**Netwookie: Connecting People and Skills in Nairobi**

We are introducing you to Netwookie, one of the newest start-up innovations coming out of Nairobi Garage.

**What is Netwookie?**

A peer-to-peer job platform for the world’s biggest labour force

At the Garage companies are constantly expanding and with it comes the need to find productive workforce. Netwookie, ranked as Kenya’s number one referral site helps you find trained and reliable professionals in proximity of your reach. Their regulated screening system and continuously reviewed delivery processes provide fast, secure and efficient recruitment services for swift business operations. The inspiration to develop an interactive platform for human resource arose when Max, scientist and founder of Netwookie, arrived in Nairobi on a UN Habitat assignment. In the interview with Nairobi Garage he explains how finding the specific work force is a constant obstacle in Kenya, “We didn’t know who to recruit. It was a real challenge to find qualified people to work with within the local community.” Misleading surveys and manual searches was a nightmare and it quickly became apparent that this was true for most projects trying to source qualified workers on site. To ease this inefficient hiring process, Max conceptualised a mobile solution.

**Services by Netwookie**

Max gave the example of a common transport service to explain their niche in Africa. Commuting in Nairobi can be a challenge because of our narrow roads, unregulated public transportation and rapid urbanization. Out of resentment or positive failure to develop innovation mobility system, many amongst the populous have experimented with a non-traditional method of transportation commonly known on the street as Boda Boda services. Traveling on a bike is not anyone’s first preference, mainly due to the safety hazards involved, however Boda Boda drivers have reinvented the scene with an energetic attitude to diversify our daily commute struggles. Many in the city have taken up a Boda Boda commute as a time saving alternative to Uber taxis. Motorcycle taxis also offer an awesome opportunity to promote the city’s urban infrastructure and local sites under a budget.

However, the happy emoji moments don’t last forever, a dreading thought of grabbing hold of a stranger and sitting at proximity to an unknown Boda Boda rider arrives. Not that the riders aren’t friendly or humble, it’s just that trust factor that rings a bell in your brain’s safety department on “*how can I put my life in the hands of a stranger.*’’ Here Netwookie can over the necessary assurance by connecting riders and drivers through their trusted network of contacts. Netwookie shows common links and quality references and recommendations you can rely on to building relationships in your day to day jobs.

**Netwookie’s Business model: Share your need; Confirm your match; and Review Job Completion**

Now let’s hypothetically say you have a need, that is to commute to and from your office on a regular basis. To get to work on time you need a Boda Boda driver to hustle traffic. This is how your arrangement with will work: First, you click search for driver on the Netwookie app. Second, based on your network of contacts, a list of recommended drivers appears. Third, you choose your preferred driver and get directly in touch with them – safe and secure with no hassle. Netwookie does not own the drivers or engage in employment agreements instead they facilitate the connection and creation of new job opportunities.

**Challenges at Netwookie**

Netwookie is a multi-national organisation, working across different time zones and developer teams. Working cohesively in different time zones and different country cultures can make it difficult to assimilate ideas on a similar plane. Redefining the relationship between co-workers will be essential in delivery of the overall product. Max’s strategy is to bring open communication and allow team members to take ownership and provide critical and constructive feedback to the whole development process. This includes motivating his employees to participate in a curious dialogue, development of critical thinking, engaging the team with a diverse and democratic management culture. Netwookie therefore reflects an environment for liberal discourse, practice and networking.

**Netwookie’s Market Share**

There is a local urgency to develop conscious companies with an ethical responsibility to advocate for communal engagement. Max explains, “Netwookie immediately received a strong interest by the community. In general, Kenyans are aspiring for more human oriented innovations. Therefore, Netwookie’s primary goal is to positively impact how we do business in Kenya, and in doing so people lives. The social benefit of Netwookie will lead to the large market share we are anticipating."

Dennis, CTO and local CEO of Netwookie, acclaims that Netwookie’s market reach is Kenya’s service sector with a greater potential than your eye can catch, “Netwookie is a big player with a big idea, which is what motivates me and the team to outdo ourselves every day. We are creating a cutting-edge platform to create job opportunities, by connecting you to skilled professionals. The difference to other solutions is how we do things. We don’t push jobs to people or dictate terms. Kenyan’s know better than anyone software how to negotiate the right job for them. Instead we create transparency and awareness where there is none right now, and help people transition from informal to formal sector and improve quality of life of Kenyans today.”

**Team Netwookie**

Max and Dennis venerate professional business etiquette combined with cool and social start-up ethics. The curious and ambitious minded Dennis, heading the team in Kenya explained how good communication has been key to their team spirit, “Max is a cool guy, we had good conversations from day one. As a result, we have grown out of work into a friendship and deep understanding of each other. Max knows when we are on the right track and when we are in trouble. His open and humble nature is reason to my success.” Team Netwookie symbolizes an organic partnership of relationships where valuing the ideal human capital by cultivating an open team culture is key to success.

**Netwookie’s Vision**

Dennis aims to take the company to IPO level in less than 5 years, growing internationally, “The product can be delivered anywhere on the planet, it just needs the right packaging and that touch of magic which our team can bring. My vision is a little crazy but don’t be surprised if one day you see Netwookie on Wall Street. But first things first, and we are taking baby steps which include a city wide launch of our product before engaging internationally.” Back to London, Max shares, “Netwookie has the power to transform Kenya into a high functioning business community already evident in the business spirit of Kenyans today. We are now focusing on our Netwookie app launch, released in the next months across all of Nairobi and are looking for the right investors to join our board of seed investors and help transform our business into a fast growing business.”

So here you have it, a great innovation working from the Garage. If you want to find out more about what our members do or join our space and work alongside them by getting a desk space, here is how..

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