

# TechSmart Business

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Nov/Dec 2013

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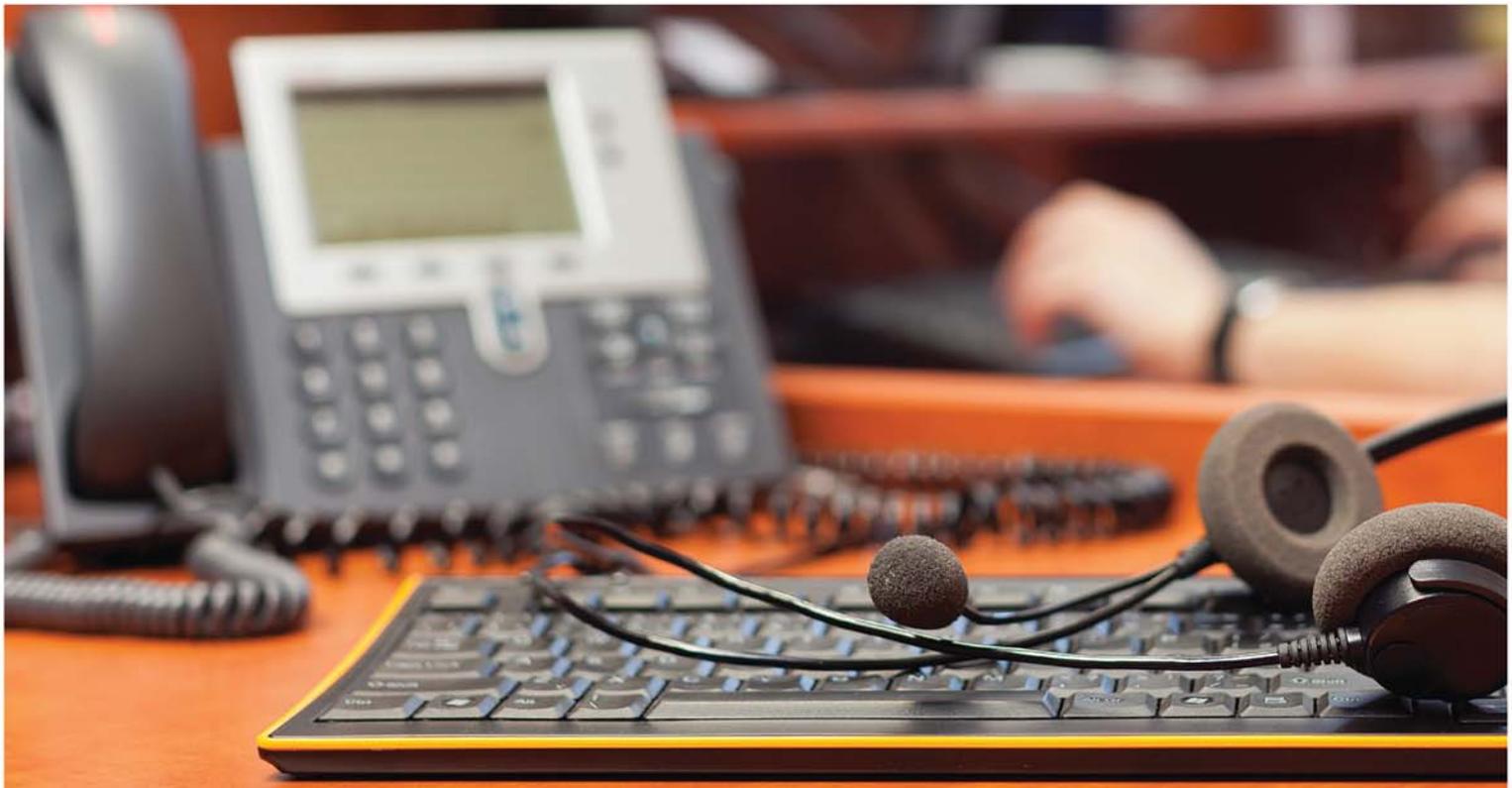
**TOP 10  
PREDICTIONS  
for IT**

**FNB**

Not as big as you think **12**

**How to:**

Future-proof your business **10**



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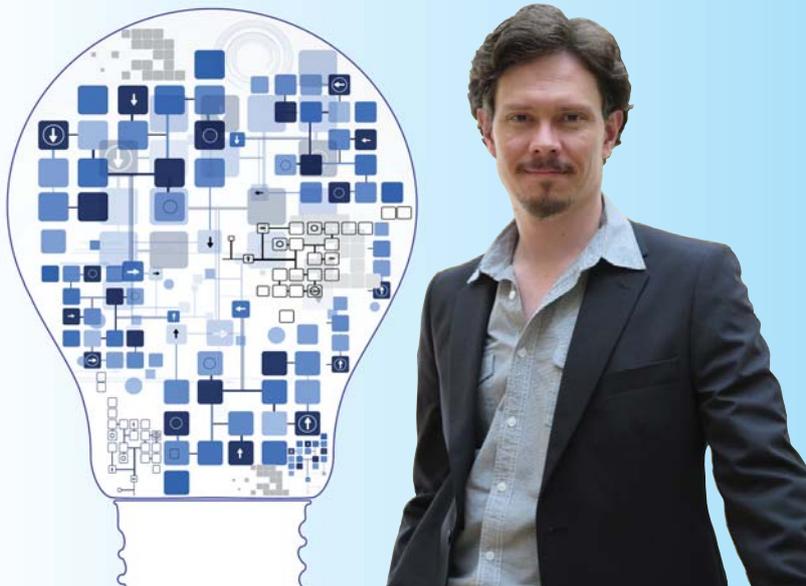
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## Change is coming

**H**ow do you future-proof your company? If it was difficult to do so in the past, it's even more so in the age of the internet. Twenty years ago we barely knew what the web or a cellphone was, now we are walking around with a smartphone in pocket and a tablet in hand.

The internet has created a rapidly changing environment where it's all too easy for a big hit to become nothing more than a footnote in a blink of an eye. Just ask MySpace. Once the darling of a new social media world, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp thought it was wise to sink \$580 million into the company in 2005. What they could not foresee coming was a certain M. Zuckerberg's "Thefacebook" he initiated just a year earlier.

So where are the good bets now? Will you put money on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Google? How about HP, Dell, Lenovo or Cisco? What about Samsung, Apple, Nokia or BlackBerry? With change being the only constant, and it happening faster than ever, one thing is for certain, companies that become complacent will soon have to face a very uncertain future.

Enjoy the issue,  
Mike (michael@techsmart.co.za)

## Features



8

### 8 Gartner

Top 10 predictions for IT



10

### 10 How to:

Future-proof your business



12

### 12 FNB

Not as big as you think



14

### 14 UC and BYOD

goes hand-in-hand

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Kanagaratnam Lambotharan,  
Chief Enterprise Business Officer,  
MTN Business

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# Contents

## Regulars

- 4 News
- 6 New appointments
- 46 Gear

## Future now

- 8 Gartner: Top 10 Predictions
- 10 Future-proof your company

## Channel

- 12 Buying electronics: The impact of FNB and beyond

## Unified Communications

- 14 BOYD and unified communication go hand-in-hand
- 18 UCaaS: Is salvation here?

## Cellular

- 20 Concurrent Systems: Adding value to mobile services

## Hardware

- 22 Acer unveils commercial market strategy
- 26 Western Digital talks tough in Turkey
- 28 The changing face of IT
- 30 Dell: Challenges and changes to IT
- 32 HP: New products

## Networking

- 34 Getting Ellis Park connected

## Mobility

- 35 BlackBerry cybersecurity

## Cloud

- 38 Opinion: The dark side of cloud

## Business

- 39 IT challenges and opportunities

## Online

- 40 Echo-Social social media monitoring

## Money matters

- 41 Bitcoin and the future

## Training

- 42 E-learning makes an easy alternative

## Cars

- 44 BMW Active-Hybrid 7
- 45 Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG

## Corporate social investment

- 48 How to build a nation

## Microsoft unveils online hub for SMEs

Microsoft's chief operating officer Kevin Turner (pictured) unveiled an online hub that will give South African small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) access to a range of free products and services from Microsoft and other partners. The hub, southafrica.biz4afrika.com, is aimed at aggregating both IT and non-IT resources available to local SMEs.

The company explained that the baseline services offered are free and highly relevant for South African SMEs looking to bring their business online and improve their general competitiveness.

The launch offer will include a free .co.za domain, a free website, as well as free email and collaboration tools. The initiative is a collaboration between Microsoft, mobile operator Vodacom, the National Small Business Chamber (NSBC) and the Small Business Development Agency (SEDA).



## KPMG survey indicates greater market disruption ahead



According to the Global Technology Innovation survey, businesses can expect greater disruption in both consumer and business markets in the next three years. This is due to cloud and mobile continuing to gain momentum as disruptive technologies, cites a report by audit, tax and advisory firm KPMG. Furthermore, biometrics and data and analytics (Big Data) technologies are also expected to spawn some breakthroughs of their own. The results came from KPMG's survey of 811 technology business leaders globally in various technology and investment firms.

"Continuing developments in Cloud and Mobile, and the interplay of these technologies, is enabling new business models that take advantage of economies of scale, provide virtual access to supply chains and allow physical products to operate in the Cloud," explained Gary Matuszak, global chair, KPMG's Technology, Media and Telecommunications practice. "At the same time, the ongoing emergence of other technologies such as biometrics and artificial intelligence prompts innovation opportunities in the next three to four years that we cannot imagine today," he added.

## HP unveils another industry first



HP recently unveiled the industry's first enterprise-class software-defined networking (SDN) open ecosystem with the HP SDN Developer Kit (SDK) and the HP SDN App Store. These are aimed at creating new business opportunities for partners, while providing a simple way for customers to purchase and deploy network services.

The company explained that legacy network rollout typically requires months of extensive customisation, delaying potential application deployment. It pointed out that while SDN promises to automate network operations, closed and proprietary SDN technologies prevent interoperability. Thus, it believes an open SDN ecosystem can unlock innovation as well as enable collaboration.

To this end, the HP SDN Developer Kit provides developers the tools to create, test and validate SDN applications, leveraging HP's SDN infrastructure and full complement of support services. The HP SDN App Store meanwhile, enables customers to browse, search, purchase and directly download SDN applications onto their Virtual Application Networks SDN controller. This in turn creates a new business model for how network services are purchased and implemented.

## The winds of change continue to blow through Waterloo

BlackBerry has backed out of its takeover deal with Fairfax Financial Holdings that would have seen the Canadian company being acquired for around \$4.7 billion. Instead, the firm has entered into an agreement with Fairfax and other institutional investors who will collectively invest \$1 billion in BlackBerry.

In the aftermath of this deal the company's CEO, Thorsten Heins (pictured), is stepping down and resigning from the Board of Directors (BoD). John S. Chen will serve as interim CEO until such time as a new CEO for the company can be appointed. Chen has also been appointed as the executive chair of BlackBerry's BoD. Chen started his career as a design engineer with information technology company Unisys and has also previously served as the chairman and CEO of enterprise software and services company Sybase. He is currently a director of Wells Fargo & Company as well as The Walt Disney Company.



## BT launches HD business collaboration services

BT is looking to transform the quality of business conversations in order to improve the way people work together within and between large organisations. To achieve this, the company has launched a series of new services that include HD Voice, which changes the quality of phone audio to allow for quicker and better communication. This service will be available for free to all existing as well as new BT One customers.

BT stated that its collaboration portfolio enables its users to gradually move their communications infrastructure from the typically complex mix of ageing analogue and digital technologies, to a single unified platform. This transformation can be achieved at a pace selected by the customer and allows end-users to collaborate from and to any mobile or desktop device by way of Wi-Fi, cellular or fixed line network services. Communication and collaboration channels can also be utilised regardless of whether the device employed is a corporate unit or managed under a company's Bring Your Own Device policies.



## Facebook and Cisco partner up to promote brands

Cisco is currently piloting the Cisco Connected Mobile Experience (CMX) with Facebook Wi-Fi with some of the world's most popular retailers, hotels and other public gathering locations. This solution provides a quick and simple way for consumers to access Wi-Fi by checking in on Facebook, and also gives companies more opportunities to connect with their customers. CMX for Facebook Wi-Fi further offers businesses a way to access some additional likes for their Facebook page and check-ins, helping to boost the demographic data they have on their customers.

Besides CMX with Facebook Wi-Fi, Cisco also revealed the expansion of its Unified Access product portfolio, courtesy of the introduction of the Catalyst 3650 access switch. This switch has been designed to accelerate the convergence of wired as well as wireless networks for managing next-generation mobile devices within high user density network environments. **TSB**

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## New GM for MWEB Business

MWEB has announced the appointment of Debbie Pretorius as its new general manager of MWEB Business. Pretorius has worked in the internet service provider (ISP) industry for the past 15 years, with her most recent role being head of MWEB Business' operational activities. In this capacity, she was responsible for customer support, engineering, technical services, project management, service level management, and operational support services. According to MWEB CEO, Derek Hershaw, Pretorius will be leading the company into a new era of development.



**Debbie Pretorius**

General Manager, MWEB Business

## Westcon-Comztek receives new services director

Westcon-Comztek has announced the appointment of Hanle Carver as its new services director.

Carver is not new to distribution, having previously worked as the business development manager for the company back when it was just Comztek. Prior to her role as business development manager for services at Comztek, Carver was employed in the distributor's retail division. She was in charge of the Incredible Connection account and also served a tenure of more than ten years at chemical and pharmaceutical company Bayer.



**Hanle Carver**

Services Director, Westcon-Comztek

## VMware appoints regional head of Sub-Saharan Africa

Virtualisation and cloud infrastructure provider VMware has announced that Ravi Bhat has been appointed as regional director for Sub-Saharan Africa. Bhat will be based in the company's Johannesburg office and is responsible for heading up the regional office in South Africa, as well as managing the company's expansion into the WECA (West East Central Africa) region. Prior to joining VMware, Bhat spent several years with IBM, most recently in the capacity of director of IBM's Software business in South Africa.



**Ravi Bhat**

Regional Director  
Sub-Saharan Africa

## New VP appointment for Acer Middle East and Africa

Acer Middle East and Africa has revealed that David Drummond has been appointed as its new VP for this region. Drummond will be responsible for the Middle East and Africa countries' operational excellence and business management. He recently rejoined Acer, assuming the role of country manager for Acer Southern Africa and brings in-depth leadership skills from the sales arena, specific expertise in relation to business interaction within the



**David Drummond**

VP, Acer Middle East  
and Africa

region, as well as a wealth of customer relationships to his new role. Besides taking on the mantle of VP for the Middle East and Africa region, Drummond will also continue to act as country manager for Acer Southern Africa. **TSB**

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**BlackBerry**

# Gartner: 10 PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Gartner has revealed its top 10 predictions for IT organisations for 2014 and beyond. It makes for a compelling, and sometimes frightening, read.

**F**or a glimpse of what's in store on the technological front, it's good to listen to what industry analyst Gartner is predicting for 2014 and beyond. Released at its recent Orlando Symposium/ITxpo 2013, Gartner's top predictions combine several disruptive topics, including Digital Industrial Revolution, Digital Business, Smart Machines and the Internet of Things, which will impact well beyond just the IT industry arena.

Gartner's top 10 predictions are broken out into four categories:

## 1. Digital Industrial Revolution

Gartner believes IT has become the catalyst for the next phase of innovation in personal and competitive business ecosystems. One place where this is evident is in the beginnings of a Digital Industrial Revolution that threatens to reshape how physical goods are created using 3D printing.

- **By 2018, 3D printing will result in the loss of at least \$100 billion per year in IP globally.**

The plummeting costs of 3D printers, scanners and 3D modelling technology, combined with improving capabilities, makes the technology for IP theft more accessible to would-be criminals. By 2015, at least one major western manufacturer will claim to have had intellectual property (IP) stolen for a mainstream product by thieves using 3D printers.

- **By 2016, 3D printing of tissues and organs will cause a global debate.**  
Bioprinting is the medical application of 3D printers to produce living tissue and organs. The day when 3D bioprinted human organs are readily available is drawing closer. The emergence of 3D bioprinting facilities with the ability to print human organs can leave people wondering what the effect this will have on society.

## 2. Digital Business

Digital business refers to business created using digital

assets and/or capabilities, involving digital products, services and/or customer experiences, and/or conducted through digital channels and communities.

- **By 2017, more than half of consumer goods manufacturers will receive 75% of their consumer innovation and R&D capabilities from crowdsourced solutions.**

Engineers, scientists, IT professionals and marketers at consumer goods companies are engaging crowds much more aggressively and with increasing frequency using digital channels to reach a larger and more anonymous pool of intellect and opinion. Gartner sees a massive shift toward applications of crowdsourcing, enabled by technology, such as: advertising, online communities, scientific problem solving, internal new product ideas, and consumer-created products.

- **By 2020, the labour reduction effect of digitisation will cause social unrest.**

Gartner believes digitisation is reducing labour content of services and products in an unprecedented way, thus fundamentally changing the way remuneration is allocated across labour and capital. Long term, this makes it impossible for increasingly large groups to participate in the traditional economic system — even at lower prices — leading them to look for alternatives such as a bartering-based (sub)society, urging a return to protectionism or resurrecting initiatives like Occupy Wall Street, but on a much larger scale.

- **By 2017, 80% of consumers will collect, track and barter their personal data for cost savings, convenience and customisation.**  
The escalation of consumer awareness of data collection

**Gartner**  
SYMPOSIUM ITXPO® 2013



Daryl Plummer, Managing Vice President, Gartner: "The savvy CIO will get his or her CEO to recognise the change being brought about by disruptive shifts is coming at an accelerated pace and at a global level of impact."

practices has set the stage for offering consumers more control over the disposition of personal data — collected both online and offline. As increasing demand and scarcity drives up the value of such data, incentives grow to entice consumers to share it voluntarily.

- **By 2020, businesses and governments will fail to protect 75% of sensitive data, and declassify and grant broad/public access to it.**

The amount of data stored and used by businesses and governments is growing exponentially, such that any attempt to protect it all is unrealistic. Instead of facing an unfathomable task of protecting all data, organisations and governments will focus on protecting only a small part of it, but protecting it well.

### 3. Smart Machines

The emergence of smart machines adds opportunity and fear as "cognisant and cognitive systems," and can enhance processes and decision making, but could also remove the need for humans in the process and decision effort. CIOs will see this as a means of delivering greater efficiency, but will have to balance between the active human workforce and the cold efficiency of machines that can learn.

- **By 2024, at least 10% of activities potentially injurious to human life will require mandatory use of a nonoverrideable "smart system".**

The increasing deployment of "smart systems" capable of automatically responding to external events is increasing all the time, but there remains a deep-seated resistance to eliminating the option for human intervention. The willingness of the general population to accept initial widespread deployment and increasing removal of manual override options is the issue.

- **By 2020, a majority of knowledge worker career paths will be disrupted by smart machines in both positive and negative ways.**

Gartner forecasts that smart machines will upend a majority of knowledge workers' career paths by 2020. Smart machines exploit machine learning and deep-learning algorithms. They behave autonomously, adapting to their environment, and IT professionals need to recognise that smart machines can create substantial competitive advantages, as well as entirely new businesses.

- **By 2017, 10% of computers will be learning rather than processing.**

Deep learning methods, based on deep neural networks, are currently being applied in speech recognition systems as well as some object recognition applications. Gartner believes quality of life improves when society is able to derive useful information from the copious amounts of unstructured data collecting in the internet.

### 4. Internet of Things

The Internet of Things cements the connection between machines, people and business interactions in the modern era. With the advent of massively connected devices, businesses, governments and people now have access to more information about themselves and their surroundings than they can actually act on.

- **By 2020, consumer data collected from wearable devices will drive 5% of sales from the Global 1000.**

Wearable computing, or wearables, is quickly moving into mainstream society, led by the growing, multibillion dollar health and fitness markets. Within five years, consumer wearables will become more sophisticated, capturing what the user sees, hears or even feels through biorhythmic responses. **TSB**

# FUTURE-PROOF!

## The Flash Forward to Business Success

**Is it possible to anticipate the future thereby helping your business not only survive but also flourish? Chris Anderson looks into different ways to do this.**

**B**usiness future-proofing entail various quantifiable and theoretical methods that attempt to forecast future developments in corporate and consumer behaviour. It includes changes in marketing trends and platforms, and product/service strategies that can aid continuing and sustainable financial success.

While future-proofing has played an intrinsic role in the successes of the information technology industry over the last thirty years, the methods and theories are now being successfully applied to conventional business enterprises.

The reason why future-proofing has become one of the most paramount business considerations, is the growing importance for businesses, no matter what their size or reach, to curtail adverse consequences of an ever changing and unpredictable world, and to be able to confidently seize opportunities that this global dynamism can offer. While essentially a kind of business survival tactic, the concept has fast becoming an indispensable building block of modern industrial evolution.

### Five Elemental Organisational Skills for Business Future-Proofing

#### 1 Finding the balance between Keeping the Lead and Taking the Leap

Businesses need to avoid

what Harvard professor Clayton Christensen referred to as the Innovator's Dilemma. This is something a post-Steve Jobs Apple has regressed into, with little new innovation on existing products and services in an effort to maintain a loyal but fussy client base and keep stakeholders comfortable. While maintaining a status quo can be seen as safe, it can present an opportunity for competitors to gain the upper hand.

#### 2 Invest in Trust

Building customer confidence and instilling trust in the client/company relationship is one of the great differentiators of modern economics. Steve Jobs was one of the first of a new generation of business thinkers – along with Amazon's Jeff Bezos and the Google collective - to regard the focus on maximising shareholder value above customer needs as an inherently flawed and blinkered idea.

While Apple may have since lost this philosophy, Amazon's lower margins and willingness to sometimes concede profit in lieu of keeping the customer experience a happy one, still enable a steady turnover, thanks to the resultant return business.

#### 3 Get comfortable with Big Data

An investment in not only large data storage, but also the ability to access, manage and process the information is vital. Predictive analysis, understanding the algorithms of a vast amount of information and using effective filtering methods to dissect this information offers a company the upper hand in anticipating the clients' needs and wants.

Google's intense focus on the science of information, along with a sound understanding of consumer trends, have enabled them to not only identify customer needs, but also constructively add value to these needs. Information, now as much as it will be in the future, is king.

#### 4 Technology: the Great Enabler

While the role of technology in our daily lives is ubiquitous, simply understanding the tech is not enough. In order to have a reasonable online presence, companies need to embrace





the actual culture of technology, especially that of social media and the use of authentic interaction.

Traditional marketing is based on the principal of 'one message to many receivers'. New non-traditional methods, such as online social media, use a 'many to many' model, an interactive experience with new and existing client bases. Companies should create an authentic and relevant identity, in order to constantly engage with the public without losing their interest.

### 5 Agility and Flexibility

Diversification and experimentation are some of the most prominent qualities of today's global businesses. Companies like Google actively embrace transdisciplinarity, investing and developing a familiarity in a broader range of disciplines, products and services. This is the open secret to organisational survival. Companies that practise this have become untouchable and immovable brands.

#### But what about training?

Businesses should view the cultivation of versatility in its workforce as one of the more crucial features for commercial viability and longevity. An investment in the training of the workforce in fundamentals of diverse atypical thinking and focused future-planning means employees can be more easily adaptable to sudden changes, particularly valuable when gaining the commercial upper-hand at times of more significant, broader changes throughout an entire industry.

Developing and nurturing a variety of talents to suit the needs of a business, over and above just looking at the formal qualifications and on-the-job experience of employees, helps create an ever-evolving and enthusiastic team collective, an unbridled resource of skills and strong work ethic.

Google is one example of how workplace synergy translates into unparalleled success. Not only is Google an abundantly interactive and encouraging place to work, its environmental influence has enabled the company to make a success of its primary product, as well as countless other avenues of innovation and ideas that would normally, in a more conventional, more traditional work environment, never been realised.

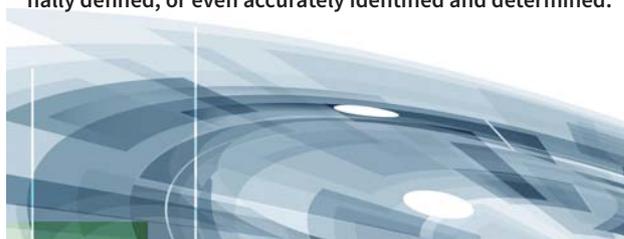
### The Proof is in the Future

As the seemingly endless US economic crisis continues to pound against the ebbs and flows of uncertainty during 2012/13, its impact on business survival, and specifically the role of business future-proofing, becomes even more challenging, but no less urgent. At every level of business, right across the world, thinking clearly and acting constructively about the future must remain a vital navigational tool for the survival of every enterprise. **TSB**

#### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FUTURE

**During and between two World Wars, traditional Western industrial culture gravitated away from three decades of conventional mass production philosophies, as revolutionised by Henry Ford, towards a more progressive approach. Due to wartime uncertainty the approaches of both the industrial-military complex and smaller private business shifted towards production techniques that were more adaptive and forward-thinking, futuristic in a sense.**

**Using shorter production cycles, combining each stage of the production process in a non-linear style, while dissecting one large absolute vision into smaller, more viable steps that could be continually developed and improved by self-organised and cross-functional specialist teams, this new radical, more agile, approach resulted in quicker product roll-outs, faster feedback from consumers and the ability to innovate faster and more efficiently. The concept later developed into the industrial and consumerism boom of the 1950s, but only reached the zenith of its post-modern application during the 1980s genesis of the modern computing age, when the abilities, products and services of burgeoning technology could not be easily or conventionally defined, or even accurately identified and determined.**



# BUYING ELECTRONICS

## The impact of FNB and beyond



**First National Bank (FNB) is expanding the consumer electronics market rather than taking market share from existing players. Lance Harris delves deeper.**

**A**n aggressive strategy from FNB to put smart devices in its customers' hands has positioned the bank as one of the country's most innovative financial services companies. Yet it appears that FNB's foray into the IT and telecoms reseller market does not yet pose a significant threat to the country's electronics retailers, IT Value Added Resellers (VARs) or cellular dealerships.

FNB celebrated the second anniversary of its smart device offer in October this year. In a blog post to commemorate this milestone, FNB Core Banking Marketing Lead, Ilse Smuts, says that the bank has sold more than 200 000 smart devices from brands such as Apple, Samsung, Acer, and BlackBerry during this time. "For many months sales exceeded 10 000 devices per month and if a leading brand released a new device, we had our hands full," writes Smuts.

### Straying from the path

The rapid uptake of the smart device offer has exceeded FNB's expectations, turning it into a fairly significant player in the IT channel in the process. But FNB's move into the IT channel has not been without controversy, with some critics charging that the bank is straying from its core business of providing financial services. "When we obtained a telecoms license and when we were the first bank to offer iPads and smartphones, we were criticised and asked if FNB was a bank, a gadget retailer or a Telco service provider," outgoing CEO, Michael Jordaan said in a speech prepared for his acceptance of the Sunday Times Business Leader 2013 Award. "The truth is, we were seeing a new way for people to bank."

In a nutshell, FNB's strategy is to encourage consumers to use lower-cost digital banking rather than traditional channels such as call centres and bank branches. And if the smart device offer lures a few customers from rival banks to FNB, that's great, too. In both of those regards, the smart device offer is paying off for FNB. However, a narrow focus on banking customers means that FNB is unlikely to unseat any of the country's dominant IT resellers.

### Mythmaking

Arthur Goldstuck, the CEO of market research firm World Wide Worx, says that FNB's impact on the smart device market is not as profound as many market observers believe it to be. The myth that FNB is the country's biggest smart device retailer comes from one outstanding quarter when it sold more Apple iPads than any other reseller. Now, there's a pervasive assumption that FNB is South Africa's biggest iPad reseller, though the feat has not been repeated, says Goldstuck. FNB is a significant reseller that is making the iPad affordable to a new audience, but it is not taking huge volumes away from more established IT retail and value-added resale channels.

**FNB is unlikely to unseat any of the country's dominant IT resellers.**

To put FNB's numbers (200 00 smart devices sold) in perspective, a study by World Wide Worx found that South Africans bought more than 1.4 million tablets between June 2010 to June 2013. When it comes to smartphones, World Wide Worx expects around 5,3 million units to be sold in South

Africa during 2013. This is all besides the ultrabook and notebook markets.

Most smartphones continue to be sold through the mobile network operators, their service providers and their dealerships, says Goldstuck. The tablet market is dominated by the Apple iStores (owned and operated by local distributor Core Group) as well as major retailers such as Incredible Connection and DionWired, he adds. "FNB should be seen as the equivalent of a major store," says Goldstuck. Its major strengths include its ability to offer discounted pricing and affordable monthly repayments to customers who might not have felt that a tablet computer, notebook or smartphones was affordable to them before.

FNB and other electronics retailers are all benefitting from a wider trend towards the consumerisation of IT in the enterprise, a force that demands IT resellers across the board start rethinking their approach to the market. Rather than dictating from the top which smartphones and tablets users may bring to work, a growing number of companies are leaving the choice up to users.

### Consumerisation eats VARs' revenues

Few companies are standardising on a particular tablet or smartphone – they're instead using mobile device management tools to manage what their end-users are bringing to work says Goldstuck. Complexity is growing all the time because of the rapid refresh cycle in the tablet and smartphone markets. This means that a growing portion of IT devices are being bought from consumer retailers, often with a company allowance, rather than through corporate VARs. Retailers must up their game to take advantage of this growing market, says Goldstuck. "The important thing is that retailers must spend more time training their staff to support customers," he adds. "You can't just hire a sales rep who reads off the spec sheet. If this doesn't change, people will be less eager to buy their devices through this route."

For corporate resellers, the trend of consumer IT devices coming into the workplace poses a major threat. Already, tablet sales are being blamed for eroding growth in the

traditional desktop and notebook PC markets. A revenue stream many resellers counted on is diminishing at an alarming rate, along with the money they used to make from supporting PC infrastructure.

### No turning back

IT consumerisation has taken root in many companies, and VARs cannot do much to turn back the clock. Their focus instead needs to shift towards selling value-added services and solutions that support consumerised IT environments to make up for the loss of PC and notebook sales to electronics stores and online retailers. For example, they should be looking at selling administration and security solutions that address the management complexities and security risks consumer devices bring into their corporate customers' networks. Other opportunities may lie in providing cloud services – software as a service, for example – to extend the value of the smart devices in the workforce. **TSB**



**Ilse Smuts**  
Core Banking  
Marketing Lead, FNB

**FNB's impact on the smart device market is not as profound as many market observers believe it to be.**



# BYOD and unified communications go hand-in-hand

Today's workspace is as often an employee-owned smartphone or tablet as it is a desktop computer. That poses new challenges for companies as they out roll unified communications applications to their workforces. Lance Harris investigates.



terms of security, manageability and integration. "Employee mobility and unified communications go hand-in-hand," says Hannes van der Merwe, Itec product manager for Mitel at Itec Distribution. As workforces become more geographically dispersed, the requirement grows for a rich, real-time communications environment that integrates voice, e-mail, unified messaging, mobility, presence, conferencing, collaboration, and applications, he adds. With their end-users spending less time at their desks and more time working remotely or at customer sites, it has become important for organisations to give them tools that allow them to collaborate easily with their co-workers, says Van der Merwe.

Companies are now able to offer a range of enterprise unified communication capabilities to their mobile end-users, with cloud solutions helping to simplify deployment. In addition to email, users can now also access video conferencing,

telepresence, instant messaging, voice conferencing, and more from their mobile devices. But with many users bringing their own tablets and smartphones to work, they now want to be able to use them for work communications and collaboration, says Van der Merwe. For example, they want to be able to make video calls from work

**T**he growing maturity of cloud-based and hosted unified communications solutions, along with a shift towards Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) mobility in the workforce, promises to spur rapid growth in the usage of unified communications among organisations of all sizes.

Industry observers say that mobility – often enabled by employee-owned smartphones and tablets – is helping to bring to life the promise unified communications holds for more seamless collaboration. But they caution that BYOD also brings with it a set of major challenges for IT administrators in

**As workforces become more geographically dispersed, the requirement grows for a rich, real-time communications environment**

## BYOD cannot be ignored in any enterprise unified communications implementation.

or their mobile devices as seamlessly as they could call a personal contact using Skype or FaceTime.

### SA enterprises embrace BYOD

Though many companies have concerns about the manageability and security of employee-owned devices, they are quickly becoming the work tools of choice for many South African workers. According to a global study commissioned this year by Dimension Data and conducted by Ovum, in emerging markets such as Brazil, China, India and South Africa, more than 70% of employees who own a smartphone or tablet report using it for work.



Gavin Hill, Technical Director: Solutions, Dimension Data South Africa



Hannes van der Merwe, Itec Product Manager for Mitel, Itec Distribution

Commenting on the findings, Gavin Hill, technical director: Solutions at Dimension Data South Africa, says: "Our research shows that more than 74% of South African employees who own smartphones and tablets bring these to work and use them for work. However, almost a third of respondents indicated they had no plans to support 'any device' BYOD at all, with almost a quarter planning no official BYOD policy." Almost one third of South African enterprises said they provide support for any employee-owned smartphones and tablets and 53% indicated support for those which have arrived in the organisation with official vetting. The implication is that BYOD cannot be ignored in any enterprise unified communications implementation.

"As more employees bring their own devices to the workplace, and use them for key tasks, enterprises are investing in systems and solutions to manage, secure and support such devices," write the authors of the Dimension Data report. "There is an opportunity for South African firms to better leverage the devices which their employees are already



## One key to success for unified communications lies in securing buy-in from end-users.



**Paulo Ferreira**

Head of Enterprise Mobility  
Samsung Electronics South Africa

### Making BYOD work for unified communications

Organisations that roll out BYOD policies as part of their unified communications strategies will need to make some investments in the technology, processes and policies needed to manage employee devices in the field. One immediate challenge is that BYOD may not deliver the upfront cost-savings or the ongoing operational expenses enterprises might hope for.

"You'll find very few companies saying, 'We have saved money through BYOD,'" says Nader Henein, security advisor at BlackBerry. "Previously companies used to be able to buy

data in bulk, but when users buy their own data, [enterprises] no longer benefit from bulk discounts."

Securing and administering devices can also be complex. "South African companies are being more flexible and allowing employees to use their own mobile devices at work," says Paulo Ferreira, head of enterprise mobility at Samsung Electronics South Africa. This has resulted in companies facing a tide of having multiple devices running a variety of operating systems in their network raising all sorts of security, management, efficiency, and integration concerns. Ferreira says that a 'bring any device' policy might not work for every enterprise. CIOs must choose whether to allow their environments to try and accommodate every mobile platform in the market or to align with those devices that are truly ready for the enterprise.

Some companies might prefer to align with manufacturers who can help them address BYOD issues around connectivity and collaboration, line of business applications, virtualisation, and providing support for productivity solutions such as unified communications .

### To the point

"The concept of BYOD is here to stay but it needs to be supported in a way that allows for consistent management of Android or other platforms, and is interoperable enough to work on all enterprise-class solutions," says Ferreira. This will allow corporate IT departments to standardise and offer pragmatic device guidelines for their end-users.

In their study, Dimension Data and Ovum recommend that the BYOD challenge should be approached as part of an overall enterprise mobility strategy. "With current mobile device and mobile application management software, extending [unified communications] applications to all mobile devices, irrespective of contract ownership, is a very viable option," says the report.

Van der Merwe adds that one key to success for unified communications lies in securing buy-in from end-users. Training and change management programmes are essential for helping end-users understand the functionality at their fingertips, but getting end-users to embrace unified communications might be easier when they can access it using the devices they use every day at work and at home. **TSB**

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# UCaaS: Is salvation here?

**While Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) promises much, is it a viable solution in South Africa? Gavin Smith takes a closer look.**

**W**hile not a new concept, unified communications (UC) is starting to come into its own. Spurred on by stable, cheap, and robust connectivity, companies are aiming to make communication management easier and more cost effective, while also leveraging the power of integration. In line with this, Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) is a model that bundles numerous communication and collaboration applications and services which are then outsourced to a specialist vendor. While this model does have its merits, is it a viable option for business in South Africa?

## Popularity expected to grow

Essentially, the 21st century workplace is filled with a diverse array of communication mediums. This includes voice, video, instant messaging, email and mobile. Unification allows the utilisation of these various technologies to be accessible from any PC, Mac, smartphone or tablet. The goal, at the end of the day, is to reduce costs and increase efficacy and productivity.

The base, it would seem, is a stable and reliable cloud from which to work. According to Bruce Dowling, managing director of Asia and South Africa at ShoreTel, cloud computing has established itself in the enterprise space and is expected to continue to gain in popularity over the next several years. "Companies find that the platform allows them to adopt new features quickly and extend an existing system to additional departments or regions. However, cloud-based UC or UCaaS is unlikely to be adopted in the same way as other cloud-based IT services by enterprises. For example, Gartner analyst, Geoff Johnson, recently cited that some 95% of Australian businesses' UC are kept on premise. Gartner believes the trend in enterprises will be towards what the analyst firm terms Hybrid Unified

Communications and Collaboration (UCC), rather than the wholesale adoption of UCaaS," he continued.

This sentiment is echoed by Andy Bull, MD at Mitel South Africa: "You cannot simply put everyone in the cloud. You look at the customer's requirements, what they are trying to do and tailor a solution to fit their needs. Whether it be on-premise, in the cloud, or a combination of the two."

## Leasing is the new owning

Ryan Steel, product development specialist at Business Connexion, delves further into the hybrid idea, noting that there are two very distinct customers within the UC sphere. "There are those that want one provider and one platform that does everything, and then there are the hybrid guys who have a voice delivery system in place but don't have the solutions available to use collaboration, video calling, messaging, presence, etc. Coupled to that, leasing is the new owning. People do not want to own their own equipment anymore, they just want to pay a monthly amount and get the desired service. People don't want to invest in physical technology anymore. Their thinking is based on the fact that they have X amount of users, a BYOD policy, and want to deliver the service onto people's devices."

## Is hybrid the answer?

Dowling notes that the hybrid model makes sense and allows enterprises to procure UCC services through several deployment models, whilst supporting the seamless service integration needed to deliver a UCC experience to users. This is done by blending traditional on-premise, public-cloud and private-cloud deployment models. Hybrid UCC allows organisations to select different procurement models for different UCC functionality. The trend at the moment seems to favour maintaining core telephony and call control on premise

while having the option to move to the cloud any UC applications deployed in the future.

While the adoption of UC in SA is more mature than hosted IP, it does seem that it is not up to the level of total immersion. "Putting UC into the cloud as a service is really the next step to hosted IP service," says Bull. "It is here, once again, that we see two types of customers. The first being someone who needs to update their voice solution because it is antiquated and they start asking what else they can do with the new technology. They then find functionality in UC that they would never have considered as part of a voice solution. Alternatively, there are people with a real business requirement who are looking for specific requirements. We are certainly at the stage now where people understand the benefits of UC, and we are in a place where we can apply solutions to their specific business requirements. It is a case of how to marry it to their business requirements and how to decide what components are required by a particular customer."

### A compelling alternative

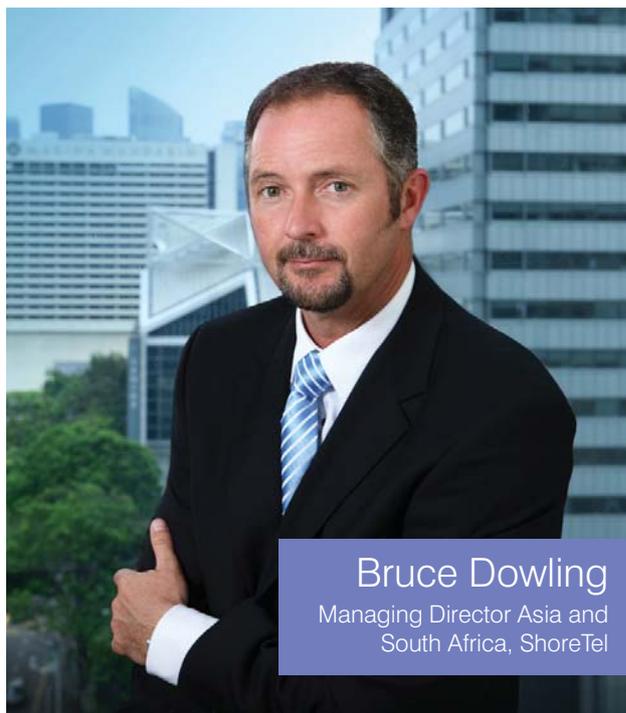
The problem arises when CIOs believe that many of the same benefits of cloud-based UC are offered by an on-premise solution, and they do not see a reason to move to the cloud for core UC functionality. Dowling outlines three factors CIOs need to consider before moving to the cloud - rapid deployment, reduced IT administrative overheads and technology obsolescence. "If an on-premise solution can demonstrate ease of deployment, management and upgrades, it becomes a compelling alternative to a cloud-based offering. At the same time, on-premise solution providers are becoming more creative with purchasing and financing options for UC buyers. Many are now offering managed UC services, providing predictable monthly costs, or consolidated telco billing, with the UC deployment financed and packaged with telecommunications services," Dowling noted.

## CIOs need to consider which model best suits their organisation's needs and unique circumstances.

Further reasons to move to UCaaS, according to Steel, must lie with the fact that there is no CAPEX required, it is generally delivered on an OPEX model. Coupled to this," says Steel, "you don't have to employ additional resources to support and run a new environment. UCaaS is a service that sits somewhere else and someone else is tasked with looking after it. This means technology changes and redundancy are not a problem either."

### Leave it to the experts

Expanding on this premise, Bull notes that it gives customers the opportunity to take advantage of solid technology without having to build or maintain it themselves. "This is the big issue



**Bruce Dowling**  
Managing Director Asia and  
South Africa, ShoreTel

at the moment. If you are a business that does not have the in-house IT resources, and you don't have either the budget or desire to buy server hardware and deploy it, then this is the solution for you. We have done all of this and all you do is pay a monthly subscription per seat and sit back and watch things happen. Conversely, there are those companies that want to divest themselves of the big server rooms and in-house IT expertise and are looking to outsource their needs. They want to reduce the infrastructure on site, and don't want to invest in big data centres, UPS's, generators, cooling plants etc."

So which one is better - cloud or on-premise UC? This, according to Dowling, is not really the right question to ask. Instead, CIOs need to consider which model best suits their organisation's needs and unique circumstances. "Today, most UC systems are on-premise deployments, especially those organisations that need to meet stringent requirements of business continuity or privacy. Entities that need to integrate voice, video, instant messaging, presence awareness or other UC capabilities into their applications may also opt for on-premise UC, which typically allows for tighter integration than hosted systems. However, cloud-based UC solutions are gaining in popularity, especially for small to medium businesses with multiple office locations - offering quick UC deployment, as well as all the benefits of cloud-provider IT services."

### To the point

For now, the hybrid model seems to be the weapon of choice. Going forward, however, Steel says that traditional voice is going to be phased out and more and more voice traffic will be turning into voice data. "Looking at it simplistically, you have a device that connects to mobile network which uses an app which, when you take a call, is routed via IP channels. You are not actually using voice minutes, you are using data." **TSB**

# Concurrent Systems: Adding value to mobile services

As a provider of mobile telecommunications network software, Concurrent Systems offers various products and solutions that caters to the diverse needs of GSM mobile network operators.



Wayne Smith, CEO, Concurrent Systems.

**F**ounded in 2005, the company has been active in

more than 30 countries throughout Africa, the Middle East, Central Europe, as well as Asia Pacific. This large operations footprint has enabled the Johannesburg-based company to fully understand the regional requirements of operators, and it has developed the mobile tools to help their customers cater to the needs of developing markets especially.

Concurrent System's two main offerings - Promotion Creation Centre and Signalling Gateway - enable mobile operators to tap new streams of revenue.

## Promotion Creation Centre

Concurrent Systems' Promotion Creation Centre (PCC) for GSM network operators allows prepaid mobile subscribers to employ USSD codes (e.g. \*145#) or SMS messages in order to subscribe to and manage the lifecycle of promotional offers as well as bundles, or to provision services such as roaming, BlackBerry and more. PCC provides the mobile network operator with a feature-rich graphical tool to help them create and manage bundles (data, voice, SMS) as well as specially discounted deals such as reduced call rates on a public holiday.

PCC enables mobile operators to themselves configure



**CONCURRENT**  
SYSTEMS

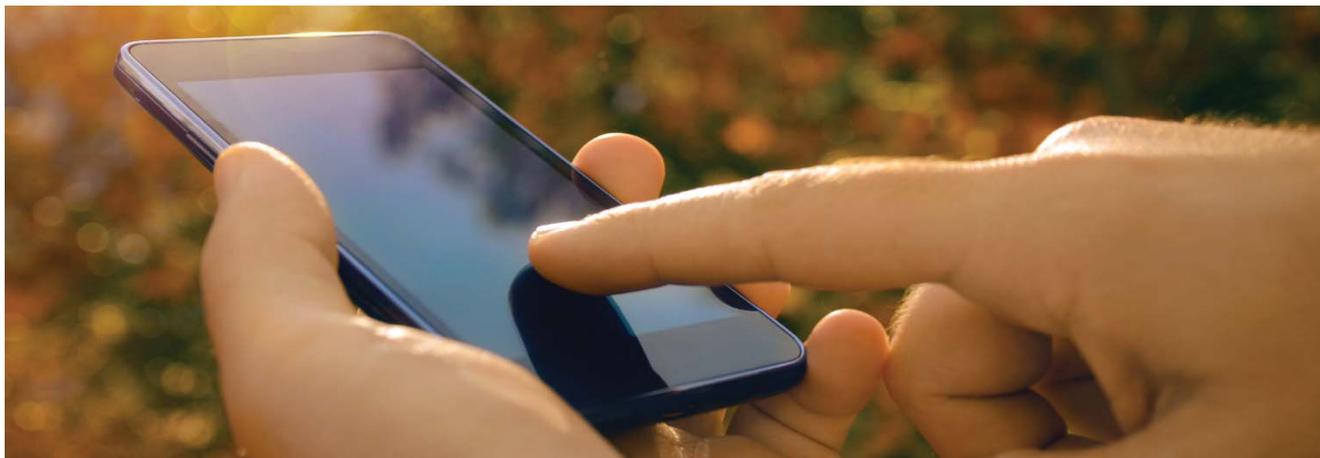
offerings like data bundles or other promotions using a graphical user interface instead of going the time consuming route of special software development to accomplish their objectives.

In order to reap all the benefits of PCC, operators need to have access to the Concurrent Systems' Signalling Gateway (SGW) to route SMS and USSD messages from PCC to subscribers.

Some of the key benefits of PCC include the generation of additional revenue for operators, the shortening of time needed to deploy new promotions, and the do-it-yourself expansion of service offerings. Furthermore, PCC also reduces the cost of customer care and increases subscriber loyalty. The latter is facilitated by empowering subscribers to take advantage of self-provision promotions as well as bundle deals.

## Signalling Gateway

Signalling Gateway (SGW) is a single solution that enables mobile operators to have richer, more engaging interactions with their subscriber base. Mobile network operators are able to employ SGW to generate new streams of revenue by launching solutions the likes of mobile banking services and



money transfer via cell phones. This can be done simply by utilising Concurrent Systems' simple-to-use application programming interface (API) toolkit.

The carrier-grade system has the capability to route subscriber and network originated USSD messages between subscribers and the USSD service applications, to route subscriber and network originated SMSs between subscribers and SMS service applications without the need for a SMSC, and it can obtain subscriber information such as location, cell ID and number portability information belonging to a subscriber in the GSM network using Any Time Interrogation. The SGW communicates with core infrastructures from all major vendors.



*Data Bundle Promotions*



*DeVilliers Malan, Product Manager, Signalling Gateway*

**Concurrent System's two main offerings - Promotion Creation Centre and Signalling Gateway - enable mobile operators to tap new streams of revenue.**

Some of the key benefits of SGW are that it lowers the cost of integrating services with the core network and the easy-to-use API simplifies the daunting SS#7 network for application developers. In addition, it generates revenue from mobile subscription-services. It further allows operators to charge companies which advertise their products and services via SMS.

For additional product information and to find out how to go about purchasing PCC or SGW, send an email to [info@concurrent.co.za](mailto:info@concurrent.co.za) or phone 011-253-3660. **TSB**

# Acer unveils commercial market strategy

At a recent event held in Amsterdam, Acer unleashed fresh strategies for the commercial market; at its invitation TechSmart was on hand to glean the company's new direction.



Jakob Olsen, Vice President, Commercial Division, Acer EMEA

**A**cer unleashed fresh strategies for the commercial market, and an invigorating new message for its channel partners in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Walter Deppeler, the senior corporate VP for Acer's commercial business global operations began by addressing the elephant in the room – namely the undeniable turmoil and transition the PC industry has faced in almost twenty years. He pointed out that there was a silver lining amongst the well-publicised dark clouds of an increased life cycle amongst the usage of PCs and notebooks. Deppeler believes that while challenges to the PC market certainly exist, these are also accompanied by opportunities and possibilities, such as addressing the burgeoning emerging markets.

## Show me the value

Additionally, it also seems as though the company is revitalising its global relevance with a strong drive into the commercial market, as Acer revealed its strategy – to create strong value on a regional basis, while serving the B2B (business-to-business) channel and efficiently addressing the needs of commercial customers, all while continuing to grow as a company.

Deppeler elaborated that moving forward, Acer planned to create value for end-users and its channel. More particularly, Acer's strategy for growth into the commercial market was based on four key points, namely innovative products; a particular focus on making it easier for partners to sell and market Acer products; with a full portfolio of service offerings; and finally, with a particular and renewed emphasis on education.

Of these, though, the products, at least to our eyes, were certainly the star of the show, as everywhere we looked, something caught our eye and beggared our attention, from new notebooks and tablets to workstations and projectors. Even as the company admitted that Windows 8 deployment had started slowly, there was nonetheless a variety of products bedecked with Microsoft's new, and sometimes controversial, operating system.

Before opening the floor to gadget hungry journalists, Jakob Olsen, the VP for the commercial division Acer EMEA, explained that consumerisation had a notable impact on its newly unveiled broad range of products. It was here that the lines between fulfilling what corporates need and its employees desired began to blur, as he noted that employees want to be able to go back and forth between their personal and work environment on a single device. Additionally, consumerisation worked the other way as well, with small and medium businesses (SMBs) seeking the same sense of design style and attractiveness that general users desire in their mobile devices.

## Broad array and Bombshells

Illustrating his point, Olsen proceeded to highlight a few of the products in particular, namely the TravelMate P645 (pictured left) and P445 series, as well as the X313 11.6" tablet/ultrabook hybrid (pictured right) that also had enough

**While challenges to the PC market certainly exist, these are also accompanied by opportunities and possibilities.**



grunt under the hood to serve as a desktop replacement when placed in its docking station. Also receiving an honourable mention was the Acer Chromebook, which comes with integrated 3G.

Furthermore, Acer unveiled three new workstations particularly for commercial customers, from the Veriton P series. These heavyweights, apparently built to the highest specifications, are also aimed at handling the heaviest of workloads, and are particularly intended for those in the fields of design.

It was then that Olsen dropped his bombshell, stating that so confident was the company in its own products, that if a new Acer notebook broke down within its first year, not only would the company repair it, but it would also give the customer back half of the purchase price. This, he explained, would not be retroactive – users couldn't dig out their old Acer notebook from five years ago and simply claim that it had broken down within its first twelve months.

### No region left behind

However, it was really what Olsen said informally that was music to our ears, namely that South Africa and the local market would receive the same level of attention as the developed countries typically do, as regards product releases. In an industry where certain new devices never make their way to local shores, this was certainly welcome news.

New products weren't the only sparkle in Acer's eye; a considerable focus on the education sector was also detailed, a sector that Olsen revealed was an intrinsic passion within the company. He elaborated that this focus also stems from Acer's mission statement, of breaking barriers between people and technology. "Nowhere is better to do that than in education," he added. One example of how the company will be making inroads into classrooms in the future is through its newly announced partnership with Intel Education Software (IES). This boasts a raft of freely available applications that will be bundled with Acer products moving forward.

### All the right channels

Next to receive some love from Acer was the channel. The company stressed that it was 100% committed to its channel,



*Walter Deppeler, Senior Corporate Vice President:  
Commercial Business Global Operations, Acer*

and reiterated that it had paid close attention to the requests coming from its partners. As a result, it resolved to make it easier for its partners to sell Acer products, by offering demo units, along with supporting channel partners with a co-marketing strategy, and then backing this up with responsive and fast service as and when it is needed.

### To the point

Acer's overarching message though, was not just about offering a broad array of products, growing their footprint in the B2B sector or even charting their course through a challenging time in the PC industry.

It revolved around offering a little bit extra – a little bit more ease, a little bit more security, a little bit more reliability, and a little bit more distinction in an industry which tends to get caught in offering much of the same. This 'little bit extra' philosophy may well make a whole lot of difference to the company's market share moving forward, as well as enabling it to remain relevant in a changing world. [RN] **TSB**



# **PAT LAMBIE'S CHRISTMAS TREATS**

**After another busy year on the rugby field, I look forward to some holiday downtime.**

I'm lucky enough to say that my home is on the coast, so when the holidays come, I get to see my family and also spend time at the beach. Surfing is not only one of my favourite pastimes – it helps keep me in shape, especially after Christmas lunch!

Spending time with my family and friends is important to me. They play a big role in my career and success. No matter what, a win or a loss, my family and friends are there to support and encourage me. My mom has a pair of lucky earrings and a lucky handbag that she wears to my matches, and my fiancée and I pray together before matches, whether I am playing at home or away.

During the year when I'm on tour, I have a lot of time to create playlists, but it's during the holidays that I really have time to enjoy them. I recently invested in a Samsung Bluetooth-enabled AirTrack, which gives me three months' free access to SIMFY Africa and over 20 million songs. It's amazing how I can share music from my phone with my Smart TV, and then via Bluetooth, I get vertical surround sound through the AirTrack. It really is the new flavour of sound!

Downtime is playtime for me. I've had a lot of fun with the recently-released Galaxy Note 3 and the Galaxy Gear, and I'm eagerly anticipating having the time to play with them and discover even more features. The Gear is really stylish and the fact that my "watch" alerts me to phone calls and messages intrigues my friends and family. Best of all, the Note 3 camera

app has Golf Mode – I'm looking forward to working on my swing.

When I'm relaxing indoors, my favourite movie is The Hangover. On the Samsung High Definition TV and Home Theatre System, it feels like I'm in the movies, that's how real the picture quality and sound is. It's a treat to be able to watch movies with my friends.

*"Spending time with my family and friends is what I look forward to when it's time to go home for Christmas. I get to count my blessings."*



*Pat Lambie*

**Pat Lambie**

SA Rugby Player and Samsung Ambassador



# Storage Wars:

## Western Digital talks tough in Turkey



During its recent 2013 Executive Summit in Istanbul, Western Digital asserted that despite competition, conventional hard-drives still have a strong future. Hanleigh Daniels reports back.

**I**t was Richard E. Rutledge, WD senior VP and GM of the Datacenter Storage business unit who kicked off proceedings by noting that secular byte demand growth is the driving force behind the continued need for storage. In fact, Rutledge stated that the amount of data created, replicated, as well as consumed within a single year is increasing at an annual rate of 46%. Factors driving this exponential data growth include the proliferation of mobile devices (smartphones and tablets); the continued global adoption of social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube etc.); the increasing sophistication of video and digital cameras; new forms of data such as recorded voice as well as location info; and a growing need for video surveillance.

### HDD: The heart of your digital lifestyle

Western Digital expects the total amount of data generated globally in the year 2020 to be around 40 000 exabytes (an exabyte is 1 000 000 terabytes or a billion GB). According to the company, more than 75% of these exabytes will be stored on hard-disk drives. Rutledge said that this means that "the hard-drive really is the heart of your digital lifestyle." If all goes according to plan, Western Digital aims

**Western Digital expects the total amount of data generated globally in the year 2020 to be around 40 000 exabytes.**

to capitalise on this foreseen need for more storage and remain a leader in the storage market. This, the company believes, will be done by competing effectively within key market segments, driving for operational and financial efficiency, and strategically allocating capital mainly into research and development (R&D).

According to Rutledge, Western Digital's current business model sees the company spending more than two-thirds of its revenue on R&D and only 5% of the revenue on all other functions of the firm. Rutledge added that the company is preserving 50% of its earnings in order to grow through investments and acquisitions. He added that Western Digital invested considerably in data centre technology as well as in making its hard-drives thinner and lighter to fit into portable computing devices that are becoming slimmer and more lightweight with each new iteration.

### Not all storage is created equal

Hitting a crucial point was Dr. William Cain, VP of technology at WD, who stated that one storage technology does not fit the need of all consumers and businesses. Cain believes that there is a storage hierarchy of needs that explains consumers' priorities when buying HDDs. The most important aspects up for consideration when shopping for



Dr. William Cain,  
VP Technology, WD



Richard E. Rutledge,  
Senior VP and GM, Datacenter Storage, WD

new storage solution are reliability and capacity, with price, performance and physical size also being priority factors. Less important aspects include weight, power consumption, robustness, and operating noise.

**For companies price, capacity and performance play a much more crucial role in storage solution acquisition decisions.**

For companies, however, price, capacity and performance play a much more crucial role in storage solution acquisition decisions. Cain went on to say that 15 years ago storage solutions the likes of tape storage and HDDs did not keep pace in development to match that of for example processors. This resulted in a large performance gap between costly memory solutions such as SRAM and SDRAM and more affordable mechanical solutions the likes of HDDs, optical storage solutions and tapes.

**NAND Flash storage joins storage party**

Western Digital found that when looking at all these storage solutions, buyers fork out around ten times more money for every 100x performance improvement in the respective solution. In modern times, that gap has been filled to some extent by flash storage, since NAND Flash offers much better performance compared to legacy solutions like HDDs. However, Cain explained that flash storage is not a substitute for HDDs and tape, as it cannot match the capacities available on HDDs. He added that it also costs

around ten times more for the same storage capacity one finds on a HDD.

An area of focus for Western Digital via which it aims to offer the best of both features to consumers and companies is hybrid-drives, which boasts both flash memory as well as a reliable and large capacity HDD. These offer the highest areal density (storage capacity up to 1 TB) inside the thinnest space (slim 7 mm and ultra-slim 5 mm form factors).

**To the point**

In essence, Western Digital's Executive Summit showed that the company has its eye on the storage ball and appears ready to meet the veritable data generation explosion, brought about by the rapid expansion of the digital universe. This should be good news for companies and consumers of computers, cameras, game consoles, tablets, smartphones, and virtually every kind of modern tech product of which storage is a crucial component. **TSB**



# The changing face of IT

There is little doubt that IT in the enterprise is rapidly and sometimes radically changing. We spoke to HP South Africa's Yesh Surjoodeen to find out what some of these changes entail.



**Yesh Surjoodeen**

Corporate, Enterprise and Public Sector Sales Manager, PPS, HP South Africa

**T**here is an old saying that the only constant in life is

change, and this certainly does seem to apply to the IT landscape, and the products that inhabit it, in general. Yesh Surjoodeen, Corporate, Enterprise and Public Sector Sales Manager, Printing and Personal Systems, HP South Africa, points out that

while manufacturers used to adopt a 'me too' approach, observing nifty devices being released into the market and quickly trying to push out

their own version, this was no longer the case from HP's side.

Rather, from HP's perspective, the new style of IT entailed aiming to make the right solution available for the enterprise customer, while selling a "bigger picture approach." He elaborated that this involved taking into account primary trends such as security, big data and cloud. These trends would, in part, shape or at least influence how the company's products evolve moving forward – with a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of enterprise customers.

## Prize in product

Surjoodeen elaborated that there are now certain requirements that companies are seeking – touch interfaces, slimness and longer battery life being highly prized – perhaps more so now than ever before. Additionally, he noted that the consumerisation of IT is also playing its part in the kind of products that are finding their way to the boardroom table. For example, from a design perspective, corporates are tending to request a business device that has a bit more aesthetic appeal, and not just the 'any colour as long as it's black' approach.

Surjoodeen also had a rather interesting take on BYOD (Bring your Own Device), explaining that he actually considered this more a trend towards Bring Your Own Experience. Indeed, he admitted that those in the industry tend to get lost trying to segment different devices, giving them names such as slate, slatebook, tablet, hybrid and detachable - when really what the user wants is a touch experience on a mobile platform. "It doesn't really matter how the products are categorised – it's really the experience that users are after that counts," he reiterated. This is not without good reason, with some device form factors suiting a business's needs better than others.

## Future vision

For example, Surjoodeen opined that in the years ahead, he suspected that a lot of enterprises will ask for machines with touch capability, but if this was in a notebook form, it would likely involve a detachable screen. He explained that we're now able to do much more in transit, such as between meetings and sites. Therefore a device that becomes lighter and easier to carry would definitely make sense.

**"It doesn't really matter how the products are categorised - it's really the experience that users are after that counts."**

However, it's not just the products themselves that would fluidly change, but the enterprise' approach to technology and their employees use of it as well. "I think the new enterprise is going to be built out of talking to their employees and asking them how they want to have their computing experience, whether that is via a tablet, a notebook, a workstation or a detachable/hybrid," elaborated Surjoodeen. Indeed, it certainly seems as though personalisation is the key to IT's changing face – with companies the likes of HP taking a more personal view of their enterprise customers; enterprises themselves considering the personal working needs and preferences of their employees, and finally employees exercising their personal preference with regards to the kind of computing that works best for them. [RN] **TSB**

# Microsoft's CityNext to help transform SA's cities

Help to major South African cities facing numerous challenges may be at hand, thanks to a bold initiative by Microsoft.

**W**hile South Africa's major cities are home to more than two-thirds of the country's population, and generate more than 60% of the country's GDP, they are facing a range of complex challenges. These include the need to modernise aging infrastructure, provide critical services to citizens, and deal with socio-economic issues like unemployment, social inequality, poverty, crime and disease.

To combat this, Microsoft revealed a bold initiative, Microsoft CityNext, to use a range of technology – including cloud technology, mobile devices, data analytics, and social networks - to help South African cities become more prosperous, despite struggles with urban decay and budget demands.

The initiative aims to use cities' existing technology infrastructures to connect functions like energy, water, infrastructure, transportation, public safety, tourism, recreation, education, health and social services, and government administration. An important element of the programme will be a focus on helping cities create small businesses, develop skills and reduce unemployment.

## Solving problems

Microsoft South Africa managing director Mteto Nyati said technology could play a key role in not only helping city managers provide critical services to growing populations, but also address the burgeoning socio-economic challenges faced by cities.

"The bigger picture is that cities can become the engine-rooms that will drive Government's National Development Plan objective of eliminating poverty and reducing inequality by 2030. This is where we can drive real impact around areas like enterprise development, empowering our youth through job creation and skills development, creating a safer and more secure South Africa and improving service delivery," elaborated Nyati.

A key focus area for Microsoft CityNext is safety and security, with an emphasis on helping cities protect their citizens in times of crisis. When critical information is allowed to flow seamlessly between government, businesses, and citizens in emergency situations, people will more readily get the resources they need to deal with the crisis. One potential Microsoft CityNext customer, the Western Cape Government, is investing in more modern technology capabilities to help it



**Mteto Nyati**

Managing Director, Microsoft South Africa

operate more efficiently. Lance Williams, the chief information officer of Western Cape Government, said the ultimate beneficiaries of a more sophisticated technology infrastructure would be citizens, who would enjoy more responsive and transparent government services, many delivered online.

## To the point

"Helping South Africans to become entrepreneurs can play a critical role in tackling unemployment, by empowering our people to become the job creators and economic drivers of the future," said Nyati. "If we can work with cities to help small companies to succeed in the first 3-5 years of their lives, we will help grow job creation and economic development significantly. This will have a major impact on the well-being of cities and entire communities." Nyati said Microsoft would also work with its vast network of solution partners to help cities transform their operations and infrastructure; engage their citizens and businesses; and accelerate innovation and opportunity.

"According to IDC's Smart City Maturity Model, many cities are now in the first stages of implementing smart technology solutions as part of a 10- to 15-year path to realising full transformation potential. The result of 'smart city' initiatives will ultimately enable cities to attract businesses and citizens to build more vibrant city landscapes and competitive economies," he concluded. **TSB**

**"The bigger picture is that cities can become the engine-rooms that will drive Government's National Development Plan objective."**

# Dell: Challenges and changes to IT

Both the consumerisation of IT and networks at large are introducing changes and challenges to the industry. Ryan Noik spoke to Dell's Florian Malecki and Brad Pulford to find out more.

**I**n technology, much as in life, it seems like everything has both its positive and negative side. Enterprise users are apparently not exempt from this phenomenon, with trends, such as the consumerisation of IT, bringing both benefits and disadvantages.

Florian Malecki, Dell's Product and Solutions director for EMEA, explained that the consumerisation of IT, which includes social media, mobility and BYOD trends, can have a particular impact on a company's security. For example, workers may well use their own mobile device to access their work information data. However, should this device be lost or stolen without having the right security solution in place, companies could find themselves having a security breach. Moreover, he pointed out that hackers tend to be smart people who are after money, and thus tend to target platforms that are the most prevalent at the time. What this means is that both Android and iOS devices are becoming popular not just with users, but with cybercriminals as well. While the network is still a popular target for attack, Malecki further noted that in the last few years there had been an increasing number of attacks on the application layer as well.

## Don't be latent

However Malecki believes that network vulnerabilities, at least, can be addressed, most particularly by employing next-generation firewalls. He explained that Dell's SonicWall offering differentiates itself in this regard by offering reassembly and deep packet inspection (DPI) using multicore architecture. He elaborated that this enables the product to inspect web traffic on the fly, without introducing network latency. This he stressed was "very important", particularly for businesses providing access to online training. If an existing firewall introduced latency, this would cause voice and video issues and result in a poor quality of service.

This DPI enables companies to have their firewall inspect every bit of data coming into or leaving the network and report in real time what exactly is happening on the network, and instantly ascertain whether a slowdown is a result of someone watching a YouTube video, downloading an application or, more seriously, due to the malignant effects of a piece of malware.

## Changes ahead

However, consumerisation of IT isn't the only force having an exciting, if challenging impact on IT. The very critical IT arena of networking is similarly undergoing its own changes and bringing some exciting developments. Interestingly enough, both shifts appear to be intricately connected to one another. Indeed, according to Brad Pulford, the enterprise lead at Dell South Africa, of the several issues that are most prevalent and pertinent to networking at the moment, he identified security and resource management as being issues that one could say were joined at the hip. He elaborated that security as it relates to a business's physical data was becoming extremely top of mind for many of Dell's customers, based on the proliferation of cybercrime.

Additionally, Pulford added that other top issues facing IT in general included connected devices, virtualisation and the efforts to improve efficiencies, cloud and big data. With regards to the latter, he believes the term is largely misunderstood, with too many addressing it as an issue of capacity, rather than that of generating insights from data. "However, at the core of all those issues, is networking, with connected devices, virtualisation, and cloud services all reliant on an efficient network."

**"At the core of all those issues, is networking, with connected devices, virtualisation, and cloud services all reliant on an efficient network."**



Brad Pulford, Enterprise Lead, Dell South Africa



Florian Malecki, Product and Solutions Director EMEA, Dell

### Power and influence

Pulford identified three influences on the all-important network, with the first of these being a demand for convergence, with customers seeking solutions that address multiple issues. He explained that in Dell's mind, convergence was all about server, network and storage coming together. Secondly, another force shaping network's change and growth was the influence of the application becoming more relevant, with the power moving away from the physical hardware to the application software – also known as Software Defined Networking (SDN). This means that instead of having to physically attend to a network on a site, problems could be often identified from a centralised remote point and then repaired very quickly, provided it wasn't a hardware issue.

Finally, the third force driving changes in networking was distributed networking, which he explained entailed taking the whole infrastructure and distributing the power of that infrastructure across the entire network as opposed to leaving it in one central point.

In a nutshell, distributed networking, Pulford elaborated, creates more tiers of networking, enabling users to have a 1 GB, 10 GB and 40 GB layer, which would enable the optimisation of performance across the network. The 40 GB layer could be then shifted to whenever better speeds are required. This, enthused Pulford, means that customers would be able to manage their environment very efficiently.

With this in mind, Pulford explained that Dell had adopted a Virtual Network Architecture (VNA) approach, with virtualisation – and the benefits it can bring – shifting into the network arena as well.

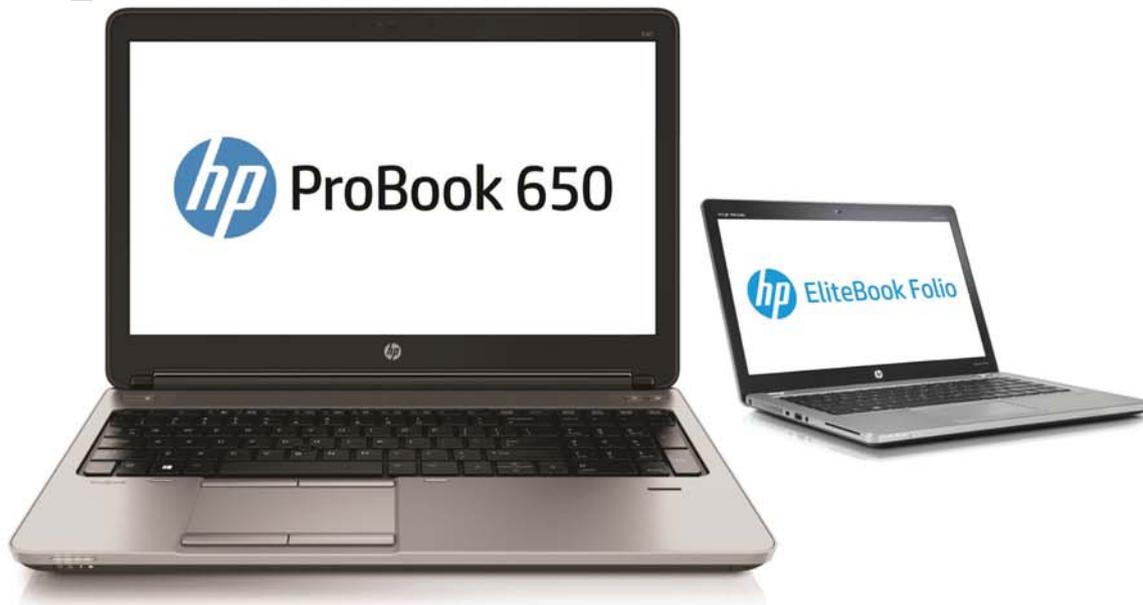
**“Customers don't want a different management platform for their network as what they have for their storage platform and their server environment.”**

### To the point

With regards to how this affects businesses on a grassroots, nuts and bolts (or rands and cents) kind of way, Pulford explained that this all means business's IT infrastructure can be unified, simplistic and easy to manage and control, rather than fragmented.

Indeed, he echoed a message that Dell has been punting for quite some time, namely addressing complexity. “Customers don't want a different management platform for their network as what they have for their storage platform and their server environment. They want one simple console approach to be able to control their entire infrastructure.” Secondly, he asserted that customers want a unified approach that would allow for their network, storage and server infrastructure to be closely knit in terms of performance enhancement. “The bottom line is that when that convergence starts happening, it drives a huge amount of cost out of our customer's IT environment, while simultaneously driving greater efficiency in,” he stressed.

In a global economy where many businesses are still feeling their fair share of economic pressure, it's this particular financial or cost savings benefit, amongst the myriad of IT challenges, changes and opportunities, that might just be the most important factor of them all. [RN] **TSB**



# HP unveils new products for commercial sector

HP has unveiled a number of new products for the commercial sector, with a particular emphasis on durable notebooks and light ultrabooks taking centre stage.

**B**eginning with the durable, the 'all-business' ProBooks were the first notebooks to be showcased, with the ProBook 650 G1 taking centre stage, followed by the ProBook 450 Touch and then the ProBook 430.

According to the company, the ProBook 650 G1 (pictured left) is thin, light and "packed with productivity features to make work faster and easier." As befitting its use in the security-conscious enterprise, the notebook comes with integrated security solutions such as HP Client Security and HP Trust Circles in order to ensure that only assigned contacts can access critical files. Furthermore, the notebook is particularly configurable, with organisations able to specify whether they prefer Windows 8.1 or Windows 7, and pick and choose the specifications that suit them. With regards to the latter, companies can choose from Core i3 up to Core i7 processors, up to 8 GB of DDR3 SDRAM, and specify whether they want up to a 500 GB SATA drive or up to a 128 GB SSD accounting for the storage. Additionally, the notebook can accommodate up to a full HD (1920 x 1080) resolution on its 15.6" display.

## Built to spec

According to HP's John Geypen, the Printing and Personal Systems (PPS) consumer and commercial notebook category manager at HP South Africa, the consumer and the enterprise spaces share a similar drive with regards to notebooks, with both segments desiring touchscreens.

To this end, the company unveiled its ProBook 450 G1, which sports 4th generation Intel Core i3/i5/i7 processors but caters to even more memory (16 GB) and boasts an optional touchscreen for those opting for the Windows 8 version. Also optional is a 500 GB hybrid hard drive and 4G LTE and HSPA facility. Its 15.6" display though, has a maximum resolution of 1366 x 768. More notable is the potential battery life – which ranges from more than nine hours with a 6 cell battery up to a whopping 17 and a half hours when equipped with a 9-cell battery.

Following in its footsteps is then the lighter (1.5 kg) and smaller 13.3" ProBook 430 G1 notebook, which has mostly similar specifications, for those users looking for a more compact form factor. However, really filling the travel friendly niche are the new EliteBooks, such as the EliteBook Folio 9470m and EliteBook 820 and 840. Geypen explained that the biggest steps taken with regards to its EliteBook 820 are the removal of the optical drive for a thinner and lighter device, the incorporation of Haswell processors and a memory boost. Furthermore, it, along with the 14" EliteBook 840, now boasts up to 13 hours battery life.

The 14" EliteBook Folio 9470m ultrabook (pictured right) meanwhile, is being billed as the company's first ultrabook with docking capabilities, and its thinnest (18.9 mm) EliteBook to date. Similarly weighing in at a travel friendly 1.6 kg, this business ultrabook can accommodate up to 16 GB of memory, Intel Core i5 or i7 processors and a very respectable screen resolution of 1600 x 900.

## To the point

Alas, we weren't given any firm prices on the above offerings. However, in our brief hands on time with the new notebooks in question, we were certainly impressed by what we saw. [RN] **TSB**



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#### APPLICATIONS

BlackBerry Enterprise Service 10 and BlackBerry 10 smartphones provide a high level of security and control over applications as well. The platform provides seamless corporate app storefront management and user experience through BlackBerry Balance and BlackBerry® World™ for Work.

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Find out more on [blackberry.com/business](http://blackberry.com/business)



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Michael Fletcher, Sales director sub-Saharan Africa, Ruckus Wireless

**What did it take to set up Wi-Fi access for Ellis Park's main stand in time for the Castle Rugby Championships, where South Africa took on New Zealand? We spoke to Michael Fletcher, sales director sub-Saharan Africa for Ruckus Wireless, and Carel van der Merwe, CEO of WirelessG, to find out more about the challenges involved.**

### **Q: What were the major challenges of the project?**

**A:** The nature of high-density environments, where thousands of users must be simultaneously supported in a confined space, presents a unique set of challenges that conventional, enterprise Wi-Fi systems simply aren't able to handle.

The requirements for high-density environments run counter to traditional enterprise wireless LAN (WLAN) deployments. Instead of optimising for broad Wi-Fi signal coverage with the fewest number of access points, Wi-Fi networks within stadiums and other high-density environments require large numbers of access points (APs) to get the needed capacity and very high spectral reuse. When large numbers of APs are deployed in close proximity, it can create the potential for interference.

### **Q: Tell us more about the main equipment used?**

**A:** The Ruckus ZoneFlex 7782-N is the industry's first 802.11n outdoor access point featuring a 30° narrow beam antenna array along with patented Ruckus BeamFlex technology to deliver additional signal gain. The ZoneFlex 7782-N was specifically designed to address the needs of very high-density deployments such as stadiums, arenas, airports, etc.

These are amongst the most challenging wireless environments imaginable and are ideally suited to Ruckus Smart Wi-Fi technology. High-density best practices

usually call for a large number of APs to get the needed capacity, but care must be taken to limit co-channel interference. The narrow beam antenna in the ZoneFlex 7782-N is able to focus radio frequency (RF) energy into a specific area, which greatly reduces the opportunity for interference and increases network performance.

Other equipment components consisted of a Ruckus ZoneDirector controller for centralised management of the APs, multiple switches, a specialised Gateway server and associated software components.

### **Q: How long did it take to set up the network and how many people were involved?**

**A:** In a period of a month, close to 15 WirelessG project team members including; project manager and developers, Network Operation Centre personnel, network infrastructure engineers and marketing personnel, worked closely alongside the Ruckus team to deliver the first phase of the project (main pavilion), successfully.

### **Q: Were there any problems experienced during the test?**

**A:** No, the equipment worked properly on the day and the spectators had a great user experience. On a device level, new devices with 5 GHz capability had the best performance and enjoyed the highest speeds. According to tests performed by WirelessG the average speed achieved at the event during peak hours were between 5 and 10 Mbps.

### **Q: When will the whole project be completed?**

**A:** With the "events-activity-landscape" being relatively inactive for the remainder of the year, we will be utilising the additional time to ensure sound deployment of the first Wi-Fi enabled stadium in South Africa, using Ruckus Smart Wi-Fi technology. We would like to see the entire stadium Wi-Fi enabled within 4 - 6 months. **TSB**

# Cybersecurity: The Pivotal Role of Communications Networks



By Scott Totzke, Senior Vice President, BlackBerry Security

**I**n today's world, we have so many device options – smartphones, tablets and notebooks – to stay connected to either the office or manage our personal lives. For consumers, many use their mobile devices to manage everything from their personal calendars to making online purchases and even securing financial transactions with their bank. But, unlike computers, most of us rely on applications we download to our mobile phones and tablets. These applications may have the ability to broadcast your location, private conversations, pictures, banking information and other sensitive data, sometimes even when these mobile devices are not in use. Now imagine if your smartphone contained classified information pertaining to our national security.

Whether it's a device owned by the consumer or one that's managed by your company, every piece of data that leaves your device or that comes in from another source is at the potential risk of hackers. It has been well documented that various foreign entities – both governmental and criminal – have ramped up attacks on the electronic communications and information systems of the United States. Given that mobile computing has become a necessity, government agencies need proven partners that follow top-to-bottom security protocols.

## Security built from the ground up

My company, BlackBerry, holds the position that a secure mobile solution needs to be built from the ground up and embedded in all aspects of the design and implementation of the products we ship. We also know that the best way to protect data is end-to-end data encryption. This means encrypting data before it leaves the enterprise and decrypting it within the device such as a smartphone, after it is delivered. Encryption works to protect the integrity of the data at all points outside of your control, and traveling over the carrier network.

Today, BlackBerry uses AES-256 as our standard for our encryption. AES is an international standard and one that has more public scrutiny than any other cipher in the world. In short, when it comes to encryption, AES is state-of-the-art. For those not familiar with AES, it is the most studied and trusted

encryption scheme available today. It is fundamental to all online security from securing web traffic when you do online banking, to the VPNs used that enable employees to connect to their corporate networks, to the embedded encryption included in every BlackBerry device we ship.

As an industry, we need to meet the public demand for secure personal and business information, and our communication solutions need to provide built-in security features that allow users to manage their privacy protection easily and consciously. Every security decision is an exercise in risk management and we need to ensure that the mobile technology that users have access to has a level of transparency and assurance around the protections afforded to them by their mobile solution providers. While technology vendors can provide components of these solutions, it is equally important that we help government, enterprises, and consumers understand the risks involved with all types of online activities.

## To the point

Security has to be a pillar of everything we do to protect our information. It is in all our interests to focus on implementing the strongest, industry leading, open standards possible. This includes being open to independent testing and validation of claims, and to provide an open framework for customers so that they may incorporate their own security capabilities.

BlackBerry products and solutions have already received more security accreditations globally than any other wireless solution and our customers value this level of transparency when it comes to protecting their information. We intend to continue to lead the industry in innovating smart solutions that help government, enterprises, and consumers understand how to keep their sensitive information from falling into the wrong hands. **TSB**

**“It is in all our interests to focus on implementing the strongest, industry leading, open standards possible.”**

## Nology's ZyXEL VDSL Gateway set to create a stir

Nology's new VDSL Gateway is expected to generate its fair share of excitement in the small to medium business markets.

**T**he device boasts a DSL chipset that allows internet connection speeds of up to 100 Mbps via VDSL, enabling businesses to connect at much faster speeds than they have previously. Additionally, for those businesses which have yet to upgrade to VDSL, they too will be able to take advantage of the gateway, as the SBG3300-N is backwards compatible with ADSL, as well as supporting ADSL2+, VDSL2, Ethernet WAN and 3G/LTE. Furthermore, the gateway also boasts multiple WAN interfaces for DSL and Ethernet.

### Business imperatives

Particularly pertinent for businesses where loss of connectivity can mean loss of productivity and profit, the device further allows a backup connection via a 3G/LTE USB modem, where LTE can achieve speeds of up to 100 Mbps. This ensures contingency and minimises downtime in case the primary DSL connection or ISP temporarily suffers an outage. Furthermore, the gateway will automatically switch back to the primary line once it is restored. However, having a contingency is not the only benefit - the load balancing feature allows businesses to distribute their bandwidth requirements over the various connections. For example, one's mail server can run on DSL while browsing is relegated to 3G connectivity, making it easier to manage and run a multi-office virtual private network (VPN).

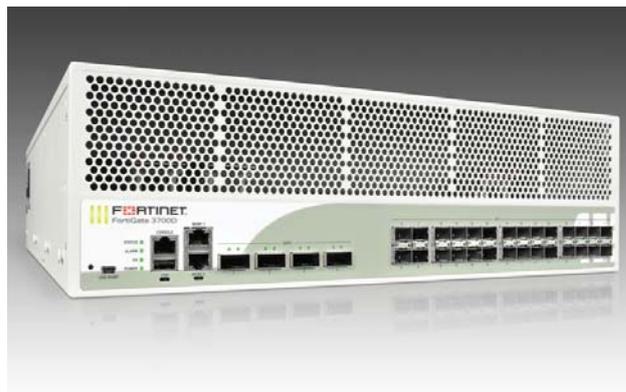
**The device boasts a DSL chipset that allows internet connection speeds of up to 100 Mbps via VDSL.**

### Final arguments

According to Nology, the ZyXEL SBG3300-N offers a more advanced firewall to ensure secure connections, and features a 4-port Gigabit Ethernet switch with an 802.11n wireless access point for wireless devices.

Further catering to businesses is the fact that the device can be mounted in a cabinet alongside one's switches.

Contact Nology on 086-166-5649 for more. **TSB**



## Fortinet debuts fastest datacentre firewall appliance

Fortinet has released a new high performance, compact network firewall appliance for enterprise data centres, large service providers, cloud providers and carriers.

**T**he new FortiGate-3700D, which includes four 40 GbE (QSFP+) and 28 10GbE (SFP+) ports, is able to achieve up to 160 Gigabits per second (Gbps) firewall throughput, intended to address a growing need by large businesses for faster firewalls.

### High performance, low latency

With this in mind, the company explained that the FortiGate-3700D is able to deliver best-in-class performance, low latency and IPv4 to IPv6 performance parity. Fortinet claimed that it was the first network security company to deliver 100 Gbps+ firewall throughput and 40 GbE ports in a compact appliance. The company believes this refines the standard for price per gigabit, price per port density, power dissipation per gigabit and space per gigabit. This performance improvement lowers both capital and operational costs for customers while providing the highest performance and lowest latency available.

### Faster firewalls needed

According to a high speed firewall survey conducted by Infonetics, the move to faster network technologies is forcing enterprises to look at upgrading every component of their IT infrastructure. The survey also found that the need to add new high speed interfaces to firewalls (10 GbE, 40 GbE and eventually 100 GbE) tops the list of drivers for investing in new high-end firewalls. The report elaborated high-end firewall buyers were seeking faster firewalls to secure faster networks; with many buyers considering products with 100G+ aggregate throughput and support for 40G and 100G ports over the next year.

The FortiGate-3700D is intended to cater to large organisations that have already deployed high-end firewalls, defined as firewalls that currently support greater than 40 Gbps aggregate throughput. For more information and pricing contact Fortinet on 011-326-4311. **TSB**

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# Opinion: The Dark Side of Cloud

The cloud may be on just about every IT company's mind at the moment, but Rudie Raath, the chief technologist at HP Enterprise Group, urges companies to adopt cloud with their eyes wide open.



Rudie Raath, Chief Technologist and Country Manager:  
Presales, Cloud and Strategic Pursuit, HP Enterprise Group

**R**aath starts by noting that while cloud concepts make for a very good debate and challenge most of the existing paradigms in business today, cloud technologies are also magnified with the introduction of mobile application and smartphones that demand this new style of IT. But he asserted that the anticipated tremendous growth of devices connected to the internet over the next seven years is only possible if the technology supporting this mobile application explosion rethinks the way we do business now. "This future drives us to move from a server orientated environment to a services orientated environment, where we manage service levels and broker the services on a continuous basis," he elaborated. Furthermore, the CIO may well find his role changing, to encompass becoming a broker of services.

## Buyer beware

Even amid the potentials that cloud brings, Raath warned that there are some critical areas that require attention, such as terms and conditions, customisation requirements and testing, customer data handling and platform design and regulatory

compliance and liability. He added that users of cloud are quick to click the little 'I Agree' checkbox just to move onto the next screen, but they tend not to understand the liabilities they accept. He warned that the terms and conditions may have severe impacts on the business financially and impose crippling effects on operations.

Depending on the services that are hosted, businesses should make every effort to understand the terms and conditions they are agreeing to or find a provider that they can negotiate with. In Raath's opinion, the foremost considerations should include uptime commitments; data backup policy and restore windows, and its associated costs; data theft liability; exactly what is included and excluded from the subscription fee; use of personal information; and finally, migration costs and the start-up costs that are involved.

## Terms and conditions may have severe impacts on the business financially.

He also then warned about technology manufacturers and cloud providers which build services based on highly customisable platforms with bundled consulting packages. Raath believes that while this service is pushed hard to upsell the value, it has a downside, with users finding themselves locked in. Worse yet, customers also find themselves facing high costs for customisation and limited movement options. With this being said, Raath did admit that the choice of platform obviously plays a major role in any customisation that might be required, and added that in some cases it is unavoidable to customise the platform or services to fit the business. However, he advised that this must be kept to the minimum to ensure that businesses can harness the benefits that future cloud innovation will bring.

## To the point

Amid the warnings and otherwise bleak picture that the dark side of the cloud can portray, Raath nonetheless added that the world is changing, pointing out that cloud technologies, mobile application and virtual reality are here to stay. "The question is, how do you embark on this journey and stay competitive? The simple answer – choose the correct partner to walk this journey with you and share the risks," he concluded. [RN] **TSB**

# IT Challenges and Opportunities: Four Opinions

We asked two questions – one looking at the challenges of the past, and one regarding future opportunities. Here are four opinions.



**Hein Engelbrecht, Managing Director, Mustek**

**Q: What was the biggest IT challenge for your business this year?**

**A:** From a distribution point of view, the biggest challenge we faced over the past year was the volatility of the Rand to Dollar exchange rate, which makes pricing of products and provision for fluctuations complex.

**Q: What do you foresee will pose the greatest IT opportunity in the year ahead?**

**A:** As a distributor, we see potential in tablets, with vertical and market specific content being made available on each device. Additionally, the diversification of product offerings – branching into non-traditional IT spaces, such as: solar, fibre and full scale security solutions.



**Riaan Badenhorst, Managing Director, Kaspersky Lab Africa**

**Q: What was the biggest IT challenge for your business this year?**

**A:** One of our biggest challenges over the past year was (and probably will remain) the ever increasing complexity of different devices that require access to corporate networks. Complexity is IT security's worst enemy.

**Q: What do you foresee will pose the greatest IT opportunity in the year ahead?**

**A:** I believe that the focus on enterprise mobility will continue in 2014. With the continuous improvement of mobile devices and applications, the complexity of managing and securing these devices on corporate networks will remain a hot topic and a focus area. Furthermore, I also feel that there will be an increase in the adoption of cloud-based services and applications – where it will become essential that organisations bring together personal clouds and external private cloud services.



**Shabir Satar, Channel Solution Engineer Eastern and Southern Africa, Huawei**

**Q: What was the biggest IT challenge for your business this year?**

**A:** With the onset of new technologies - virtualisation, consolidation, cross platform collaboration, BYOD - all with the view of developing a single platform (cloud) to address both external and internal needs of an organisation, our challenges have been in dealing with misconceptions, lack of understanding of the technology and the benefits that such platforms have to offer. Security also being key to the enablement of such platforms.

**Q: What do you foresee will pose the greatest IT opportunity in the year ahead?**

**A:** Industry speaks a lot about cloud and BYOD, server consolidation, storage virtualisation, software defined data centers, software defined networking, etc. The opportunities will be in enabling organisations to achieve their visions. This will be in understanding existing infrastructures and creating a roadmap for achieving their ultimate goal. This includes selling the cross platform collaboration between VOIP, telepresence, video surveillance and data. Also creating the VPNs and defining the security around them.



**Gary Allemann, Managing Director, Master Data Management**

**Q: What was the biggest IT challenge for your business this year?**

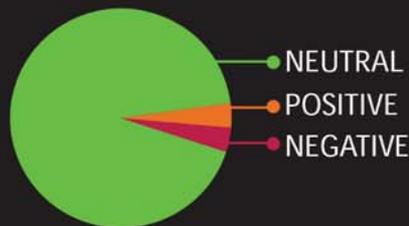
**A:** Data and the management thereof was the biggest IT challenge this year. This was due to a blend of new regulations, such as King III and The Protection of Personal Information Act (PoPI), as well as new opportunities such as the adoption of Big Data analytics. These are driving the importance of data at board level like never before. For example, according to Mutual & Federal's CEO Raymond Snyders: "Data is the distinguishing factor between winners and losers, between struggling and thriving insurers."

**Q: What do you foresee will pose the greatest IT opportunity in the year ahead?**

**A:** This new focus on data presents both challenges and opportunities for IT. Successful data management requires significant cooperation between business and IT. In order to capitalise on the opportunity, data governance structures and tools must be put in place to enable this collaboration. **TSB**

What do you do if a tidal wave of posts is suddenly aimed at your brand?

## THE CHALLENGE FACING SENTIMENT ANALYSIS



**93%** of all social media posts are neutral

**70-80%** of automated sentiment analysis tools rate their accuracy against their ability to identify neutral posts.

**0.07%** of what is analysed is relevant.

Without contextualisation, sentiment analysis alone can only scratch the surface.

# Echo-Social brings next-level social media monitoring to SA

**How can companies more effectively manage their reputation online? Echo-Social believes they have an answer.**

There can be little denying that businesses seek, and often need, every edge they can get to stay ahead in the information age, with the proliferation of social media and the rise of big data only complicating matters. However, a new tool, Echo-Social, launched into the South African market, enables businesses to see what social media users really think about them. According to the company, this brings a much-needed contextual, linguistic and psychological insight to social data analysis, thus affording businesses a means of more effectively managing their reputation online.

**70% of users who receive help via social customer service avenues will return as customers in the future.**

At the launch, World Wide Worx founder Arthur Goldstuck pointed out that most companies merely measure their effectiveness on Twitter by considering the number of their followers or how many likes they have on Facebook. He added that neither of these are considered a good measurement, as they fail to take into account what people are actually saying about the business in question.

### Do you hear me?

Addressing this, at its launch in Melrose, Echo-Social explained that its offering uses "a sophisticated blend of technologically-advanced linguistic processing and understanding of psychological drivers to determine what is steering conversations on social media." The main reason for doing this is to extract contextual insights for immediate action and results. Robin Meisel, the head of social insights

at Echo-Social, elaborated that traditional social listening and sentiment analysis tools have dealt with big data by essentially avoiding analysing it as a whole. These tools extract small slices of data, which may or may not be representative, and then rely on crowd-sourcing to explain what the sentiment - positive, negative or neutral - behind the data is. This, he asserted, only scratches the surface of analysis.

### Echo effect

Echo-Social's online dashboard allows for the simultaneous monitoring of the online conversation across social platforms including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogging platforms and forums. "If it has a data stream, we can track it," said Meisel. The unique metrics used by Echo-Social include market segmentation, competitor activity, language usage, the psychological drivers behind conversations, linguistic insight, topics of relevance, advanced word clouds (drawing correlations between words allowing for early identification of trends) as well as geo-location analysis. "What sets Echo-Social apart, is the ability to customise the service and metrics based on a client's specific needs and interests," he continued, adding that it can be tailored for any business sector or industry.

### To the point

While the number of social mentions increases daily, it is becoming increasingly important for brands and businesses to become proactive. "Along with these expectations come great opportunities for customer service. Seventy percent of users who receive help via social customer service avenues will return as customers in the future," explained Meisel. "There is tremendous business-value to be derived from social media - but only when it is leveraged effectively. Echo-Social does just that," he concluded.

Interested parties can visit [www.echoecho.co.za](http://www.echoecho.co.za) for more information. [RN] **TSB**

# Bitcoin and the future

## Interview: Timothy Stranex, Co-founder, BitX

Bitcoin, the virtual cryptocurrency, has gone from a murmur to a rumble. We talked to Timothy Stranex of BitX, a local Bitcoin exchange, about the internet's next big thing.

**Q: With guys like the Winklevoss twins involved, is Bitcoin the investment of choice for the tech savvy?**

**A:** Bitcoin is certainly quite popular in the tech community. Venture capitalists in Silicon Valley are very excited about Bitcoin and have begun investing in Bitcoin companies. The premise of these investments is that Bitcoin will become more mainstream over the next few years, and that it will ultimately be most useful as a transacting tool (as opposed to an investment only).

We are already seeing signs of it becoming more mainstream as more businesses across the world adopt Bitcoin as a form of payment. Some hedge fund managers have expressed interest recently, so there are also other groups that are getting involved.

**Q: How big is Bitcoin locally?**

**A:** This is difficult to measure given that local Bitcoin trades may take place both online and offline. One also needs to consider that many people here hold Bitcoins as an investment but don't actively trade them. As an initial data point, there were more than R400k worth of Bitcoin traded last month on BitX, but the overall market will be much larger than that. There are also several people starting Bitcoin-related businesses, with a list of merchants accepting the currency here: [bit.ly/bitcoinza](http://bit.ly/bitcoinza).

**Q: How can people purchase Bitcoins through BitX?**

**A:** People can buy Bitcoin on BitX by registering, submit their FICA information, and then placing a trade order. The trade is settled by sending an EFT via internet banking. Once the funds clear, BitX sends the purchased coins to the user's Bitcoin wallet.

**Q: We have heard comment that it's the volatility of the Bitcoin currency that might be its biggest problem. What's your opinion?**

**A:** The volatility is a challenge, however several businesses exist (such as BitPay and Coinbase), that allow merchants to set prices in USD and lock in the conversion rates so that the merchant isn't exposed to the risk. So it's not a major problem in practice.



It's important to realise that the Bitcoin market is still very small. The total amount of Bitcoin traded each day is around \$20 million. By comparison, the daily trading volume on the global forex measured in the trillions of dollars. As the Bitcoin market becomes bigger, it will become less volatile.

**Q: While Bitcoin touts anonymity as a positive, buying Bitcoins through BitX requires FICA registration. Is this standard operating procedure?**

**A:** Yes, all reputable Bitcoin exchanges around the world now follow KYC (Know-Your-Customer) and AML (Anti-Money Laundering) regulations, such as FICA, to prevent abuse of the Bitcoin by criminals.

It is still more anonymous than using a credit card to buy something from a merchant, since with Bitcoin you don't need to share your name with the merchant. However, it's not anonymous from a law-enforcement perspective because all Bitcoin transactions are recorded and is publicly available, making transactions open to investigation and auditing.

**Q: Do you foresee Bitcoin becoming a global currency or will it remain mostly online?**

**A:** While there are certainly some short-term challenges, given the technical advantages of Bitcoin and witnessing the increased adoption rates across the world, we foresee Bitcoin becoming a global currency in the long run. **TSB**



# E-Learning makes an easy alternative

**For businesses, up-skilling staff without the hassle of long periods of absenteeism and loss of productivity are indeed attractive. Gavin Smith looks into the benefits of e-learning.**

**T**here has most certainly been an increase in the uptake of e-learning in the business sector in lieu of the traditional 'talk and chalk' methodology.

According to Deon Benito, lead learning specialist at The Training Room Online, e-learning has become significantly more popular and important in recent years, and economic prospects for developers and suppliers of e-learning products have substantially improved accordingly. "The range of approaches and application areas is quite broad, and so is the range of products, comprising of computer-based training, virtual classroom and portal solutions." Benito believes e-learning's gaining of ground over the traditional classroom methodology can be attributed to the increased capacity to instruct more students while maintaining the quality of learning outcome equal to comparable forms of face-to-face instruction.

While echoing this sentiment, Warwick Kingsley, principal consultant at Pink Elephant South Africa stresses that, even though there has been an increase globally and in SA, e-learning has yet to really take off in South Africa. "That said, it most certainly will. Globally, e-learning is without doubt on the upward curve and it's gaining a lot of attention."

## All about convenience

Kingsley notes that, interestingly, the worldwide trends seem to indicate that it's not primarily about the price but about the

convenience; the ability to learn whenever and wherever the student or course delegate happens to be. "The uptake in e-learning in SA is certainly about the convenience. I think e-learning in SA has been a little slower to get going as quality home-grown e-learning options are still fairly rare. South Africans who want to participate in e-learning still often have to purchase online courses from overseas and this typically means that the prices are no different or even higher than local classroom options thanks to exchange rates."

With this in mind, Benito believes that the current surge in popularity of e-learning can be traced back to the rollout of telecommunications infrastructure. "Until about four years ago, there was no fibre in South Africa, apart from Telkom's Dignet and Asynchronous Transfer Mode. Deregulation in South Africa has opened up the market and now more than seven companies are laying fibre. New infrastructure in the form of fibre and undersea cables will bring down internet costs in South Africa substantially and this will boost the uptake of e-learning," he continued.

## Anywhere, anytime, anyone

Essentially, South Africa have the structures in place to facilitate e-learning and it would seem that corporates are buying into the concept. But the question remains, what are the benefits to companies and individuals when choosing



*Deon Benito, Lead Learning Specialist,  
The Training Room Online*



*Warwick Kingsley, Principal Consultant,  
Pink Elephant South Africa*

**E-learning eliminates the time, expense and inconvenience of getting the instructor and students in the same place.**

the digital route to education? Benito sums it up succinctly: "The growth of the world wide web, high-capacity corporate networks and high-speed desktop computers will make learning available to people twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week around the globe. This will enable businesses to distribute training and critical information to multiple locations easily and conveniently. Employees can then access training when it is convenient for them, at home or in the office."

Kingsley concurs and says that, across the board, it is all about convenience. "For the student it's the ability to study at one's own pace, where and when convenient. To the institution, it's about logistics. Online learning can be delivered to far more individuals without huge increases in costs whereas a classroom only holds so many."

#### Generally cheaper

The cost factor also comes into play when looking at the e-learning model. Benito states that, when delivered through technology-based solutions, training is less expensive per end user due to scalable distribution and the elimination of high salaries for trainers and consultants. "The biggest benefit of e-learning, however, is that it eliminates the time, expense and inconvenience of getting the instructor and students in the same place."

Expanding on the cost saving factor of e-learning, Kingsley agrees that, ultimately, for the provider, e-learning is easily scalable with minimum increases in costs the more students are enrolled. "And for students, again, aside from exchange rate-related anomalies, e-learning is generally cheaper."

Finally, for those who think that e-learning is aimed squarely at the soft-skill and short-course market, think again. "E-learning seems to be gaining popularity in both the skills training and formal academic education spaces," says Kingsley. "When it comes to degrees, e-learning still resembles the UNISA (long-distance learning) model, meaning that, while much content is presented online and admin is also accomplished in this way, students still use paper-based text-books and manuals and, of course, examinations for degree purposes are almost always

administered in the traditional fashion (pen/paper and exam-halls). It is worth taking note of a particularly interesting form of e-learning, the virtual classroom or instructor led online course. This refers to students attending a lecture in real-time via an online portal. The class is interactive and all participate using headsets and video-streaming."

#### Everything you need

Benito expands of the various offerings in the market at the moment. "Types of e-learning include online courses and campaigns; live online training/virtual classrooms; blended learning; learning via mobile devices and smartphones; social media for learning; video and podcasts." He believes e-learning can cover many business areas, from compliance subjects such as health and safety, to performance support essentials such as customer service. E-learning can also be used on its own or as part of a blend. This can be a fusion of face-to-face and e-learning or the effective combination of different types of e-learning. "We will advise on the right solution depending on what companies want to achieve and the learner/business context of the challenge," Benito notes.

"In the tertiary education space more prospective students are turning to online options. With a computer, an internet connection and a little self-discipline, you can earn a degree from home, work, or anywhere else for that matter." He says that online degree programmes follow much the same routines as traditional learning, with a few twists. "There are lectures, but they won't be in person. There are assignments, but you won't hand them to your instructor. There may be a set time that 'class' begins, but you don't have to be there then. In most situations, you are free to 'go to class' when it fits your schedule," Benito explains.

#### To the point

While there may still be sceptics within the business community e-learning is available, cost effective and has a gamut of products to suit just about every need. Training staff to become efficient, effective and productive is now simply a click away and does away with all the traditional barriers faced by companies when planning to up-skill employees. **TSB**



# BMW Active-Hybrid 7

With its second generation ActiveHybrid 7, BMW aims to offer decent fuel economy and lower emissions for its largest luxury barge.

**A**t the heart of the ActiveHybrid 7's green drive is the combination of the BMW TwinPower turbocharged six-cylinder in-line petrol engine supported by a 40 kW synchronous electric motor. This pair produces a total system output of 260 kW and peak torque of 500 Nm, which is enough to see this 7-Series reach 100 km/h in 5.7 seconds.

Equally as impressive is the combined-cycle (town and highway driving) fuel economy of a mere 6.8 litres per 100 km, which is around 14% less fuel than a less powerful (235 kW; 450 Nm) BMW 740i with a conventional engine setup. In terms of carbon dioxide emissions, the ActiveHybrid 7 releases 158 g per km, compared to 184 g per km from the 740i. Drivers are further able to cruise around town at speeds of up to 60 km/h on electric power only. With a sufficient charge on the hybrid battery, the ActiveHybrid 7 can run purely on electric power over a distance of up to 4 km sans any engine noise or tailpipe emissions.

## Large number of bells and whistles comes standard

ActiveHybrid 7 buyers will not want for much as the car comes standard with an encyclopedia of features. These include automatic tailgate operation, onboard navigation system, soft close automatic system for all doors, a 6-disc DVD changer, head-up display, glass sunroof, as well as ventilated and heated front seats. It also doesn't skimp on the tech, with the music interface for smartphones that offers Bluetooth hands-free calling as well as audio streaming functionality and USB device support. The driver and front

passenger both get comfort seats with electrically adjustable lumbar support, whilst the car also sports automatic air conditioning with 4-zone control. Safety features include a rearview camera, automatic door locking when driving away, plus front and rear park distance control.

**Equally as impressive is the combined-cycle fuel economy of a mere 6.8 litres per 100 km.**

If all this is not enough to quench your feature appetite, you can also select from a large list of optional extras. These includes BMW Night Vision with object (pedestrian, wildlife, rocks) recognition and speed limit info, LOGIC 7 hi-fi loudspeaker system, lane departure warning system, sunblinds for rear side windows, adaptive LED headlights, shifting paddles on a sports steering wheel, as well as a rear-seat entertainment system with analogue TV function and entertainment apps.

## To the point

The ActiveHybrid 7 is aimed at the well-off executive saloon buyer who does not mind having to sacrifice a bit of boot space to accommodate a high-performance lithium-ion battery in order to gain better fuel economy. BMW's ActiveHybrid 7 goes for in the region of R1 319 000, which includes VAT, emission tax and a 5 year or 100 000 km motorplan.

Not keen on the BMW? Alternatives include two versions of the upcoming (February 2014) Mercedes-Benz S400 Hybrid, which delivers 245 kW and 370 Nm of torque. It comes in a short wheel base version for R1 227 100 and even roomier long wheel base iteration at R1 248 200. **TSB**



# Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG



Sometimes you require a Jekyll-&-Hyde kind of saloon that packs enough grunt to get you to the board meeting on time, but also provide a stately ride so that you don't spill a drop of your Kopi Luwak to-go. Enter the S63 AMG.

**M**ercedes-Benz's new S63 AMG was officially unveiled at the 2013 Johannesburg International Motor Show during October and will roar its way into local showrooms in February 2014. Unlike most of the other vehicles in the AMG lineup, the design of the S63 AMG is very understated making the car appear very close to a run-of-the-mill S-class. But there are certain noticeable styling cues, including the AMG sports seats, AMG badges in the front and rear seat backrests, as well as the AMG sports steering which features aluminium gear shift paddles for the AMG Speedshift MCT 7-speed sports transmission.

## A performance wolf in stylish sheep clothing

Beneath the shapely bonnet of the S63 AMG resides a 5.5-litre V8 biturbo engine that churns out 430 kW at 5500 RPM and enough torque (900 Nm) between 2250 and 3750 RPM to straighten Donald Trump's comber. Thanks to some systematic lightweight construction based on the AMG Lightweight Performance philosophy, the new S-class squeezes in under the two ton mark and weighs 100 kg less than its predecessor. A fifth of this weight savings has come via the car's battery, as the S63 AMG is only the second car after the dreamy SLS AMG Coupé Black Series

to replace the conventional starter battery with a lithium-ion one. According to Mercedes-Benz this new technology offers numerous advantages over a conventional battery, including being more compact and weighing more than 20 kg less than a normal battery.

## THE S63 AMG bolts on the sportier ride and performance which AMG owners demand.

Less weight equates to better fuel efficiency, with the powerful S63 now gulping down a respectable 10.1 to 10.3 litres per 100 kilometres. Also lower is the time it takes for this car to reach 100 km/h from a standing start – a mere 4.4 seconds, whilst the terminal velocity is electronically limited to an illegal 250 km/h.

## Magic carpet ride plus other handling tech

The S63 AMG sports AMG sports suspension that is based upon the S-class' Magic Body Control technology. This functionality allows the new S-Class to scan the road surface ahead via a stereo camera and automatically adjusts the suspension in advance for potholes, speed bumps or any other undulations on the road surface. Also boosting the sporty handling prowess of the S63 AMG is ESP (electronic stability control) with curve dynamic assist, which provides the car with greater agility whilst cornering at speed. It achieves this via a brief brake intervention on the inside rear wheel to prevent understeer when turning into a corner.

## To the point

The Mercedes-Benz S63 AMG boasts all the technology, comfort- and safety features S-class drivers expect, but bolts on the sportier ride and performance which AMG owners demand. A drive in one of Germany's finest will set you back R2 174 000 (including VAT and emissions tax), which includes a 6-year or 100 000 km (no customer contribution) PremiumDrive maintenance plan as standard. **TSB**

# GEAR

## Hot Stuff for not just the Office



### Epson V550 Photo scanner



**E**ver wished there was a magical scratch, fingerprint, and imperfection removal button for your photo scanner? Epson's Perfection V550 Photo boasts Digital ICE Technology that enables the scanner to remove all of the above from scanned film automatically. This scanner enables users to scan and upload photos directly to social media websites, photo sharing websites and other cloud storage services.

Additionally, the device is able to handle a wide range of media thanks to its built-in transparency unit, 6400 dpi resolution, and optical density of 3.4 Dmax. These includes standard photographs, newspapers and A2-sized posters, filmstrips, mounted slides, as well as medium format film. RRP: R5 500



### WD Se drives



**I**n order to cater for this rapidly expanding demand for data centre storage, WD has made its Se enterprise-class drives locally available in capacities of 2, 3 and 4 terabytes. These drives offer optimal storage for six to 12 bay Network Attached Storage (NAS) devices and deliver a cost-effective combination of performance, better reliability as well as workload capability that are required for enterprise-class storage. WD's Se enterprise drives are now available from resellers for recommended retail prices of R2010 for 2 TB, R2 300 for 3 TB and R3 800 for 4 TB.



### Google Nexus 5



**C**an Google take a chunk out of Samsung and Apple's sales with its new Nexus 5 smartphone? Manufactured by LG and based upon the hot G2, this Android 4.4 KitKat running smartphone is powered by a Qualcomm Snapdragon 800 quad-core CPU clocked at 2.3 GHz per core, which is backed up by 2 GB RAM. The Nexus 5 boasts a 4.95" (1080p) display with an eye-popping 445 ppi (pixels per inch).

Also onboard is LTE (4G) connectivity, NFC, wireless charging for the 2300 mAh battery, 16 or 32 GB worth of internal storage, Bluetooth 4.0, dual-band 802.11ac Wi-Fi, plus an 8 MP main camera with OIS (optical image stabilisation) and 1.3 MP selfie shooter. Despite the impressive spec sheet, the Nexus 5's pricing kicks off at just \$349 (around R3 500) for the 16 GB version Stateside. No local release details are available yet.

# Apple MacBook Pro

**A**pple's new 13" MacBook Pro runs the company's latest desktop operating system (OS), Mac OS X Mavericks, out of the box. It is powered by a fourth generation dual-core Intel Core i5 processor clocked at 2.6 GHz, with graphics being delivered via Intel's new integrated Iris graphics processor that Apple says is up to 90% faster compared to the previous generation MacBook Pro with Retina display.

Cupertino's 15" MacBook Pro version sports Intel's quad-core Core i7 Haswell processor running up to 2.3 GHz, with users having a choice between Intel's Iris Pro graphics or a dedicated Nvidia GeForce GT 750M discrete graphics card with 2GB of RAM for an enhanced gaming experience. Both iterations also feature longer battery life (8 hours+), quicker PCIe-based flash storage, as well as support for the latest Wi-Fi standard (802.11ac). No local release info is available yet.



# Sony PlayStation 4

**S**ony's next-generation gaming console – the PlayStation 4 – hits local shores just in time for Xmas (13 December 2013), giving it an early release leg up on Microsoft's Xbox One (no SA release date set as yet).

Powering the new PlayStation is a x86-64 AMD Jaguar 8-core CPU and AMD next-generation Radeon based GPU. Also onboard the console is 8 GB of GDDR5 RAM, a 6-speed Blu-ray disc drive (which will play movies but not audio CDs), Wi-Fi 802.11n, Bluetooth 2.1, HDMI out, two USB 3.0 ports, an ethernet port and 500 GB built-in HDD storage.

The latter can be swapped out for a compatible SATA II hard-disc drive with more space, but users will not be able to utilise USB flash-drives or other external storage devices with their PS4. With release titles such as Killzone: Shadow Fall, Knack, Battlefield 4, FIFA 14, and Call of Duty: Ghosts being available,

# Ingolstadt's crosshairs pointed at the S-class, 7-Series

**A**udi's redesigned and revamped A8 does much to hook the eyes thanks to its sculpted single-frame grille, new Matrix LED headlights, plus the coolest indicators in all of motoring - a row of LEDs that light up successively in the direction the driver is about to turn.

Engine choices includes a 3-litre TDI that delivers 190 kW and 580 Nm of torque, whilst utilising a claimed 5.9 litres per 100 km average consumption. There is also a new 4.2 TDI V8 that is a little more thirsty (7.4 litres per 100 km), but makes up for this by churning out 283 kW and a whopping 850 Nm. This results in a 4.7 sec sprint time from standstill to 100 km/h for this model.

Petrolheads will more than likely opt for the S8 which is rocketed forward by a twin-turbo V8 that produces 382 kW and 650 Nm for a 4.1 second 0-100 km/h acceleration time. Power is channeled to all four wheels thanks to Audi's legendary Quattro system, with shifting being handled via an eight-speed Tiptronic gearbox. Local buyers will see the A8 in showrooms during April 2014, with pricing being



# How to build a nation:

## A quick guide to making everything better

By Mynhardt van Pletzen, Communications Director, Nation Builder

**Adopting a mere box-ticking strategy where we give the legal minimum and care the very least, might benefit us when the tax-man cometh, but not if we consider the real-world change being made.**

**T**ruly identifying with the felt needs around us requires a much more immersive approach – a state where we know that our own prosperity remains holistically wrapped up in the wellbeing of others, and that caring less for our own country and its people, will eventually result in the breaking off of the very branch that we've built our corporate structures on.

### Healthy corporate ecosystem

Committing to a sustainable good giving program, becoming increasingly responsible investors, and being acutely aware of the conditions in our communities, are only a few ways to start positioning our businesses in such a way that it contributes to the healthy development of our corporate ecosystem. Knowing that our country thrives when all industries work together to build and expand the triple bottom line of financial prosperity, social responsibility and environmental sustainability, is another tool that will set us, and those that depend and come after us, up for long-term success.

**Nation Builder guarantees that 100% of all corporate contributions find its way to where it generates maximum impact.**

Nation Builder is an initiative by the Muthobi organisation, which assists and guides corporate catalysts to do just that. Through proven advice, meaningful connections and useful resources, leaders immediately get plugged into the Nation Builder community. Nation Builder expertly spans the bridge between corporate generosity and credible NGO projects that are actually doing the work. Years of experience enables the Nation Builder team to seamlessly navigate the slippery slope



of corporate social investment, without falling into the trap of bureaucratic governance, or ending up with misappropriated, or even wasted, resources.

Fully funded by the generous work of the Mergon Foundation, Nation Builder guarantees that 100% of all corporate contributions find its way to where it generates maximum impact. Curating a roster of 15 established NGO projects, Nation Builder is unique in the way it assists and enables corporates to become involved beyond the minimum legal requirements, towards actual and sustainable growth. It was said that 'if you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together'. Nation Builder represents the 'togetherness' of the business community, the NGO sector and ordinary people like you and me, all who desperately want to see our beautiful country and its people prosper.

### Committed compassion needed

Charitable compliance is not what ultimately brings about change, committed compassion is. Join the movement towards good giving, become a responsible investor, and fully live beyond the boundaries of selfish indulgence and legalistic reciprocity. That is how you enable an economy, care for a country, and to this day remains the only effective way, to truly build a nation. **TSB**

### Become involved:

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