Differentiation**

Offer a core experience and value proposition that is unique and poles apart from your competitors. Capitalise on areas where your competition falls behind. Identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps of your competitors.

A good customer experience lets the customer know that we are glad to do business with them.

For a complete Customer Experience Transformation your human resources are just as important. Studies indicate that there is little correlation between customer satisfaction and customer retention. However, employee retention and customer retention do have a relation. It is through your employees that customers get a reaction towards your company. They are the front-liners of the organization and they are the ones in constant interaction with customers.

"Remember, without the customers you do not have the need to keep your business and a poor customer experience on a business will impact its growth and sustainability greatly."



# BANK OF ABYSSINIA

By Rufus Mara  
Team Leader, Intelligent Real Estate, SST  
rmara@sevenseastech.com

## VISION STATEMENT

As "Abyssinia" is the ancient name of our great nation and that of the pioneer bank of the land, Bank of Abyssinia's vision is to live up to this legacy through continuous innovation and provision of world -class banking services.

Seven Seas Technologies, a leading ICT integrator, has expanded into the region to deploy integrated ICT services to the Ethiopian market. The recent award valued at over USD 700,000 from one of the leading banks in Ethiopia, Bank of Abyssinia, is a testimony of Seven Seas Technologies' increasing footprint in Africa.

To improve on efficiency to its clients, Bank of Abyssinia decided to implement an integrated core banking solution to cater for its needs as a modern financial institution. This called for a robust infrastructure on which its core banking solution would reside. Through a competitive open tendering system, Bank of Abyssinia awarded Seven Seas Technologies the task of designing and building their data center's physical infrastructure as well as their IP network for the data center and the 12 bank branches.

The infrastructure will be the foundation for which the banks core banking and IT services will reside. It comprises of power, cooling, physical security, safety, as well as the network fabric.

Experience from past similar projects will see Seven Seas Technologies utilize its Intelligent Real Estate (IRE) and Enterprise Networks (EN) business division competencies to roll out the project. Their Projects Management Office will ensure that best practices and standards are adhered to in line with globally accepted banking benchmarks.

Seven Seas Technologies' drive into the regional market coincides with a rapid shift in the regional banking industry's appetite for a technology driven focus which can be seen in the increasing demand for more complex projects from various internal departments as well as externally in the form of higher agility from the banks as a chief expectation of swiftly growing, more educated customer bases forcing the banking industry to coalesce around customer centric solutions rollouts.

This project promises to be another example of our passion for growth of ICT services into Ethiopia and beyond.

## THE NEW BANK

On 15 February 1996, ninety years to the day following the establishment of the first Bank of Abyssinia, a new privately-owned bank with this historic name, but otherwise not connected with the older bank, came into existence.

The subscribed capital of the new Bank of Abyssinia (BOA) was Birr 25 million and its authorized capital Birr 50 million, with 131 shareholders, all Ethiopian.



From Left: Seife-Alem Liben, Vice President of the Bank, Addisu Habba, President of the Bank, Mike Macharia CEO Seven Seas and Mesfin Bekele CTO Net and Com PLC

# Report any crime

by sending an **SMS** in the following format

**CRIME ROBBERY#NAME#AGE#LOCATION**

To **6665**

For us to achieve vision 2030, security will be a major enabler. The motivation to build Mulika Crime was to provide new channels of communicating crime as and when it happens. In line with vision 2030, we hope to build "a society free from danger and fear "through provision of information to the Kenyan mwanaainchi."

Help us to help you create a crime free country.



**www.mulikacrime.com**

For more information, contact us on Tel: (+254) 20 4268000  
Fax: (+254) 20 4451231 | Email: mulikacrime@sevenseastech.com



# MULIKA CRIME

By James Wainaina  
Software Engineer, Business Applications, SST  
jwainaina@sevenseastech.com

The brand Kenya is known for tourism, culture, nature and the good weather that we enjoy throughout the year. Unfortunately there are elements contributing negatively to the brand. These include poor infrastructure, political instability, corruption and crime. As a response to this depressing effect, Corporate Kenya and the Citizens have to partner in activities in line with Kenya's vision 2030. Seven Seas Technologies has aligned its corporate strategy to be at the core of transforming Kenya in partnership with the government to improve Governance.

One of the things we are doing as a technology company to transform the lives of the Kenyan citizen is to offer technology that deals with crime and corruption. The ideal technology should help the citizen report crime in real time; as well as provide functionality to analyze crime and crime prone areas. With this information in the hands of the citizen, questions such as "Is it safe to live here? Is it safe for my kids to go to school early in the morning without fear of kidnaps?" will be answered. The technology should also transform the institutions that are entrusted to serve and protect Kenyans, such as the Kenya police, into centers of excellence.

Unfortunately not all people report the offences committed against them or around them and the reasons why they do not report range from the people being too busy to report, the lack of effective and convenient channels for reporting or the lack of faith in the police force. For instance, a person parks his vehicle right outside a police station and finds the rear windows missing or stolen. A large percentage of vehicle owners would opt to just drive to the closest mechanic and fix the rear windows rather than walk into the police station to report the crime. That action does not really help the situation since the police remain unaware of the crime while the potential danger to others motorists remain.

Due to the lack of reporting, it is a fact that the Police lack visibility of crimes happening. In the released Crime Report 2010, the statistics in it say that there were zero reported offences of a police officer taking a bribe in 2010, zero reported crimes against tourists since 2009 and only seven corruption offences of accepting a bribe by a person outside the police force reported in 2010. This then forms the basis and the motivation to develop a Mulika Crime Platform which is a crime reporting and crime management solution.

Mulika Crime is an online application with a front office and a back office. The front office is built to allow citizens to report crimes via the internet and via SMS. For a citizen to report a crime over the internet

they would have to go to [www.mulikacrime.com](http://www.mulikacrime.com). Alternatively, the citizens would report a crime via sms which is then directed through a gateway to update a crime database. This information becomes available to the police and fellow citizens immediately.

Mulika Crimes' back office is the most important part of the system and runs on a highly private and secure network. The back office is what automates the whole crime investigation process using Business Process and Business Rules engines which handle complex workflows and logic. The front office (the citizen facing [www.mulikacrime.com](http://www.mulikacrime.com)) and the back office (Private to the police force) are integrated so that when a crime is reported; a case investigation process is automatically started within the back office. This crime goes through a complex investigation workflow and is managed within the system. Eventually based on the investigations and prosecutions given, all that data shall be input into the system and shall be available for analysis. This would provide dashboards based on crime analysis metrics such as Reported Crimes Vs Detected Crime, Detected Vs Prosecuted etc. This means that for the first time in Kenya the citizens will have access to real time data for crime analysis.

The adoption of the Mulika Crime platform will see the transformation of the Police Force from the institution as we know it today to an institution of excellence managing the whole crime reporting and crime investigation life cycle in an intelligent, integrated and automated system. We therefore hope that Mulika Crime will be adopted as the default crime reporting platform and most importantly we hope it shall, in the long run be attributed to reducing the crime levels in Kenya.



# MY MOBILE THINGAMABOB

Just as I was starting to write this article, I wondered where my mobile gadget was. Maybe I had missed a call, received an urgent email or text..... the list goes on. Yes, I have become a slave to this intrusive device; I cannot imagine a day without it and it is practically an extension of my hand.

I also started thinking of the gentleman who was born in 1847 and what conversation we would have if he happened to be passing around. "Hi Solomon, what is that you are holding?" "Aah Mr. Bell, this is a telephone." "A telephone ...? That small, wireless apparatus with a screen and a keyboard? No I am more clever than that." "Ok let me call your great grandson," I would say. On hearing his great grandson's voice, my friend Graham has a heart attack in disbelief.

Just over a decade ago, planning meetings with our friends and our families was so difficult and required a face to face meeting to plan for the actual face to face meeting. However ridiculous this sounds, I miss those days to an extent; at least we used to keep our word. Our social habits have greatly changed on both extremes depending on our personal characters. We get to know each other much faster than our parents used to due to the increased and frequent communication that does not depend on face to face meetings; we break up with each other much faster too.

Mobile phones are now more than phones and the phone functionality has become one of the many applications. I think we should call the gadget the mobile me or maybe the mobile thingamajig. Many big companies are making monstrous profits though enriching our mobile experience. Just think of Facebook or Youtube in the absence of mobile phones, would they be big? Yes they would but they would not have enjoyed the deeper market penetration they currently have in a country like Kenya. Local telecommunication companies more so Internet Service Providers have also leveraged on this reality and have driven their data revenue growth by marketing the access to these content providers and social networks through mobile phones. It's important to note that even the local media industry is growing and thanks to content access via mobile phones; it's now possible to download your favorite local music, video or shows.

Wikipedia defines Bluetooth as a "proprietary open wireless technology standard for exchanging data over short distances (using short wavelength radio transmissions) from ...." but wait, did my 10 year old niece ask me to Bluetooth her the Justin Bieber baby song from my HTC droid thingamabob? "So is Bluetooth a noun or a verb?"

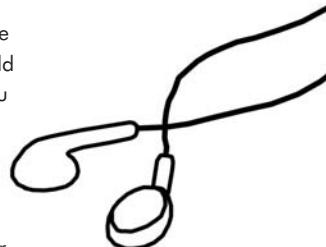
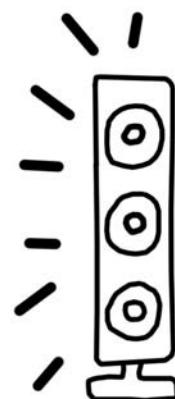
In the yesteryears, one had to visit a cyber cafe to access the internet and the best you could do was just save your documents on a floppy drive to go read them at the workplace or in school to avoid spending you bus fare at the cyber café. The access to information is now so effortless and it's easy to read the daily papers, get 411 news, catch up with friends and so forth just from your mobile gadget. Today's phones have the latest wireless network access technologies such as 3G and 4G and arguably, some of my friends tell me, they do not need a separate internet access modem; you just need to tether your phone over Wi-Fi or Bluetooth with your laptop and voila you have yourself a good internet connection.

I think one of the biggest contributions the mobile gadgets have had in our lives, apart from access to information, is the growth in our social networks through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc. We now face concerns of uncontrolled information for children. Gone are the days when a parent could just set adult controls on the TV or enforce TV watching curfews. I guess it calls for better parenting beyond rules and now demands that parents and mentors be more knowledgeable. Gone are the days when a child would ask you where babies come from and you just say heaven!

How were people finding directions and places with no access to maps? The best you could do is carry a 1m<sup>2</sup> printed map. Now you just need your mobile phone, (good screen is preferable) and you can be on Google maps or any other navigation system provider on your way.

Our working habits have also changed tremendously. We have a culture of continuous availability for office related work. Most of us have our phones set to download emails from our corporate email accounts in addition to our personal ones. In today's work culture, it is deemed as an excuse when someone claims that, "I haven't checked my email, I didn't see the email". You are always expected to check your emails at all times, thanks to the wide high speed 3G coverage and our 3G mobile gadgets.

The current trend for high performance organizations is to leverage on mobility solutions to drive user productivity. System integrators like Seven Seas Technologies are able to design and implement mobile



By Solomon Thuo

Business Manager, Enterprise Networks Division

[sthuo@sevenseastech.com](mailto:sthuo@sevenseastech.com)



applications in an organization where a lightweight client on your Smartphone connects to your corporate IP PABX; the device that controls your desk phone. In this case you are able to extend your extension to your mobile phone whether in your office through Wi-Fi or outside the office through 3G networks. This is done via integration through your corporate firewall to ensure secure tunnel is created between your phone and your office network. The benefits to this is that you can access your office directory, view missed calls, call history, initiate business calls from your extension, have a single voicemail box etc. In summary you will always be reachable through your extension for all business related activities. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfu06L5xFxA> for more information on this concept.

Our society also stands to benefit from the mobile phone technological revolution. Consider tools like [www.ushahidi.com](http://www.ushahidi.com)

that crowdsource information through text, email, twitter and web. During the Haiti earthquake, citizens could send real time updates on what was happening on the ground and as such authorities could know the worst hit areas that required prioritization on dissemination of food supplies and other resources. There are also mobile applications that have been designed to aid in fighting crime. For instance, in the City of Boston, the agencies have released their own iPhone application to allow residents and visitors to Boston to report public disorder crimes and nuisances such as graffiti, broken street lights and potholes; yes the last two are farfetched for the Kenyan environment, maybe the inverse would work. The good news is that we have our own platform ([www.mulikacrime.com](http://www.mulikacrime.com)) where citizens can report incidences by sending messages or by sending a tweet to #mulikacrime, thanks to the public private partnership between Seven Seas Technologies and the Government of Kenya.

As I was writing this article I just looked through the Safaricom 2011 Financial Year results and noticed that the MPESA revenue has grown to Kshs 11.78 B. The mobile money transfer service has really changed the local money transfer services landscape. To date, this has been the biggest innovation built around our mobile phones. What I personally like about it, is that technology is no longer a big word out there for the tech-savvy; not everyone needs to know the technology behind MPESA but the technology just works for everyone. In this regard, the mobile phones have literally fueled economic growth.

I am looking forward to having more local mobile applications suited for our day to day activities. This will greatly drive economic growth and innovations. It is a sure way of dealing with unemployment. How many people are self employed through making applications that integrate with Facebook and have been able to monetize their talent? Why do I have to go queue at a government office to find out if some documents have been processed? Can't I just send a text and have my results pap? We need to be able to shop just using a mobile phone with a bar code reader that can connect to the supermarkets price database; imagine just walking to a supermarket and serving yourself (from making your selections to paying), wouldn't this be real self service? I am looking at integrating my home security surveillance and monitoring solutions to my mobile phone. I can be in office and still watch a video feed of how everything is running at home. The possibilities are limitless... "Look at the time, I need to leave. Let me find out where my wife is... of course through my Google mobile location services, but do I say?"

END

# SAFARICOM, SEVEN SEAS TECHNOLOGIES AND EMC PARTNER TO DELIVER THE LARGEST INDIGENOUS CLOUD PLATFORM IN AFRICA.

In a landmark technological breakthrough by a Telco in Africa, a partnership between Safaricom, Seven Seas Technologies and EMC has delivered the largest, most innovative cloud computing project ever implemented in the African telecoms space.

Faced with a backdrop of price pressures within the traditional voice business, and the potent promise of growth in the data market, Safaricom selected a world class team to build the first local indigenous cloud geared for the Kenyan and regional market.

The Partnership comprised of Safaricom, Seven Seas Technologies - a regional leader in complex ICT integration projects in the East and Central African market, and EMC who, together with Cisco and VMWare, provided the combined technologies for the cloud project. Seven Seas Technologies has provided the bulk of the implementation team and has taken up the lead project management role from the time the project began early in the year.

EMC, which ranks among the Fortune's list of the world's most admired technology companies, provided the necessary storage infrastructure for this undertaking. Its position as a world leader in storage technologies plus its impressive portfolio of similar implementations worldwide made it the natural choice in this cloud project. EMC leveraged on technology from other global vendors, namely Cisco and VMware, to deliver the Safaricom cloud infrastructure.

The Kenyan telco invested heavily in the initiative, with some sources alluding to the deal as one of the biggest ICT deals to have been penned in the region. The investment was in line with its aggressive growth and innovation policy, sentiments echoed by the CEO, Bob Collymore.

"We see our future growth coming from offering more services in the Data Space than what we are currently offering in the market", he said.

Safaricom intends to utilize its massive infrastructure in order to become a total communications service

provider. Diversification from dependence on the mainstream voice revenue is a key aspect of the future growth Safaricom envisions in its operations. Corporates and SMEs will be able to harness on the massive cloud infrastructure to lease normally CAPEX-intensive infrastructure services such as electronic archiving, data storage and disaster recovery services. The cloud project would also enable Safaricom provide their corporate clientele with hosted software as a service (SaaS) services such as CRM, hosted ERP and hosted contact centre services, among many others.



That a local company was selected to spearhead the implementation of a project of such magnitude is testimony that local ICT companies that have the requisite skill sets and experience can compete with internationally renown ICT integration firms. Seven Seas Technologies CEO Michael Macharia believes Kenya is a technological power house in the region and must therefore continue to cement its place with

ever increasing innovations. "Neighboring countries are turning to Kenya in the area of thought leadership and pioneering of new technologies. They desire to see and experience how ICT is fuelling rapid and agile economic growth in Kenya", says Mr. Macharia.

EMC Regional Manager, Bassam Hemed, on the other hand, believes that the Safaricom cloud project will consolidate EMC's position as the leader for cloud implementation in the African market.

The image consists of two parts. On the left is a newspaper clipping from 'Business Daily' dated 26 July 2011. The headline reads: 'Safaricom, Seven Seas Technologies and EMC partner to deliver the largest indigenous cloud platform in Africa'. The article discusses the collaboration between Safaricom, Seven Seas Technologies, and EMC to build the largest indigenous cloud platform in Africa. On the right is a photograph of a man in a suit standing in a server room, looking thoughtful with his hand on his chin. The background shows server racks. The 'Safaricom Business' logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the photo.



### MANAGED NETWORK SERVICES

Injazat Managed Network Services optimize the performance and availability of the network and help manage the growing complexities of aligning your communications and network needs with your overall IT strategy

- Managed LAN Services
- Managed Router Services
- Managed Remote Access Services
- Managed Server Load Balancing Services



### MANAGED SECURITY SERVICES

Injazat Managed Security Services keep you ahead of the constantly changing threat landscape by utilizing leading-edge technologies and industry skilled resources to design, deploy, configure and manage secure and compliant solutions.

- Managed Firewall Services
- Managed Intrusion Prevention & Detection Services
- Managed Distributed Denial of Service Prevention Services
- Managed Security Information Event Management Services
- Managed Security Information Event Management Services



### MANAGED STORAGE, BACKUP & RESTORE SERVICE

Injazat Managed Storage, Backup & Restore Services enable you to optimize and manage information throughout its lifestyle, maintaining the right level of storage for information from the time it is created until it is deleted.

- Managed Storage Services
- Managed Backup & Restore Services



### MANAGED DATA CENTER SERVICES

Injazat Managed Data Center Services help transform your business through hosting, server consolidation, virtualization, business continuity and application hosting.

- Managed End Point Data Protection Services
- Managed End Point Threat Management Services
- Managed Virtual Server Services

## Disaster recovery as a Service

Implement Disaster Recovery at a fraction of traditional methodology

## Information Storage as a Service

Securely store critical and personal information

## Datacentre as a service

Rapidly provision a complete data centre in minutes

## Managed Information Security Services

Security information and monitoring, Anti-theft, Anti-phising, data loss prevention

## Managed Back up and recovery

Protect your information assets in the most cost effective way

## Hosted Application Services

Implement online services cost effectively and securely

## Archiving as a service

Achieve your information onto a secure and online environment to reduce cost

## Digital Content Management Services

Capture digitize and a manage content and transition into the paperless office

## Managed Video Surveillance Services

Cost effectively secure your organisations assets



ICT SECRETARY  
Directorate of E-Government

## INTERVIEW WITH **KATE GETAO**

By John Kuria  
Sector Manager, SST  
jkuria@sevenseastech.com

### **What is the role of the Directorate of E-Government?**

- a) Facilitate access to e-government services, including online, e-mail, web services and government domain name administration
- b) Promote infrastructure, technical interoperability and secure networks within and across ministerial/departmental jurisdiction
- c) Provide technological advice and policy frameworks for government electronic service delivery
- d) Coordinate the development of ICT sourcing strategies to ensure that government obtains value for money
- e) Monitor emerging technologies and facilitate activities to ascertain the potential value of these technologies in a government context.

### **Does the ICT Board of Kenya's role conflict with the E-Government?**

Both roles are well defined where ICT board is involved in Marketing – positioning and promoting Kenya as an ICT destination both locally and internationally. Advisory – advising the government on all relevant matters pertaining to the development and promotion of ICT industries in the country. Capacity building - Providing government and other stakeholders with skills, capacity and funding for anchor implementation of ICT projects for development. Project management - Coordinating, directing and implementing anchor ICT projects in development.

Directorate of E-Government on the other hand is mandated to provide leadership, facilitation and coordination of E-Government services across ministries and accounting units. Directorate of E-Government further coordinates and prepares of the E-Government Strategy including the implementation plan, and monitoring and evaluation of the process.

### **What role is the E-Government playing to assist Government cut down cost of services via ICTs?**

We should not talk of cutting down costs but creating value for money. For example, reducing the time it takes for a business to register. If it takes a business a couple of months to register, who costs for the time taken in waiting? The role therefore is to bring effectiveness in government services by use of automation. In an automated environment, the first five minutes should be relegated to operations and trivial administration then move on to priorities. Soon homes are also becoming more complex with bills, salaries and tax compliance, kids' health and school records, and will soon need automation to handle all these records and the home owners can then concentrate on raising the family and their jobs.

Banks have also improved their systems with automation of what used to be clerical work. This does not mean that jobs are not being

created but the banks are now utilizing these resources in customer relationship management and push of their new products. I would call automation the "professionalization" of government. Avoid a huge staff overhead and have few people managing operations at a massive scale.

### **What is the latest on the project?**

Our major projects currently are the government datacenter, core networks implementation and UMAX (unified messaging and collaboration)

### **What is the E-Government strategy on capacity building and skill development?**

The E-Government strategy has a capacity building element and internal staffs are already undergoing training in various areas of ICT. We are also working with the private sector to offer post implementation training.

### **How will E-Government ensure reduce reliance on imported expensive skills and resources by incorporating and developing local skills.**

The current state of employment in government has been that the pay structures are not desirable and most staff that we train end up being taken up by the private sector. We however plan to incorporate and develop local skills to manage our projects.

### **Could the reason be that the public is not aware of the kind of innovative projects you are undergoing and how do you plan to communicate this to create awareness therefore attract local skills?**

Unfortunately E-Government has had no marketing budget and we leverage on media opportunities for communication. We would like to incorporate the public to give us feedback, input, comments and evaluate success of our projects. We have come up with a concept of using skits and plays to convey the message to schools, informal settlements and the public in general.

### **How does E-Government plan to incorporate the private sector and local ICT entrepreneurs in implementing strategic projects, provision of public services?**

With government being a trusted source of data, the strategy is to clean up this data and secure it and then make it available to the public in an organized manner. The sky is however the limit with the number of applications that would need development to make this data available to the market, in automation of government systems. There is a need to incorporate the private sector in development and implementation of innovative applications, make the information available to the public and make costs bearable for adoption, thereby creating wealth. These same systems can be further enhanced by building tools that make information available by the click of a button to those who can pay.

END

By Regina Nthenge  
 Account Manager, Intelligent Real Estate, SST  
 rnthenge@sevenseastech.com

# LAKE NAIVASHA ENASHIPAI RESORT AND SPA: LEADERSHIP IN IT TRENDS FOR THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN EAST AFRICA

**O**ver the past few years Kenya has witnessed growth in real estate with the hospitality sector being a key player. This growth has seen an increase in the number of hotels, restaurant chains and other related services. With this increase in numbers of players in the hospitality sector, the need to stand above the rest has arisen. The experience at any hotel, restaurant or lodge needs to be commensurate with international standards.

Walking into any hotel, restaurant or lodge, people need to feel at ease not just with the soft surroundings and elegant interior decors but with their experience. Business travelers and tourists need to feel as if they are still at work or at home. They need to have business continuity and communication with those they have travelled away from. The experience should begin from before arrival to post arrival. Traditionally; hotels were largely dependent on cards and paperwork at the front desk for operations.

From hotel reservation to billing solutions, information technology has expanded well beyond that. Hotels can now work with online travel companies and booking services, to have their rooms booked online. This also allows a hotel to advertise directly to persons who would be interested, instead of wasting lots of money advertising in an unfocused manner.

These advanced Information Technology requirements and the need for business continuity have presented the Kenyan hospitality sector with a new challenge. To stay ahead we need more than sandy beaches and luxury hotels. The travelers thirst is for more than a game drive or a scenic view of Mt. Kenya. Therefore, wireless internet has become a very useful service for hotels to provide. Security cameras, door locks, and other devices essential to hotel security and safety can be wired into the network, so that staff are alerted whenever a door is propped open, a fire alarm goes off or suspicious activity occurs. Though the hotel guests are wholly unaware of it, this sort of added safety and security keeps them safe, and in the event of a problem they will most certainly appreciate the benefits of such a system.

Seven Seas Technologies has been part of this transformation in the hospitality sector in Kenya. Lake Naivasha Enashapai, a five star resort and spa located in Naivasha town, has just recently opened their doors. The first phase of this resort boasts not only tastefully designed architecture, a strong local heritage, abundant nature but also the latest in IT infrastructure and IP communications. The solution

provided for this lodge by our team of engineers and consultants allows for Internet connectivity both wired and wireless throughout the entire resort. The fiber backbone allows for coverage of the expansive site adequately with provisions for future expansion.

The hotel has ensured interconnectivity between its various branches. In addition to network infrastructure and unified communications the Resort has invested in hotel management systems, the latest in email communications and storage solutions.

Hotel groups are looking at 'guest profiling' leading to 'frequent lodger programmes' allowing guests to take their individual preferences from hotel to hotel with a single guest profile number. Hotels in particular are now developing e-marketing strategies both to develop new business and to retain repeat customers. Online marketing strategies including E-commerce, and online application development to facilitate and promote service offerings through the hotel website.

Property Management Systems can be used to gather information from all those systems, such as the phones, restaurants and bars, to calculate guests' bills and monitor stock and even staff performance. A hospitable solution for all.



# CHALLENGES FACING THE ICT INDUSTRY IN ACQUISITION OF QUALITY TRAINING

Since early times of the first computer, the Abacus, the Information and Telecommunication Industry has continued to evolve with new innovations to suit the ever-changing demands of the users of these technologies. For example, the modern technology of high speed internet enabled 3G/4G smart phones has led to traditional learning systems changing to e-learning systems.

In Kenya, a tremendous growth in the ICT industry has led to business innovations in order to increase revenue. Companies are becoming more efficient by reducing their costs and enhancing scalability and flexibility. To be able to achieve this, companies in both the private and public sectors have invested heavily in acquiring software and hardware to develop systems and products to achieve these goals. However, after the implementation process is finished, the challenge then is how to up-skill technical staff to enable them to optimize the functionality of these technologies.

This leads to a gamble between authorized training providers (quality) who can provide the desired training, and predetermined budget for such training, and the grey/quantity (fake) training providers.

Companies are left pondering various questions such as:

- How do I distinguish the authorized training provider from the grey (fake) training provider?
- How much does it cost me to acquire genuine training?
- What other benefits do I get from authorized training providers?

Reputable organizations value quality training as opposed to quantity training. This is because quality has contributed immensely to their overall excellence.

- To answer the first question, checking the websites of the various partners of given technologies in the region, one would be able to identify Training Centers authorized to provide training in a given technology i.e. CISCO, Oracle etc.
- Secondly, as opposed to grey training, genuine specialized training saves the company's finances and time in the long term. If the training is genuine, the trainer will not only be experienced but is certified in his specialty. The trainees will be given original training materials to use while undergoing training and the curricula will be the latest

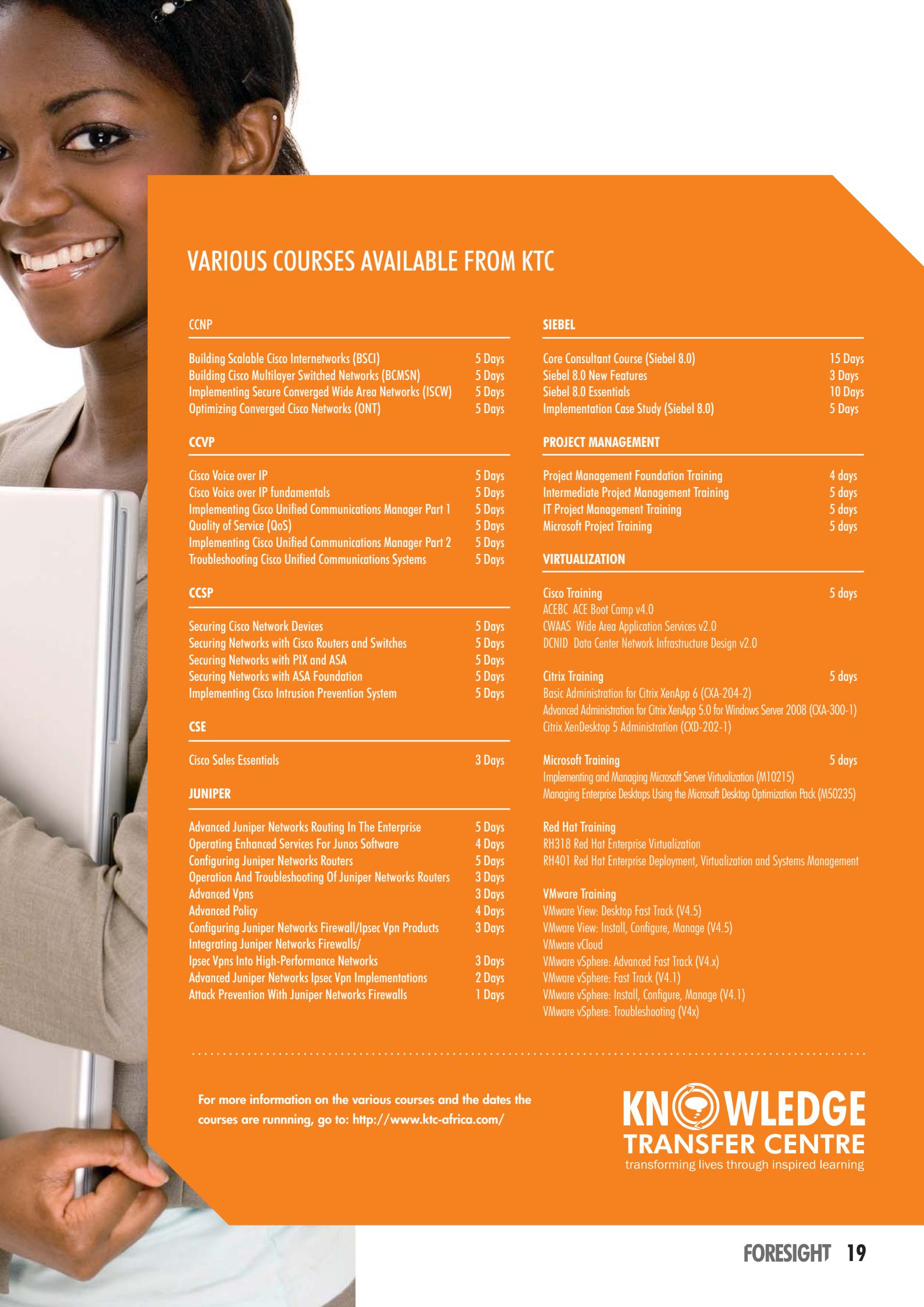
versions of technology.

- Grey training may attract uninformed users by offering very low training costs. If the company has invested heavily on technologies, this low cost training may entice them at first but will cost them more in the long run. Trainees completing a course are unable to certify because they are required to provide evidence of attending classes at an authorized training provider. Their competence can also not be measured. Additional costs to re-train staff will therefore be required.
- Authorized training providers ensure that the quality of training is not compromised and guarantees student satisfaction. When trained from the source, there is a clear development road map which can easily be realized. It is simple to tailor-make a course without compromising its contents while at the same time keeping in mind the customer's budget.

Knowledge Transfer Centre (KTC) is a high-end training centre dedicated to the training and development of outstanding ICT professionals in Africa.

Our Goal is to promote the highest standards of IT training, promote development and the adoption of best practice guidelines and enhance customers' capacity to get the most from their investment.

END



## VARIOUS COURSES AVAILABLE FROM KTC

### CCNP

Building Scalable Cisco Internetworks (BCSI)	5 Days
Building Cisco Multilayer Switched Networks (BCMSN)	5 Days
Implementing Secure Converged Wide Area Networks (ISCW)	5 Days
Optimizing Converged Cisco Networks (ONT)	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

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 Vpns	3 Days
Advanced Policy	4 Days
Configuring Juniper Networks Firewall/Ipsec Vpn Products	3 Days
Integrating Juniper Networks Firewalls/	3 Days
Ipsec Vpns Into High-Performance Networks	3 Days
Advanced Juniper Networks Ipsec Vpn Implementations	2 Days
Attack Prevention With Juniper Networks Firewalls	1 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

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project Management Foundation Training	4 days
Intermediate Project Management Training	5 days
IT Project Management Training	5 days
Microsoft Project Training	5 days

### VIRTUALIZATION

Cisco Training	5 days
ACEBC ACE Boot Camp v4.0	
CWAAS Wide Area Application Services v2.0	
DCNID Data Center Network Infrastructure Design v2.0	
Citrix Training	5 days
Basic Administration for Citrix XenApp 6 (CXA-204-2)	
Advanced Administration for Citrix XenApp 5.0 for Windows Server 2008 (CXA-300-1)	
Citrix XenDesktop 5 Administration (CXD-202-1)	

Microsoft Training	5 days
Implementing and Managing Microsoft Server Virtualization (M10215)	
Managing Enterprise Desktops Using the Microsoft Desktop Optimization Pack (M50235)	

### Red Hat Training

RH318 Red Hat Enterprise Virtualization	
RH401 Red Hat Enterprise Deployment, Virtualization and Systems Management	

### VMware Training

VMware View: Desktop Fast Track (V4.5)	
VMware View: Install, Configure, Manage (V4.5)	
VMware vCloud	
VMware vSphere: Advanced Fast Track (V4.x)	
VMware vSphere: Fast Track (V4.1)	
VMware vSphere: Install, Configure, Manage (V4.1)	
VMware vSphere: Troubleshooting (V4x)	

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

By Mike Macharia

Founder and Group CEO of Seven Seas Technologies

Email: mmacharia@sevenseastech.com

# CITIZEN BARAZA - TRANSFORMING KENYA

Part of the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, to which Kenya is a signatory, is to develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for the youth.

**K**enya is a young nation, with 75 percent of its population under the age of 30. The biggest challenge facing the country right now is finding the means, political will and the know-how to create jobs for the thousands of youth who enter the job market every year. The issue of finding gainful employment for youth is a potential tinderbox that needs to be addressed as a matter of national priority.

Right now, Kenya is among countries in Africa with the largest number of Facebook users in Africa between ages 16 and 35. It is also instructive to note that 65% of Kenyan households own and use a mobile phone. Kenya also has 3.2 million Internet subscriptions and 8.6 million Internet users.

To achieve this middle level status, we must provide the right atmosphere and incentives for our youth to come up with innovative ideas that can create employment opportunities. The big question then is how can the government harness the collective thoughts of these youth and give them a platform to channel their ideas?

Driven by innovation, technology is changing rapidly every day; this is the right time for government to provide a forum and platform for youth to channel their creative and innovative ideas, through a Citizen Baraza. And what is the Citizen Baraza? The Citizen Baraza is an ideal market that uses a technology platform to capture and channel public opinion and ideas so that the most meaningful and impactful ideas are filtered and recognized.

It is an innovation factory, an organized approach with structures, practices and tools to pool the entrepreneurial and innovative resources available nationally to drive execution of the best ideas into reality. A practical model for a Citizen Baraza would incorporate digital villages, online government, social media platform, e-mail correspondence, M-government and a Citizen Portal.

Social media is by far the best tool in harnessing the productive ideas of our young population and channel them to the relevant government organs. This is because social media provides an instant connection between the youth and the target audience. As soon as you put information up on the Internet, it immediately becomes easily

available to a large number of people. By contrast, television or radio commercials can take weeks to produce, billboards take time to print and install, and postcards can take several days to travel through the postal service.

Also, many social networking platforms charge little or no fee to register, allowing youth to utilize the service to locate and interact with the target audience without having to spend large amounts of money. Social media also makes information available to millions of people through the Internet, but can also be used to reach very specific niches, ensuring that your innovation or idea is catching the attention of people who will be interested in what you have to say. Above all, the social media allows someone to open up a conversation with the target audience, allowing them to provide feedback and express their ideas and suggestions about your business.

The views of youth collected through the social media platform can then be incorporated into public, private partnership projects aimed at spurring economic growth and therefore job creation for the thousands of jobless youth in the country.

END



# Citizen Baraza

Sikiza, Jionee Uongee



## Innovating For The Citizen



Transforming Kenya  
through Citizen Engagement  
100 days Rapid Result Initiative (RRI)

[www.citizenbaraza.com](http://www.citizenbaraza.com)



[www.sevenseastech.com](http://www.sevenseastech.com)

## SEVEN SEAS TECHNOLOGIES INCUBATION PROGRAM

Kenya today is seeing an influx of "techpreneurs" emerging in the market, coming up with various innovations in mobile hosted applications and content development, web development, portals, social media advertising tools and methodologies.

However, these micro entrepreneurs lack the governance structures needed to make business value out of their products. Most of these "techpreneurs" are one-man businesses just getting their foothold into the market. They do not have the capability to employ staff and are struggling to obtain capital to run their businesses. There is therefore a need to assist and mentor these micro entrepreneurs in areas of business management, tax and legal compliance, people management and in marketing their products.

With the reduction in the cost of mobile handsets, low value of prepaid calling cards as well as service providers offering attractive promotions, Kenya's mobile phone penetration has been on the rise. Industry statistics from the Communications Commission of Kenya show a 9.5 per cent mobile subscriptions growth from 20.1 million in the last quarter to 22 million subscribers. This is the highest growth that has been recorded over the last three quarters, mostly attributed to multiple SIM subscriptions.

The number of internet/data subscriptions reached 3.2 million at the end of the second quarter. The mobile data/internet subscriptions through GPRS/EDGE and 3G continue to dominate internet subscriptions and account for 99% of the total subscriptions during the last quarter. It is expected that mobile shall continue to dominate the provision of internet service as competition in the voice market intensifies, compelling operators to diversify into other products and services in order to sustain and grow revenue.

With the continual advancement of mobile technology, adoption of mobile banking and increased internet subscriptions, the market is poised for growth as never before. We cannot therefore ignore the fact that there is a need to develop models that support start-ups so as to push their products for adoption in the market.

The recently held Pivot25 contest saw over 100 teams from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda pitching their startup over a 2-day period to a panel of judges who are established Entrepreneurs and Business Executives in the ICT sector.

By Betty Macharia  
Business Development Manager, KTC/K4Life  
bmacharia@sevenseastech.com



It was evidently clear from this event that while most of these startups had excellent business ideas in the mobile, government, business and health sectors, most lacked the confidence and ability to pitch the business value of their ideas to the judges, operators, Venture Capitalists, Angel Investors and the ICT community present.

Through our Knowledge for Life program, a number of "techpreneurs" and IT engineers have approached us to help them make business value of their ideas and products.

In line with the projects that we have had in the applications space in various sectors, we have identified that most can be modified to provide solutions such as government dashboards, monitoring and management systems, banking applications, security applications, amongst others.

Seven Seas Technologies has therefore started an incubation program that targets software developers with unique solutions that lie within our business offering, which we can develop, model and scale into the market. Seven Seas Technologies will also provide the financing and governance needed to support and develop their businesses.

The Seven Seas Technologies incubation program involves giving the developers a platform on which to develop hosted applications in enterprise architecture infrastructure, business process management, content management, business activity monitoring and service oriented architecture.

With the diversification being seen in the banking sector, and with the government sector offering improved services, the incubation program will ensure development of monitoring and management systems for these sectors and enable improved security, mobile and banking applications.

END

By Polys Hadjikyriakos  
Sales Director, NetInfo  
polys@netinfo.eu

# E-BANKING AND EMPOWERING THE CITIZENS

How has the Internet changed our perspective during the last decade and how has it made an impact on the Financial Service Industry?

When it came to e-banking through alternative channels 5 years ago, the general consensus was: What kind of different transactions can be done online?" Is this form of banking secure and will this benefit the bank?

As the capabilities of e-banking expanded, the opportunities also became more apparent. Today the question is: How can the bank differentiate itself through Internet banking; How can it utilize online channels to contribute to the business strategy of the bank, Can the bank use this methodology to retain customer loyalty and attract new customers? And finally: How can the bank promote their products and services through alternative channels?

NETinfo offers the answer to these questions through its flagship product NETteller e-banking solution.

NETteller is a universal Multi Channel Banking System, developed with market leading tools and tailored to international banking practices.

NETinfo Plc is a leading provider of e-banking due to the specialized industry know how and technical expertise, managing to stay one step ahead of the game in new technology by using the banks as their university for the customers' expectations.

NETinfo NETteller e-Banking channels includes: NETteller WEB Channel, NETteller Mobile WEB, NETteller SMS Alerts, NETteller SMS Banking, NETteller WAP Banking, NETteller PC Banking, NETteller Kiosk Banking

New channels for 2011: NETteller iPhone Client (App.), NETteller Android Client, NETteller Social Network

## **Additional Modules:**

NETteller Authentication Suite: An advanced two-factor authentication module which will drastically reduce the incidence of online identity theft, phishing expeditions and other online frauds. It includes SMS TAN and OTP Token.



NETteller ATM Gateway: The ATM Gateway is a software-based gateway that links the existing ATM network with a banks' backend system or any other applications.

## **THE WAY FORWARD**

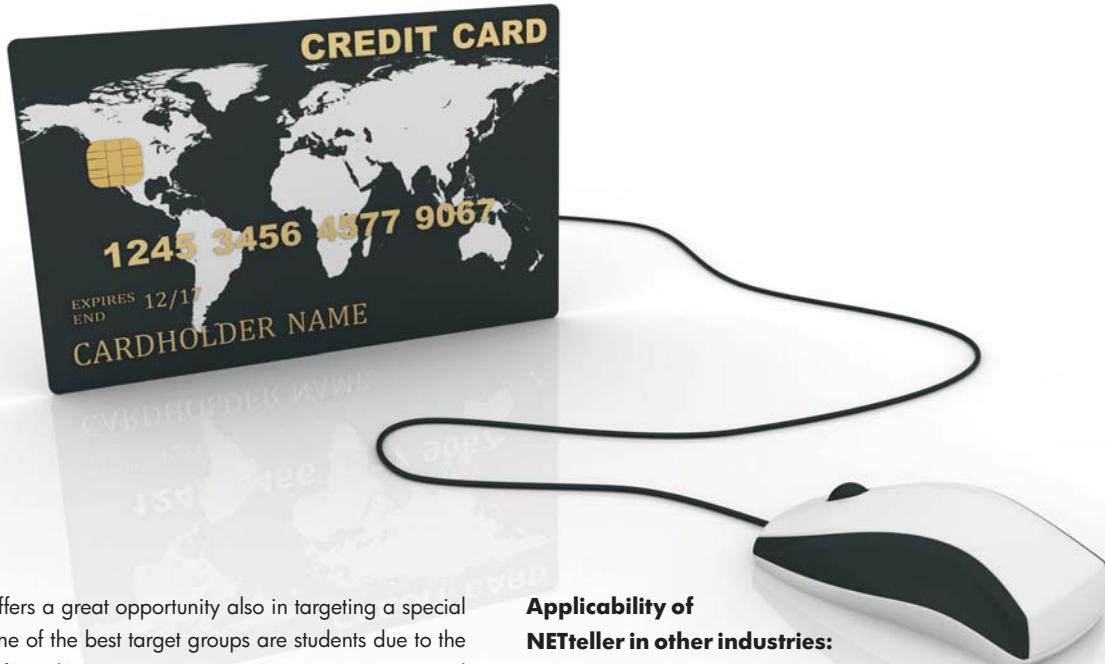
### **Social Networking**

How can the bank utilize the new channels such as Facebook to acquire new customers?

There are some banks that have made remarkable progress utilizing the current trend in Social Networking channels to create a further competitive advantage in the marketplace.

A particular bank extended its donation program to Facebook as an additional communication channel. Their Facebook site has accumulated almost 2.5 million fans and the bank now gives donation with their participation. This has made visitors more active in participation.

Other banks have used Facebook to build an entire virtual branch offering live chat with the Bank. From the customers' perspective it offers the high availability of a call center but in a more personalized way.



Facebook offers a great opportunity also in targeting a special segment. One of the best target groups are students due to the high usage from this segment. Appropriate segmentation and targeted communication is an important asset for success in this channel.

#### **NETteller Business Values:**

**Channel demands:** Internet Banking is becoming an increasingly important alternative banking service as customers become more internet confident with access to Web banking, Mobile banking, SMS and other channels.

**Retention and loyalty:** The cost of acquiring a new customer can be up to eleven times higher than retaining a customer. NETteller capabilities for customer profiling and segmentation enables banking organizations to work closer with existing customers, achieving loyalty and retention.

**Fast Implementation Cycle:** Up and running within few months

**ROI:** The NETteller e-Banking Solution has been designed with the understanding that any investment decision must leverage existing technologies deployed and ROI must be proven within a 12 month timescale.

**ASP Model** - One installation many banks: The NETteller e-Banking Solution can run in ASP model serving different banks, for example a group of banks can be served by one central installation located in the banks' HQs. Each bank can have its own look and feel, as well as business rules, legislations and even different core banking systems. This model is very suitable for Banking Groups that have affiliated banks in different countries or regions.

**Single Sign On** - Multiple Banks: Provides Single Sign On facility enabling access to all the accounts, and information from different banking jurisdictions usually belonging to the same group, presenting a consolidated customer picture. The bank client is able to have access to all his accounts globally and he will be able to perform transitions independently from his location. For each transaction, the business rules and limitations of each account are applicable.

#### **Applicability of NETteller in other industries:**

NETteller solution can provide the complete technological infrastructure in order to accomplish the vision for e-Government. NETteller, in conjunction with the existing Government infrastructure can provide the citizens a central point of integrated electronic services delivered in a secure manner.

#### **Service Key Objectives:**

- (a) e-Government Service delivery through secure channels - To provide the required environment for carrying out secure Government to Citizen (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), Government to Employees (G2E) and Government to Government (G2G) transactions through different electronic channels.
- (b) Protection of existing investment - To enable the Government to utilise its existing investment in business applications. That is, by providing the necessary interfaces and interoperability standards, the Government Gateway will enable the Government to provide e-Services from its legacy applications, without the requirement for expensive application upgrade.
- (c) Interconnecting back-office systems - To provide a cost-effective and fast way of connecting systems using open interoperability standards with interfaces into existing proprietary applications.
- (d) Ability to deliver customer (citizen/business) centric projects - To provide the infrastructure that enables integrated transactions/services. That is, to enable citizen/business focused services to be developed, regardless of the number of Government Organisations that are involved in the process.
- (e) Administrative cost reduction - To reduce the Civil Service running costs by delivering integrated e-services; integrated processes and reduce overhead, throughout government.

NETinfo has recognized the advancements in technology and the positive steps that the African banks are taking to keep their competitive advantage. With our unique service offering, and our strong partnership with Seven Seas Technology, we believe we hold the key for the future development of the banking sector in Africa.

By Betty Macharia  
 Business Development Manager, KTC/K4Life  
 bmacharia@sevenseastech.com

# DIGITAL VILLAGES TO SPUR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT AMONG KENYANS

The development of an efficient ICT infrastructure network is one of the key economic pillars of Kenya's Vision 2030 which hopes to propel Kenya into a middle level income country in the next two decades.

**A**s part of a connected "Digital Nation", the Government of Kenya recognizes the importance of ICT as an enabler for economic and social development by improving communication and facilitating information flow. But despite the phenomenal growth of the ICT sector in the country in the last five years, there has been imbalanced development in the sector. Most of the development occurs in the urban areas resulting in region-wide disparities in the distribution of ICT facilities.

In order to address this disparity, the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Kenya ICT Board have developed a network of Pasha / Digital Village Centers which are aimed at encouraging new micro-enterprises by providing access to information, education and new products.

Pasha centers are electronic centers that will provide among other things, Wide area / Wi-Fi access, portal development and services (e.g., e-education, farmer-market links), business using and/or marketing of any ICT-enabled applications, ICT training and ICT network maintenance and technical support to businesses, NGOs and schools.

Other services to be provided by the digital villages include business services like typing, scanning, CD writing, retail of stationery and ICT office equipment, Mobiles, SIMs and airtime top-ups, M-Pesa, Zap or any other m-Money service and E-Government service . These centers will also ensure broadband coverage of the whole of Kenya and access to e-Government and other services vital to socio-economic life and development.

The network of Digital villages will be distributed in all counties, owned and managed by a commercial entrepreneur, assisted in start-up by a 90% concession loan from the Kenya ICT Board, under the World Bank Assistance Project, and disbursed by Family Bank.

Knowledge for Life, part of Seven Seas Technologies, has partnered with Family bank to

render an innovation platform aimed at building mentorship, entrepreneurial capacity and ICT Skills in financing and promotion of the digital Villages. This partnership will therefore offer hosted management applications, capacity building, youth development and mentorship, best practice in use of systems, entrepreneurship, and overall business management that is conducive to business.

With only five per cent of the Kenyans hooked to high speed internet access by late last year and 3.7 million internet users in the country, the data segment offers huge potential for ICT developers and operators in the country.

The outcome of this partnership is to develop capacity, entrepreneurship and ensure best practice in business management, availability of technical resources, support and training.

The Entrepreneurship training undertaken by the partners will lead to an understanding of the challenges facing IT Enterprise, ICT skill enhancement, marketing, finance management, operations and Human Resources management.

Ultimately, the end effect will be the creation of thousands of jobs for Kenyans in the ICT sector and the bridging of the ICT divide between the urban and rural areas in the country.



# SALES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FOR THE SALES ORGANIZATION

## Overview

2009 witnessed a global economic downturn and as a result, the spotlight was focused firmly on the financial and insurance market sectors. Increased public awareness raised many questions around the business practices and the effectiveness of regulations.

Sales Performance Management is not only well equipped to address many of the issues the financial sector is facing, but it also demonstrates a solid track record of dramatically reducing operational costs; contributing substantial cost savings through process efficiencies and adding revenue to the business bottom line, all of which prove very compelling arguments for any organization today.

## Sales Performance Management

So how is Sales Performance Management or SPM as it is more commonly known, defined? SPM is less about technology and more about processes and capabilities. It manages the entire sales lifecycle from on-boarding and pay-for-performance to talent development while providing visibility into sales operations and financial performance of the organization. SPM manages dynamic, complex hierarchies of sales and channel partners, it encompasses compensation payment, compliance, reporting and analytics, but in essence it aligns sales performance with business objectives.

If the main challenges facing corporate sales in an enterprise are examined, we can demonstrate how SPM directly addresses these issues.

## On-Boarding

It is essential for verifying and recruiting new Partners or Agents to sell products. Callidus' experience validates that on-boarding is fraught; primarily because it is steeped in manual paperwork. This naturally impacts on on-boarding or recruitment timescales, with some organizations citing the process can take up to a few months. The SPM system helps quickly and efficiently on-board new Agents, helping to grow capacity, while ensuring risk is managed with comprehensive workflow capabilities directly bringing about the below benefits:

- First, it reduces lost selling time. SPM ensures Agents can on-board and contract quickly with a business and receive transparency into contract status, product terms, transactions and payments.
- Secondly, the SPM solution increases transparency of the business ultimately making doing business easier. This is an important point if we take into account an agent's commission payments on policies. The Agent needs to be assured that commission will be paid accurately and on time and any disputes can be resolved quickly. There is always a clear audit trail for this to happen.

## Overpayment

Overpayment is a key issue for sales organizations with statistics after auditing showing that there has been overpayment of up to 33% of its Agency network. Analysts estimate 5-10% of lost sales opportunities are due to admin and optimization inefficiencies, this is no surprise when commission is often still calculated in spreadsheets or bespoke systems. Spreadsheets are admin intensive therefore prone to error; payments are subject to delay and inaccurate payments occur regularly. This fosters a sales culture of distrust and doubt where shadow accounting or recalculating pay is rife, which in turn leads to lost sales time and distracts a sales force from its key goal of driving sales revenue and aligning with company sales strategy. The SPM solution ensures independent Agents are paid accurately and on-time based on contracted performance, ensuring long-term loyalty.

By implementing an SPM solution overpayments are virtually eliminated; typical figures show a recovery of between 2-5% of the total commission spends. Sales commission is calculated in real-time and delivered to the sales individual in a continually updated statement which reduces the need for shadow accounting.

The visible audit trail also means any disputes are handled quickly and efficiently. Pay-related queries drop substantially from taking over a day to action, to typically just one phone call to resolve.

### **Transparency, Forecasting & Analytics**

Transparency is crucial for reporting and analytics. One particular insurance company was surprised to find an Agent who was hitting only 40% of target was more profitable to the company than others who were achieving 70% or even 100% of target. SPM tracks Agent payments and shows visibility into performance and profitability. This is invaluable information and is prompting companies to reevaluate sales targets on margin-led products. The SPM solution can provide this information and a 'league-table' insight into sales patterns and the Agency network. The modeling capability also demonstrates the impact on revenue when for example, setting advice rates.

Transparency also means forecasting is more accurate. This is imperative when budgeting for annual commission spend - get it wrong and there may not be enough funds to pay out on commission earned or worse still accruals which were not paid out in commission, stay in the commission accrual pot causing a potential deficit in the company bottom-line.

**"SPM (Sales Performance Management) is less about technology and more about processes and capabilities... but in essence it aligns sales performance with business objectives."**

### **ROI**

Measuring the return on investment is essential and an SPM solution is proven to pay dividends almost immediately after it has been implemented. This is because it addresses operational inefficiencies related to compensation payments, most notably overpayment and administration costs so that erroneous spending can be reined in and costs recouped. And secondly it is proven to increase revenue streams by up to 5%.

### **How is this achieved?**

First, shadow accounting is virtually eliminated; a study from reward specialists Mercer indicated an individual sales person can spend just 30% of their time actually selling and an incredible 21% on admin and shadow accounting. An SPM system will help to eliminate up to 90% of the manual payment process which is frequently the root cause of payment issues leading to disputes.

In addition, an SPM solution provides an unparalleled, up-to-the-minute overview of the company's sales operation which gives the business a highly competitive advantage. The organization can react within hours to market changes or shift focus to compensate for stock issues or even to push higher ticket items. In this way, the organization is also able to influence the selling behaviours of its sales team by strategically incentivizing the products it needs to sell - as opposed to letting the salesforce push what products are familiar to them.

END



# FOR A LAUGH...

## ONE LINERS AND Q&A

**Q:**  $2 + 2 = 5$  for extremely large values of 2.

If debugging is the process of removing bugs, then programming must be the process of putting them in.

**Q:** How many programmers does it take to screw in a light bulb?

**A:** None, that's a hardware problem.

**Q:** WATT is the unit of power?

**A:** WATT?

A neutron walks into a bar. "I'd like a beer" he says.

The bartender promptly serves up a beer.

"How much will that be?" asks the neutron.

"For you?" replies the bartender, "no charge".

**Q:** What did one electron say to the other electron?

**A:** Don't get excited. You'll only get into a state!

**Q:** What did one photon say to the other photon?

**A:** I'm sick and tired of your interference.

**Q:** What did the thermometer say to the graduated cylinder?

**A:** "You may have graduated but I've got many degrees"

**Q:** What did the Nuclear Physicist have for lunch?

**A:** Fission Chips

**Q:** How does Bill Gates screw in a lightbulb?

**A:** He doesn't. He declares darkness the industry standard.

**Q:** What is the difference between a Quantum Theorist and a Beauty Therapist?

**A:** The Quantum Theorist uses Planck's Constant as a foundation, whereas the Beauty Therapist uses Max Factor.



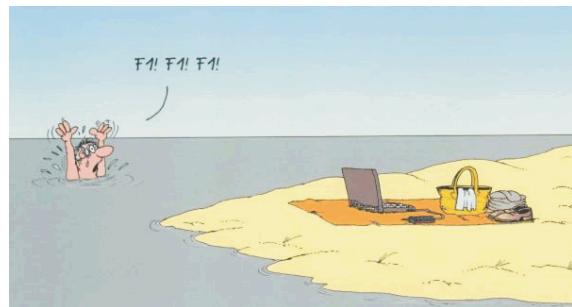
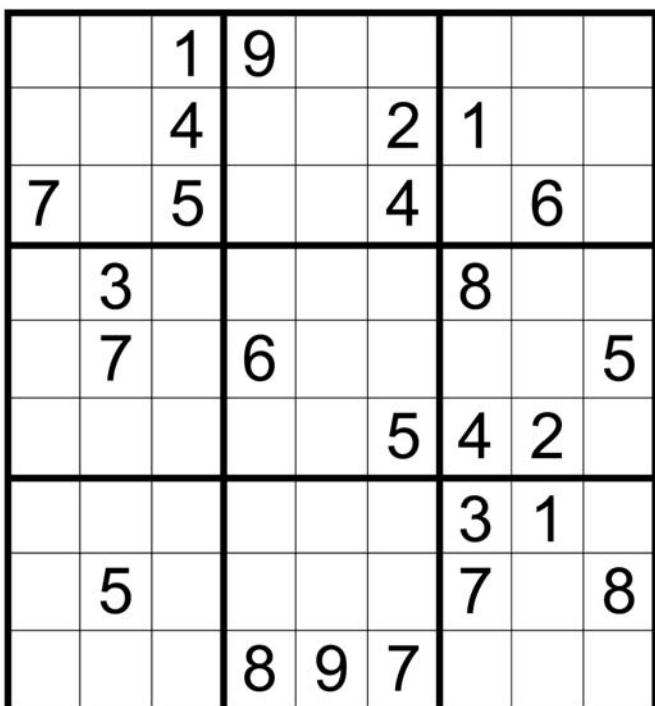
**"Would you like the technical or the nontechnical presentation?"**

## TOP 15 PROGRAMMER TERMINOLOGIES

1. A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES ARE BEING TRIED - We are still pissing in the wind.
2. EXTENSIVE REPORT IS BEING PREPARED ON A FRESH APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM - We just hired three kids fresh out of college.
3. CLOSE PROJECT COORDINATION - We know who to blame.
4. MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH - It works OK, but looks very hi-tech.
5. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS DELIVERED ASSURED - We are so far behind schedule the customer is happy to get it delivered.
6. PRELIMINARY OPERATIONAL TESTS WERE INCONCLUSIVE - The darn thing blew up when we threw the switch.
7. TEST RESULTS WERE EXTREMELY GRATIFYING - We are so surprised that the stupid thing works.
8. THE ENTIRE CONCEPT WILL HAVE TO BE ABANDONED - The only person who understood the thing quit.
9. IT IS IN THE PROCESS - It is so wrapped up in red tape that the situation is about hopeless.
10. WE WILL LOOK INTO IT - Forget it! We have enough problems for now.
11. GIVE US YOUR INTERPRETATION - I can't wait to hear this bull!
12. SEE ME or LET'S DISCUSS - Come into my office, I'm lonely.
13. ALL NEW - Code not interchangeable with the previous design.
14. YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT - It finally worked!
15. LOW MAINTENANCE - Impossible to fix if broken.

## FROG OR GIRL?

A man is walking down the street. He looks over and sees a frog sitting there on the sidewalk. The frog looks up and says in a sweet voice, "I am really a princess. If you kiss me just once, I will return to my human form and do anything for you." The man picks up the frog, looks at it, and places it in his pocket. He then heads on his way again. Shortly a voice is heard from his pocket: "Didn't you hear me? If you kiss me, I will turn into a beautiful princess and do anything for you." The man takes the frog from his pocket, looks at it for a moment, and returns it to his pocket. Shortly the voice is heard again, this time with a frustrated tone: "Hey! What's wrong with you?! I said if you kiss me I'll turn into a beautiful princess and do anything you want!" The man pulls out the frog and says to it, "Look, I'm a computer science student. I don't have time for a girlfriend, but a talking frog is kind of neat."



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



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



- dopeler effect      the tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.
- dot gone      pre-Internet bubble bust startup
- E-dundancy      sending someone an e-mail at the same time you're having an IM conversation with them.
- Egosurf      to search for yourself on Google or another search engine
- e-mailsculation      what happens when the IT department abruptly takes away access to an email account from a worker that's been fired, including archives, distribution lists and contacts.
- E-mnesia      the condition of having sent or received an e-mail and having no recollection of it whatsoever.
- Execuglide      to maneuver oneself around the room while seated in a wheeled office chair.
- Famspam      unsolicited email sent by family members.
- Fauxtography      altering a photographic image with editing software to create an image that appears real but is in fact misleading or untrue.
- Faxcess      having access to a fax machine.
- Faxcination      staring intently at the fax machine because you're waiting for a fax to come through.
- fonesia      the affliction that strikes when you dial a phone number and forget whom you were calling just as they answer.
- FUtility      a 3rd party utility that won't install no matter how closely one follows the instructions.
- Gadaboutag      the orphan HTML tag that's messing up your page.
- Gleemail      inspirational emails forwarded by a friend or coworker that may or may not bring joy to your inbox.
- GMOOT      short for "Get me one of those," the basic command from CEOs to CMOs or CMOs to their agencies.
- id10t error      help desk log lingo for clueless end-user.
- Imdecision      repeatedly erasing an IM text box because you change your mind about what you want to say.
- IMglish      the combination of chat abbreviations and online slang commonly encountered in instant messages conversations.
- Mahogany Row      the business side, the boardroom.
- Multi-asking      communicating with someone through IM, phone or e-mail at the same time. See also: e-dundancy.

# CUSTOMER TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS & NEWS

**Top 40 Women Under 40** Seven Seas Technologies' Bancy Gakuru who is the Chief Talent Officer was among the women who scooped this prestigious position. Business Daily's TOP 40 Under 40 is an annual ranking of women who have risen to occupy positions of influence in society before the age of 40 and are therefore headed for top careers in the next decade. It has been said that what sets societies apart in terms of human and economic development is the lack of diversity (especially on gender) in key decision making positions be it in business or public policy. The reality in Kenya is however, that a growing number of women have stood their ground and are making it in nearly every segment of the economy including the corporate world, government, and enterprise. These are the women whose achievements we hope to highlight and celebrate because it is our view that by highlighting their achievements, we encourage other ambitious women to meet the challenges and that many still face in their bid to reach the summit of their careers and aspirations.



## AITEC Banking & Mobile Money

**COMESA** This year's edition of AITEC Banking & Mobile Money COMESA took place from 2nd-3rd March at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre in Nairobi. It is an annual 2-day event which brings together the banking industry from COMESA region, together with IT service providers from around the world to showcase and talk about the latest technology trends in financial services. Seven Seas Technologies was a sponsor at this year's event, where we

had an exhibition stand that won two awards (Most Improved Stand and runners up for Best Stand Overall), and 3 presentation slots that we used to showcase our transformational technology proposition for the banking industry. These were Banking 2.0 vision, IT architecture of a modern 21st century bank and impact of Cloud computing on banking IT infrastructure.



**Kenyan CEO among global business heavyweights** The CEO Collaborative Forum is geared at assisting global business leaders identify and explore practical solutions to critical problems ranging from finance and capital mobilization, Board and other stakeholder items, through sales channels, market segmentation and other commercial issues to operational challenges such as hiring and retaining senior staff. Mike Macharia was the only sub-Saharan executive attending the annual Forum which was an exclusive community of international growth-company leaders either based in Europe or with strong business interests in Europe. The Forum consisted of about 100 members from 20 nationalities, in different programs and streams. Speaking from Barcelona, Mike Macharia described his experience as a worthwhile immersion in European entrepreneurial situations which are closely linked to the African perspective. "I've really enjoyed participating in the European entrepreneur business challenges, and glad to learn that their issues are quite similar to those of African entrepreneurs," Macharia said.

## NETInfo Partnership with Seven Seas Technologies

With the rise in demand for Internet and Mobile banking in the African market, Seven Seas Technologies is pleased to announce its new partnership with NETinfo Plc ([www.netinfo.eu](http://www.netinfo.eu)) of Cyprus, who have a world-beating internet and mobile banking solution, NetTeller. This new partnership enables Seven Seas Tech to complete its service offerings under the Bank 2.0 vision of customer-centric banking excellence through deployment of the right technology building blocks. NETinfo is a niche software company which provides a centralized e-banking solution for the Banking and Financial Services arena. They have many years of experience in the domain and good knowledge of the market, as well as proven international success which sets them apart from the competition.

## Kibarage Children's Home (CSR Program)

The Kibagare group started in 1997 as a self-help group as the many single mothers needed day care for their children while they were out seeking work or hawking. The first class started in 1999 in a self made mud hut. The group (24 women and one man) contributes to the school with cash and voluntary labour. Seven Seas Technologies through its CSR program, has donated uniforms and is paying school fees for five children in the primary section.



## KU Career Week

Knowledge for Life (K4life) participated in this year's Kenyatta University Career Week

Symposium which included giving a public lecture to students informing them on what we are doing in discovering, transforming and unleashing skills and talents in the region. Sponsored by amongst others; Kenyatta University, Safaricom Ltd. and Procter and Gamble, the week-long symposium titled "Paradigm Shift from Job Seeking to Job Creation" brought together over 100 players from the private sector and high school students to debate on skills required by the industry. K4life also had an exhibition stand where students from all ICT related faculties visited in large numbers to get more information and also register for inclusion into the program. It proved a great task for James Wainaina and Betty Macharia who addressed each student individually giving them advice and mentorship on what is needed in ensuring successful employment in the industry. Knowledge for Life has partnered with the University of Nairobi, Strathmore University, Kenyatta University and JKUAT to offer free training to students in order to equip them with the necessary skills demanded by industry.



**Transforming Kenya through a Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) 100 days** The Initiative (RRI), flagged off by His Excellency, the Right honorable, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kenya, Raila Odinga, on the 13th July 2011 is a rapid transformational tool that will be used by the government to identify and analyze key issues affecting Kenyans' and setting

resolutions aimed at improving service delivery. Seven seas Technology has offered to deploy an introductory, non commercial portal for citizen engagement. The portal dubbed "Citizen Baraza" is a platform creating channels with which the citizens will engage directly with government agencies via; online government website, planned digital villages across the country, social media sites, email correspondence to citizen touch points, mobile phone and any other channels that may emerge in due course. The portal will allow Kenyans to air their views/opinions on material matters, offer ideas on how we can improve as a nation and allow the government to respond in a timely, efficient and effective manner to its Citizens concerns or impactful ideas.



#### Google Enterprise Partnership

**Agreement** Sevenses Technologies has been appointed as the sole GSA appliance enterprise partner for the East and Central African Region. The Google Search Appliance (GSA) provides fast, relevant search for your intranet or website. An on-premise, easy-to-deploy solution, the GSA provides your organization with high relevancy right out of the box. GSA can be customized to meet your specific needs and scales easily as your content grows. Google Search Appliance builds on its scalable architecture and adds key new features around search quality, access control and connectivity. This will enable SST to offer

enterprise search solutions within our clients' intranet environments. This partnership is an addition to the managed services SAAS Division offering, which features hosted collaboration solutions e.g. Gapps, Hosted ERP Solutions, Hosted IHRMS solutions, Hosted CRM solutions, WEBEX as part of its wide range of solution offerings targeted at the SME and ME market segment.

**Chase Bank Project** Chase Bank is a privately owned bank incorporated in Kenya in 1996 and has been in existence for the last 15 years. To improve on efficiency to its clients Chase bank is implementing an integrated modular core banking solution that caters for the needs of a modern financial institution. This has necessitated an upgrade of the data center to a modern facility that can accommodate the computing hardware to run the core banking solution. Seven Seas Technologies has been selected to design and build the data center through a competitive bidding process. The design phase is already complete and has been signed off for implementation. The design has taken into account the Network Physical Critical Infrastructure. Having done similar projects in the past, Seven Seas Technologies will utilize its Intelligent Real Estate (IRE) business division competencies for the project implementation. SST Projects Management Office will ensure best practice and standards as well as delivery of the project in time and on budget.



## KTC Registration for accreditation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Learning

**Knowledge Transfer Centre (KTC)** has been accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education Science and technology. KTC has successfully been training technical staff in various specialized high-end ICT courses from various companies namely; Safaricom Ltd, Ericsson, KPLC etc and we are on course to expand our training services to other organizations in both private and public sectors.

Our clients' benefits include:

- Lowered costs as courses are done locally with accredited partners who understand local business and current requirements.
- Consistent delivered quality of globally standardized content.
- Certified trainers are practicing consultants.
- Access to post support services.



## Connected Kenya Citizen Baraza Awards

The Citizen Baraza Awards was presented to about 300 delegates from all across Kenya. Through sponsorship by Seven Seas Technologies, incentives were used during the 3-day launch of this platform in Connected Kenya, attracting a large number of registrations, idea submissions and even voting. The ideas submitted by the delegates that received the most votes won the three prizes which included an apple ipad, ipod touch and an ipod nano for the first, second and third positions respectively. Some of the top ideas submitted to Citizen Baraza were: development of an IRA (Innovation Risk Assessment) Board/vetting body to conduct risk assessments to evaluate ripple effect of technologies, ideas and innovations to ensure that they will actually be helpful, safe and useful. This idea was submitted by Sue who won 1st position and took away an Apple ipad. The

2nd and 3rd positions were taken by Idd Salim from Symbiotic who proposed 'wewenani', a mobile-web system that will help the public confirm the identity of police officers and city/municipal council officers in real-time. He also proposed 'Pete' (Swahili for Ring) which is a look-up service for finding the marital status of a person with the aim of reducing unknowing infidelity among citizens.

## Seven Seas Technologies Scoops Africa Cloud Computing Award

Seven Seas Technologies has scooped this year's VMware Africa Channel Partner of the Year Award in recognition of the firm's Cloud computing market development efforts in the wider east Africa region. Arising from Seven Seas Technologies' recent investments in developing and delivering Cloud computing solutions running on VMware platforms, the locally headquartered firm is gaining global prominence in the ICT world as a major solutions partner. Globally, VMware is reputed as a computer virtualization and cloud computing solutions provider serving leading global enterprises. Cloud computing refers to an IT based technological concept that uses the internet and central remote servers to maintain data and applications. As a new generation concept, experts agree that this technology allows for much more efficient computing by centralizing storage, memory, processing and bandwidth.



**Mfarm** After obtaining university degrees in computer science and IT, Susan and Jamila (co-founders of M-Farm) realized they could design a software application that would assist Kenyan farmers with some of their major problems, especially related to the

sale of produce. This application would help the farmers know the actual retail price for their produce, which would give them bargaining power over the middle man's offer. The application would also assist Kenyan farmers to buy inputs (fertilizers, seeds, etc.) in groups at discounted wholesale prices. Finally, the M-Farm service would also allow farmers to sell their produce together, thereby receiving higher prices (because of large orders). MFarm participated in the Human IPO competition and won 1 million KSH as a start-up investment in the company.



## Technology the Symbiotic Way

Symbiotic is a leader in mobile business, mobile entertainment, custom web and mobile platform solutions. Symbiotic builds software platforms that help businesses and organizations leverage web, mobile and general telecom technology to maximize revenues and meet other business objectives.

The areas of focus range from technology consulting, business process improvement and automation, monetization of content, publishing of content, messaging solutions, as well as development of public services on behalf of government.

Some of the services offered include mobile billing, messaging platforms, mobile advertising, social networking solutions, content management, mobile portal design, payment gateways, hosted services SAAS (software as a service), service management and technical consulting. Symbiotic provides direct network connectivity for promotion, distribution and billing of mobile content and services over a range of channels including WEB, SMS, WAP, GRPS, 3G and USSD.

## FILM REVIEW

By Delano Kiilu Longwe

## THOR

Genre: Action, Adventure, Drama

Rated: PG-13

Running Time: 1hr 36min

**The powerful but arrogant warrior Thor is cast out of the fantastic realm of Asgard and sent to live amongst humans on Earth, where he soon becomes one of their finest defenders.**

- Action, Adventure, Drama
- Epic Blockbuster
- An entertaining ride into the realm of Fantasy
- "Courage is Immortal"

Never before has the intricate Father-Son relationship been so aptly demonstrated on the silver screen as with the Movie Thor. Chris Hemsworth (Thor) and Anthony Hopkins (Odin) have managed to accurately portray the age old challenges of the father and impetuous son relationship. Thor abandons the rules and sets off on a self destructive path which is only curtailed by the intervention of Odin. Thor is stripped of his power and banished to earth to live as a mortal.

Its been a long time since Cinema was able to grab us and fling us onto such an incredible journey in such a short time. There's no doubt about it Paramount Pictures, Marvel Entertainment and Marvel Pictures have not spared the horses to roll out big entertainment. The estimated budget for this movie was USD \$150,000,000. Its ranking at the top of the box office mute testimony to the fact that they made an informed decision. For die-hard Marvel fans there are numerous references to 'Hulk', 'Iron Man' and 'Captain America'. The very visible involvement of S.H.I.E.L.D. agents led by Agent Coulson (Clark Gregg) also signals the imminent release of 'The Avengers' movie where all these characters will work as a team.

THOR seen in 3D is a good experience with the panoramic shots of Asgard, Jotunheim and Earth. The only drawback is the plodding pace of the script which typically drags in between times of intense action. Essentially the Frost giants of Jotunheim invade earth in A.D. 965 and Odin with Asgard's warriors stop them and seize their source of power the 'casket of ancient winters'. A delicate balance of peace prevails until Thor upsets the barrel. Without letting away too much of the plot the highlights will remain 'Mjolnir' Thor's hammer and Heimdall (Idris Elba) the all seeing, all hearing sentry of the 'Bifrost bridge'. In terms of leadership Thor's ascent to the throne is disrupted by invading frost giants prompting his irrational behavior. Loki (Tom Hiddleston) aptly plays the role of the demented brother to Thor whose actions lead to the destruction that follows.

The movie showcases the fact that transformational leadership must begin from the heart and when heart motives are wrong or greedy then thousands of innocent lives can be lost. It depicts the challenge involved in making the tough decisions of personal change by a leader for the sake of the greater good and that it takes tremendous courage to positively change the course of many destinies in the eternal battle between good and evil.

Overall the movie is definitely a must see for 2011 and heralds the beginning of a different type of thinking in the making of Superhero movies.



## TOP 10 BOX OFFICE

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 1  | THOR                     |
| 2  | FAST FIVE                |
| 3  | JUMPING THE BROOM        |
| 4  | SOMETHING BORROWED       |
| 5  | RIO                      |
| 6  | WATER FOR ELEPHANTS      |
| 7  | MADEA'S BIG HAPPY FAMILY |
| 8  | SOUL SURFER              |
| 9  | PROM                     |
| 10 | HOODWINKED TOO!          |

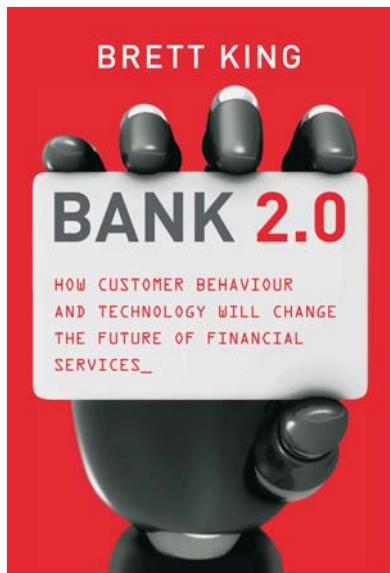
By Daniel Mainye  
Management Trainee, Shared Services, SST  
Email: dmainye@sevenseastech.com

BOOK REVIEW

# BANK 2.0

## HOW CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR & TECHNOLOGY WILL CHANGE THE FUTURE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

*By Brett King*



A comprehensive analysis of how technology can help financial services win back the trust of consumers' post-recession, by Brett King

With its voracious appetite for high-speed trading systems and oceanic volumes of data, the banking and financial services sector is often seen as something of a technological pioneer. But according to Brett

King, a strategic financial services adviser and author of Bank 2.0, the industry is in fact stuck in the technological past. Many organizations still operate from the same mainframe systems that have been in place for more than 30 years, he writes, and innovation within the sector is a slow and reluctant process. This, he argues, has to change. Thanks to the most damaging financial crisis in decades, the reputation of the global financial services industry among consumers is at its lowest ebb. Because of this, King states, it is now more vital than ever that banks leverage technological innovation to improve and streamline the customer experience.

Throughout these chapters, one theme persists. Like many organizations, banks and financial services companies suffer from a solo approach to doing business. This inhibits the sharing of data between departments such as sales, marketing and customer service.

This, King believes, has a profound impact on the customer experience.

The fact that customers must go through an arbitrary process of providing personal details every time they apply for a credit card, loan or mortgage with the same bank is, he argues, nonsensical. In the Bank 2.0 world, as King sees it, this data is shared and visualized between departments via business intelligence dashboards. This means that the necessary approval processes can be undertaken faster, and with zero form filling.

He also argues that banks have yet to adapt their organizational structures to the rise of electronic and Internet banking, despite the fact that 95% of global banking transactions are now being made electronically. For example, the head of branch banking is typically a more senior position than the head of 'alternative' channels i.e. Internet and mobile phone banking who will often sit somewhere below the IT and marketing departments regardless of how much revenue these streams draw. It is this collective reluctance to move with the times that is one of the most pressing obstacles to greater industry innovation.

King's direct writing style is clearly aimed at business-minded financial services professionals, rather than technical ones. This straightforwardness makes the book accessible, but it may disappoint readers seeking in-depth analysis of the tools and vendors in question. At times, the author's desire to elucidate leads him into some serious waffle. A more ruthless editor might have helped to bring the page count down below its rather excessive 400 pages.

King's overall argument is that the credit crunch and ensuing recession have intensified the need for innovation in the financial services sector. This innovation is required not only to maximize the value that can be derived from customers, he says, but also to regain their trust.

He acknowledges though that even after the disastrous events of 2008, not every banking organization is ready to change. "Let us be clear," King writes in the preface to Bank 2.0. "This book is not for traditional bankers who want to stick to the status quo."

SST FAMILY GROWS

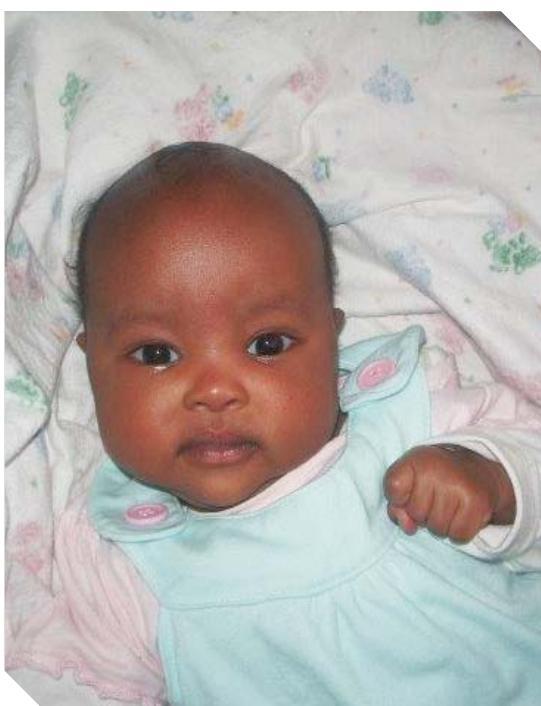
## NEW ARRIVALS



Fred Olocho's Family



Kenny Kinako's Family



Rose Turere's Family



Phyllis Kabeu's Family

## PEOPLE



BA TEAM BUILDING VILLAGE MARKET



CONNECTED KENYA | LEISURE LODGE MOMBASA



ELECTRONICS AND ICT TALK | NAIROBI SAFARI CLUB

ETHIOPIA BANK OF ABYSSINIA SIGNOFF



MAY BIRTHDAY

QMATIC TRAINING



TANZANIA DEVELOPING LOCAL TALENT TALK

WELLNESS TEAM



LEWA TEAM SOFACHUI



MARKETING STUDENTS ASSOCIATION DINNER | INTERCONTINENTAL



REGINA KARANI AND MARTIN NDUNGU'S FAREWELL PARTY | GALILEO



YPO BREAKFAST SANKARA



TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS:

EXECUTIVE PROFILE  
**GILBERT ARUM**  
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

**What do you do at Seven Seas?**

I am responsible for the Operations team. With 24 years of field experience, I bring with me a load of intangible assets that I have created and amassed through time.

**What was your first career?**

I started out as an ecologist working on the development of Kenya's indigenous plant resources.

**What has shaped your life to what you are today?**

Travelling the world has changed my outlook. I have learnt that for any single issue, there can be very many perspectives. It is therefore important that we always remain open-minded. That way we can learn, adapt and manage no matter the odds.

**Describe Kenyans take in the information age.**

I am so amazed. Mostly, I thank electronic mail; it brought new dimensions of usefulness to the Personal Computer. Now with the smartphone, this utilitarian value has further been extended. With Facebook, not only do mature people, even kiddos have their account on one of the amazing communicating and social networking tool. The world is being taken over by a new and public culture. Nothing is private anymore. Want to know what I ate last night? Check out my wall on Facebook!

**How do you think the Government's vision 2030 will affect your industry?**

There is a lot to say. Most importantly though, it signals the beginning of an era where foresight becomes important in the development of our nation. All Kenyans can now wake up every day, focused on a single national vision. This new thinking ought

to inform our politics and policy. It is not whether it is perfect; it is that we all remain focused. With Government as the largest customer for our industry, business growth can then be predictable and sustainable as we achieve the milestones within the set target periods.

**Social Media. In what ways do you see it affecting business?**

The first lessons can be drawn from the market leaders of yesteryears and how their fate was sealed by disruptive technologies.

Secondly, business IT applications shall have to mirror social software as organizations look to improve employee collaboration and harness the community feedback of customers. The added value for businesses shall be to be able to collect low cost feedback in a way that reflects collective attitudes. Further, Chief Information Officers (CIOs) will have to think beyond the constraints of conventional data centers, business continuity plans. Instead, they, in order to survive, will need to identify technologies that might be in widespread use within a few years from now.

**China is poised to be the largest trading entity in the world. How do you think African businesses ought to prepare?**

Africa is the last frontier. As individuals, we must champion



**"Practicing self-discipline and persistence to stick with the course one sets to attain goals, is the single most important factor in determining whether they will be achieved,"**

this last frontier and make it the place to be. African businesses must quickly exploit their presence and expand to cover the entire landscape. There is no reason to wait and be dominated at home.

#### **Are you concerned about the Food Crisis?**

Definitely! And with the fuel prices rocketing, it is a double hit. We all need to be concerned. It will not get better. It is estimated that 10 million Kenyans do not have enough to eat. Attention is rightly drawn to the drought stricken parts of Kenya while there are parts of the country receiving higher than average rainfall yet there is no effort to increase food production in those parts. This is the real tragedy!

#### **What do you do for entertainment?**

I have a very simple philosophy: Work Hard, Play Hard. Recently, and with age and hindsight, I have modified it to Work Smart and Play Smart. Because we spend so much time working it is only natural that we should find an equally demanding form of release that we can fit into the little

time we have left for ourselves. The problem with working hard is, it is a surefire way to burn out and the problem with playing hard is... it is also a surefire way to burn out. I thoroughly enjoy off-road driving. With our roads in the state they are in, and the considerable distances I regularly have to travel, it would be too frustrating otherwise. I am lucky too that not only does my family enjoy, but also that our country has plenty of places to go to.

#### **What are your pet peeves?**

I have two pet peeves First: Kenyan roads are full of awful drivers. Second: Government

spending on AIDS and related awareness programmes. But the real menace is Acquired Inefficient Driving Styles. This is the real AIDS. We are losing too many people to this undocumented form of AIDS. Then, there are the tele-spammers. Forget the email. I hate the guy who jumps on the phone while making it clear that they are doing their part and have explored other avenues before asking for my help. It is amazing how many questions I get asked when the answers could be Googled in 20 seconds flat.

#### **How does success look and feel like to you?**

I set firm goals in my mind and I always know where I am going and what I plan to achieve. I have always set goals and believe this is the cornerstone of my accomplishments. I feel that the first step to success begins with having a personal vision statement. This then acts as a guiding beacon, assisting one to navigate the rough and narrow path that is life. Practicing self-discipline and persistence to stick with the course one sets to attain goals, is the single most important factor in determining whether they will be achieved. Self-discipline to stick with the direction one has set, or to purposefully change it, allows one to persist every day on the journey. Note that purposefully changing one's course is perfectly okay. Drifting away is not. This for me is success - when you are able to stay the course you have set for yourself.

#### **How do you feel your vast experience helps you today?**

Experience is only useful if it can help shape the future. Anything else is irrelevant. It should never matter what you have done, who you have been or where you have been. What is important is what you are going to do tomorrow. How will you contribute to the future? This means that all that you need to survive in the future is the ability to learn new things. See how uneducated people are using Mpesa? What education does one require to use Mpesa? Look at Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, or Larry Ellison, does it matter they never graduated from college? In fact does one really need to go to school to succeed?

END



TRANSFORMATIONAL CAREERS:

## STAFF PROFILE

# DENNIS CHEGE

TEAM LEADER, BUSINESS APPLICATIONS, SST

### Who is Dennis Chege?

I am 29 years old and a graduate of the University of Nairobi. I am married to Rose Njeri and together we are the proud parents of three year old Joy Wangari. You will find me playing soccer on Sunday afternoons and attending salsa classes on Wednesday evenings. I am also a good table-tennis player, chess player and basketballer. I enjoy initiatives geared towards assisting the community and I have represented SST in the last editions of Standard Chartered and Safaricom Lewa Marathons.

### What is your typical day like?

My day begins at 6 a.m. with a routine light breakfast, usually a fruit or a glass of juice. I take a short drive to the customer site and depending on traffic this can take anything between 10 to 30 minutes. Occasionally I will connect to the customer systems remotely for a quick system health check before leaving for the office. I always start by reviewing tasks that I have carried over from the previous day and schedule according to order of urgency. I use a commercial task management tool for this. I strive to have looked at all my emails and planned my day by 9.00 a.m. though this doesn't always work out. My day is composed of several tasks which revolve around ensuring that all Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) services are up and running, closing incidents and assisting users to resolve system related problems. I also hold meetings with the client and meet my team regularly to offer guidance and ensure our goals are aligned. My day usually ends around about 8 pm with a log of my timesheets on Clarizen. Occasionally I get involved in late-night deployments where the tasks involve a system outage.

### Describe your journey in SST - your first job to the current one

I joined SST back in August 2005 as an intern in the then Networks team. At the time the senior engineers were setting up the campus network at the old Safaricom house. This was a new challenge as my previous job was in software development. The implementation team was happy for me to tag along and unpack the switches and routers if not perform actual configuration. With time I developed a keen interest in enterprise networks and

studied for CCNA certification under close mentorship from the senior engineers. By the end of the year I had passed the exam and was taking more responsibility when onsite at Safaricom and University of Nairobi where we had a similar deployment.

In early 2006, the company made a decision to expand our service offering by venturing in to the server and storage consolidation arena. I seized this opportunity and stepped up a ladder from connectivity issues to worrying about computing power. I attended training workshops in IBM South Africa and became one of the product champions for IBM storage and software. I was involved in a couple of eye-opening project implementations before I got involved in a big managed services project for Uganda Revenue Authority. Having been involved in the pre-sales, I was well positioned to take up the role of technical project manager. I therefore crossed borders to Kampala and spent the better part of 2007 there managing and at the same time implementing what was our biggest project at the time. This project was ultimately a huge success due to team effort. On a personal note this was a very fulfilling project for me having been involved in the project end-to-end from pre-sales, tendering where we survived a very rigorous bidding process managed by UK Department for International Development (DFID) to implementation and production support.

Up until now SST had established itself as a dominant player in the infrastructure arena. The one piece missing in the technology solutions jig-saw was a strong software and applications delivery team. While I was in Kampala there was a parallel pre-sales effort that was ongoing in partnership with a Portuguese company called CelFocus to deliver a CRM system for Safaricom. I came back to Kenya just when the SST/CelFocus consortium had been awarded the contract to implement the CRM. I had been the business applications champion in the company and naturally I



became the team leader for the SST team that was involved in this implementation. The development work was being done offshore in Lisbon Portugal and this was a great opportunity for the team to travel and learn from the vastly experienced CelFocus team while at the same time enjoying the ample pleasures that Europe has to offer. Since 2008 I have been the Team Leader for the Business Applications team, now the single largest SBU in the organization. The plan for this year and beyond is to take up more business development roles as I continue to mentor the younger engineers and my peers in BA.

**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 these years?**

What has kept me at SST all this time is the massive opportunities for growth that I have had since I first joined. I can look back every quarter of every year I have been here and see that I am definitely growing professionally as well as on a personal level. Ours is a very dynamic industry

but I can confidently say that I would not be where I am today if I had not made the decision to stay in SST and pay back the investment that the company has made in me.

**What were some of the challenges you faced generally as a company especially in the initial stages as it was starting?**

One challenge that comes to mind was lack of processes. At the time I joined we were still a small outfit and it was easy for everyone to do their job without elaborate processes and procedures. This challenge became more apparent as the company continued to grow and the management has taken much needed steps to ensure we have laid down documented processes and procedures.

**What has changed in the way the company operates?**

There is more structure to support the growth.



**What can you say have been your most enjoyable moments over the years in SST?**

To mention just but a few:

- My first ever trip overseas to Johannesburg South Africa 2006
- Winning and subsequently being involved in the URA project implementation 2007
- The much awaited arrival of my daughter Joy - October 2008
- My trip to the Las Vegas for TIBCO conference, including trips to The Hoover Dam, the immense Colorado River, and the Grand Canyon Tour May 2010
- European Champions League Game, SC Braga vs Arsenal FC November 2010

**How do you see SST in the coming years?**

The growth we have undergone since I joined the company has been phenomenal. Back in 2006 when I first joined we were a relatively small outfit dealing predominantly in infrastructure projects. Since then I have seen the company evolve and diversify our service offerings to emerge as a dominant player in the applications and managed services space. The number and size of the clientele has grown even more. And judging from this trend, the future looks very bright indeed. The icing on the cake will be going public in 2013.

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

There is a stereotype that local IT specialists have to overcome almost always when we go to customer sites. Every time a local person shows up as a consultant we don't always get due credibility until we actually deliver; it is almost as if you are expected to fail until you prove otherwise. Companies such as SST invest a lot to upskill local talent and companies need to have confidence in the talent available locally just as they do with expatriates.

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

The move from a purely infrastructure outfit to a services-oriented company was timely and much needed, both from a corporate strategy perspective and for our customers. There has been a significant change in the nature and expectations of customers where there is more emphasis on business requirements being fulfilled and less importance on the actual technology products deployed to meet those requirements.

**What would be your advice to those joining SST?**

Most of the engineers join the company straight from campus and with little experience in project implementation. Sometimes new joiners may find it frustrating when they don't always get involved in projects. My advice for anyone in this situation is to be patient and not lose sight of their individual career goals and how they relate to the overall corporate goals and continue building capacity by doing pre-sales work so as to be ready to take up project opportunities as and when they arise.

END

By Carol Warugongo  
Project Manager, Operations, SST  
Email: cwarugongo@sevenseastech.com

## FEISTY FUSION ON VALENTINE'S DAY! ROCK ON!



St. Valentine's Day is celebrated worldwide by all people of all nations, cultures, races & communities and of all ages. This is a day to mark in a special and memorable fashion the love they have in their families and/or affiliations, either in a grandiose fashion or in the little and imprinted gestures of love. This tradition is held dear by all ladies young and old as tradition has it that St. Valentine wrote in the wake of his martyrdom to his lover deep & heartfelt affections to mark that day.

Before I digress further into the romantic details of the events first commemorated on the 14th February 496 AD, by martyr Pope Gelasius who refused to give up Christianity and left his loved one an affectionate note professing this love... let's fast forward to 2011 where in the Seven Seas Technologies offices, the Feisty Fusion were looking forward to the special day, dressed up and looking fabulous!!!

The day started as active as any other with the morning's agenda having first priority. We had planned it to a tee and the execution was perfect! It was a memorable moment for all those who took part to witness the blushing of the surprised recipients. Our mission to dress beautifully for the occasion was rewarded with smiles all the way! With this in place, we were all assigned a group of gentlemen to whom we were tasked to present cupcakes with initials of their names. From floor to floor we set out surprising the group of men to whom a "Feisty Fusion" offered them their specially designed cup cake. You could not but help notice the amazed smiles & sheer gratitude of our fellow male colleagues - not to mention the perfect timing just in time for morning breakfast!

The ladies in their glamorous, brightly coloured dresses outdid themselves and definitely made a few heads turn and we cannot wait for next year's Valentine's Day adventure. Living out the Seven Seas Technologies' family culture of sharing and caring for each other will enable the company to grow to even greater heights in a highly motivated and high-performance driven culture.

# COLLABORATION & VIRTUALIZATION BEYOND BORDERS



clarizen  
Work Management Solutions

OpenERP  
OPEN SOURCE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

UCM Google Apps

Google

EmpXtrack

KnowledgeTree®

palladium ACCOUNTING ZOHO Work. Online

Salesforce

aconex

SOFTWARE AS A SERVICE

facebook

POLYMITA Empowering Business Productivity

Ning™

Google

Windows Azure

opensocial

SEVENSEAS TECHNOLOGIES

PLATFORM AS A SERVICE

# MY COUNTY 2.0 (IF I WERE SENATOR)

By Richard Magu

Team Leader, Business Applications, SST

Email: rmagu@sevenseatech.com

In the new constitutional dispensation the Office of a senator has been created. Given that most of the personalities jockeying for this position are old guns in the political arena, I would look to differentiate myself from the rest of the pack and personify a reincarnation of sorts as a politician. How would I do that? I would use technology!

## Why Technology?

Kenya is at a unique place in the technological time stream, we have been the cradle of several world changing innovations, the most prominent of which is MPESA. MPESA epitomizes the ability to innovate with the aim of addressing problems of the man in the street. Given that the majority of the innovators, technologists and investors fall within the 'youth' age bracket; championing its cause shall not only ensure gainful employment among this social grouping but will also give me political 'bonga points' with a demographic that 'coincidentally' forms 80% of the electorate.

Kenya seems to be a country of early adopters; my aim shall be to make my county the epicenter of these trend setters with emphasis on new technology as the product or service offering. This shall attract investment by technology companies in the county. The multiplier effect this investment shall create in the county, such as infrastructure and complimentary services, will definitely have people clamoring for my re-election.

Technology has the ability to be duplicated once a use case scenario has been successfully conducted. I would provide the necessary 'lab' environment in my county for the development of these technological innovations. With my county as the incubator, innovations that make it to the national, pan African and global arena shall be branded by my county. This shall attract more innovators and with them venture capitalists and its positive impact on my county's economy. The standards of living in my county are definitely bound to improve.

I shall encourage that, as part of research and development, the innovators set up educational centers of excellence and ensure that promising students in the county get priority. In doing so I shall ensure that the sons and daughters of my county are able to forge careers in technology that they can apply and contribute to within the county. These centers shall also attract talent to the county, thus improving the standing of my county in the eye of central government.

## What Technology?

Without a network infrastructure I would not have the basic technology necessary to create an enabling environment within the county. Therefore I would ensure that local area networks were set up. I would endeavor to ensure that my county was the most

interconnected in the country with hotspots in public areas and ensuring that all new buildings are networked. I would go as far as to set up a technology complex that would serve as a hub for the provision of technology based products and services within the county. This way ISP services for internet connectivity and the necessary hardware and skills to network the county would be at hand.

With the network infrastructure in place one of my areas of focus would be mobility. With the proliferation of mobile phones and the general acceptance of mobile based applications, I would encourage the use of mobile based technology. For example all payments for administrative services shall be acceptable by MPESA, Inquiries related to county projects and provision of services shall be serviced via SMS. Other areas I would look at would be mobile health, especially in the remote or rural areas to ensure availability of drugs and health workers. What about mobile Agriculture? Yes, I would use mobility to ensure farmers are up to date with concerns such as disease outbreaks, animal health campaigns etc.

I would also focus on the usage of cloud computing to not only facilitate the optimal usage of hardware in the county but also encourage the development of applications, such as citizen portals and document processing, that would be used in the cloud by the county government. I would ensure my county made use of cloud based applications that were locally developed to spur their creation and also attract developers.

As my county becomes synonymous with state of the art technology, I would establish a fund that would be used to procure business applications for deployment within the established infrastructure. I would then offer these solutions for use by the county business community for free for a window of three years. Once the period had elapsed I would include a small fee in the county licensing for the continued use of the solution. My intention would be to spur the use of these business applications as a service and also build a talent pool that would support this solution thus enhancing the image of my county as being on the forefront of technology.

## The end game

As a final result my county shall be the de facto source for innovation and new technology that not only addresses the problems of the common man but which creates and drives an economy while at the same time creating a reusable pool of talent that can be exported to other counties.

In a nutshell, my county shall be the technological cog in the works of the Republic.

**IRE** | INTELLIGENT  
REAL ESTATE

**KNOWLEDGE**  
TRANSFER CENTRE  
transforming lives through inspired learning

**DCAI** | DATA CENTER &  
APPLICATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE

**BA** | BUSINESS  
APPLICATIONS

**SP** | SERVICE  
PROVIDER

**EN** | ENTERPRISE  
NETWORKS

**PM** | PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT

**SMCI** | SERVICE  
MANAGEMENT  
CENTRE

**TC** | TECHNOLOGY  
CONSULTING

**MSI** | MANAGED  
SERVICES

  
**knowledge.4.life**  
DISCOVER • TRANSFORM • UNLEASH

**SERVICE EXCELLENCE. DELIVERED**



**SEVEN SEAS TECHNOLOGIES** is a leading provider of Integrated business & technology solutions across Africa in the Financial, Telecom, Real Estate, Service and Government industries, in partnership with Global Technology Industry leaders and collaborative synergies with Domain and Technology centric Eco-system Partners. We deliver business value to customers through a combination of process excellence, quality frameworks and service delivery innovation. Our Core Motivation is defining Service Excellence in Technology driven business solutions.





a hand in  
tomorrow's  
industry  
leaders

### Molding talent

Knowledge for Life is a program aimed at providing free training to University Students on various Partner courses that will enable them to understand the different service and product offerings available in the market, consequently enabling them to make informed decisions on their future career choices. By leveraging our industry experience and partnerships, we seek to be an integral part in the development of talent to ensure adequacy and relevancy of skill.