



Effective management of human capital essential to business' survival strategy

The opportunity to engage markets directly and communicate key messages is one that we relish. We support all initiatives that encourage awareness and help to cement information that builds business.

Fortunately there are a number of such opportunities in the pipeline, organised by industry, and we look forward to taking full advantage of these events to reinforce these messages.

One of the main messages we want to communicate to our markets is that without due diligence on the development and implementation of a human capital management strategy, businesses are susceptible to confusion and negative impact on operations when faced with an array of pressures.

We operate in HR-intensive markets in which people development, skills acquisition and application, as well as training and recruitment, are considered top priorities. A human capital management strategy positions a business to not only have all these bases covered, but actually leverage off any and all related opportunities.

Going back to public events to diarise – representatives of our executive management look forward to participating in the ICT Women Empowerment Africa Summit 2010 at the end of September at Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand.

This is an important event in that it will highlight the level of contribution that women make towards the success of this industry and its general influence on South Africa's socio-economic development. It will also underline the leadership role that female professionals play in managing ICT enterprises. Today many of the stereotypes and limitations that once prevented women from securing a firm place within the ICT sector, have been eradicated.

In her presentation to delegates at the Summit, Maya Bucher, our COO, together with Liezl van Rensburg, SAP Manager Consulting, will motivate and encourage those contemplating a career in ICT to understand how much has changed in the industry and how much opportunity there really is.

As Maya will mention our company continues to demonstrate the capability and quality of skill that women do bring to the industry. We proudly acknowledge that we have a 70:30 percentage ratio of women to men, and we believe this is indicative of the strength and determination of our labour force within ICT.

The remaining quarter of 2010 will be very busy, challenging and certainly interesting. We look forward to engaging with our client base, partners and customers and providing our continuous, reliable service and support.



Markus Bucher

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Saphila 2010 Sun City



Saphila 2010, the largest bi-annual African SAP User Group conference on the African continent, will take place between 07-10 November at Sun City. The event is hosted by The African SAP User Group and SAP Africa, and is considered to be one of the most significant on the domestic ICT and infrastructure management calendar.

Visit www.saphila.co.za for info or registration

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Swicon360 takes HCM Spectrum in the Cloud service online



Swicon360(Pty) has taken a definitive step towards providing more information and greater access to the company's Human Capital Management (HCM) cloud-based service by establishing a company website dedicated to this offering.

The website (www.hcmspectrum.co.za) represents a key step in an industry-leading initiative involving the joint expertise of Swicon360, SAP, Vodacom Business and Novell.

The primary function of the site is to provide information available for download about the relevance and full spectrum of the SAP HCM Solution as a Service offering. It also offers the browser information on the company, its track record and achievements.

This information also covers solutions, events, core information about the Service and details on the partners involved.

HCM Spectrum online features a customer login facility and details on how customers can engage with partners in order to take advantage of the main principle behind HCM Solution as a Service – to pay only for what is used, when it is used.

“At the time of the launch of our cloud-based human capital management spectrum as a service, we said it represented a new phase in the development of this area of business management. We confirmed that it would address the issue of cost and, because of an integrated approach, would enable all businesses to leverage off the benefits of SAP HCM,” said Markus Bucher.

Investment in Swicon360 pays off for Development Bank of Southern Africa

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) has partnered with Swicon360 to initiate and support a large-scale overhaul of its Human Capital IT infrastructure and systems.

Potential candidates competing for the tender had to demonstrate the necessary skills sets and have resources to manage and support the two-phase project, a sizeable undertaking in terms of the logistics and technology involved. Swicon360 was successful in its bid to serve as ICT support and services provider on the project and started work on the first phase (Blueprint Phase) in March 2010.

The finance institution has four applications in-house: Core, Oracle, People Soft and Unique, and management required that these applications be assimilated into one integrated system. Representatives from Swicon360 tabled the HC SAP infrastructure as a solution and immediately focused on the first task of replacing PeopleSoft and Unique.

This aspect of the project encompasses key elements of workforce management including organisational management, employee administration, payroll, leave administration and labour relation cases.

Additionally, it covers competency management, training management as well as employee and manager self service. Swicon360 will also implement a customer-specific development for studies which will support part-time study assistance for employees and a study grant for employees' children.

The Realisation Phase is a crucial period during which physical works or deliverables will be implemented based on the signed off blueprints. It is here where the project will be integrated with finance. This will bring workforce management and talent management into the foreground of the project (to promote efficiency and reduce the risk of human error) and the project is scheduled to go live in March 2011.



Maya Bucher with Ilonka van Diggelen, Executive Coordinator (Human Capital Division) & Program Manager at DBSA

Maya Bucher, COO at Swicon360, says that there are several milestones on the project that should be pointed out.

“The move from multiple systems to a system that is run off a single platform, such as SAP, requires a change in mindset. We pay tribute to our client for the progress they have made in this regard, within a short space of time. To their credit they foresaw the need for change and have embraced the process. The result is that the project is on track, there have been no significant challenges and any feelings of anxiety have been replaced with excitement. We look forward to being part of a new era of service delivery.” says Maya.

Effective knowledge transfer has also ensured that the administrative and legal aspects of the relationship have been well managed.



Quick Q & A

Venessa Padayachee, SAP HCM Senior Consultant at Swicon360



What technologies are influencing your product/service?

More and more we see the concept of Self Services appearing in various sectors of business. This concept affects the general employee population in a way that empowers them to take responsibility for certain personal data and make certain applications online. This trend has forced SAP to provide the necessary tools to enable Self Services in a user-friendly way.

What has been a highlight in your career?

Having had the opportunity to travel abroad extensively has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my career. Such global exposure to politics, cultures, infrastructure etc has had a profound positive influence on my attitude to life and people.

Market ready to fully embrace cloud computing

But experts warn consumers to be mindful of specific considerations before investing

There may be significant consumer interest in cloud computing but potential investors are advised to seriously consider a number of factors before making a commitment. This is the view of Warren Small, MD at BasisOne.

Warren formed part of a group of industry leaders who spoke at the ITWeb Virtualisation and Cloud Computing Conference held recently in Gauteng. The Conference provided a platform for discussion over existing and emerging trends within the cloud computing and virtual services environment.

Among the topics on the agenda was the ITWeb / Fujitsu Cloud Computing Survey. According to the results of the survey nine percent (9%) of IT professionals said they were knowledgeable and deal with cloud computing as part of their jobs. Furthermore, the research suggested that broadband reliability and speed was impacting on the pace of local investment in virtualisation (iWeek Online, August 11, 2010)

The BasisOne managing director acknowledged the hype that surrounds cloud computing and growing virtual services market and the fact that this has contributed significantly to general consumer interest.

However, he listed factors such as architecture, connectivity, risk management, security and government compliance as aspects that have to be considered by those eager to embrace the technology.

"Our message to the market is that it is best to have the appropriate architecture to support cloud computing. The rationale behind this is that by not having adequate architecture in place, the success of cloud computing in business is jeopardised," Warren said.

According to Warren there is a growing realisation among business leaders that data is being used to predict outcomes, as well as the fact that there is ongoing global pressure to sharpen risk focus and review manual processes.

This trend, in addition to the fact that directors are being held personally responsible for governance and compliance requirements and output, is fuelling interest in cloud based service delivery and application.

Warren also mentioned that in order for investors to benefit from lower cost, better risk management and better process quality, they must factor in components of cloud computing. These components include identity management infrastructure and virtual infrastructure.

"If one looks at user management in the context of the value of cloud computing, this area is affected by manual actions, actions which are prone to error and are time consuming, and that is influenced by security and governance risks. A move to a cloud-based environment addresses these issues, but, as we have already mentioned, it is very much dependent on having the correct architecture in place," he explains.

BasisOne



Warren Small

