

Africa's solution is investment in business intelligence - PBT

With Internet access improving and the increased use of mobile devices in Africa, companies need to be aware of how they should position themselves to benefit from this technological 'land grab', says Martin Rennhackkamp, business intelligence specialist at PBT Group.

According to a survey by the telecommunications development sector released earlier this year, ICT development and uptake across the continent is growing at an astonishing rate, with cellular mobile penetration at 52% and 12.8% of the combined African population having access to the Internet. These developments have seen the adoption of technologies such as cloud computing which, according to Gartner, has enjoyed a growth rate of 25%, representing over \$56 billion in 2009. Furthermore this growth is expected to account for \$150 billion in 2013 - which is approximately 10% of worldwide investment in the IT sector.

A recent report by the International Data Corporation suggests that the worldwide business analytics software market will continue to grow at 9.8% year-on-year and is expected to reach \$50.7 billion in 2016. "These findings - coupled with Gartner reporting business intelligence (BI) as a top-ranked technology for 2012 - only substantiates my opinion that BI is a significant technology investment for companies operating and looking to operate in Africa."

A useful real-time asset

By investing in BI software, companies will make better informed decisions and faster. BI improves the overall management of projects and optimises productivity. BI solutions offer businesses more than just data capturing and transactional processing. BI has the ability to turn data and information into a useful real-time asset, from identifying and reacting to problems, to anticipating opportunities within the organisation and on a project.

"Simply put, BI cuts through complexities that are inherent to conducting business - on any continent. Significant economic, social and political influencers and daily limited financial resources are just some of the additional challenges. The decision to invest in a technology therefore is one that must be carefully considered, but must create the obvious and sustainable mix between encouraging international investment and developing local talent and e-commerce. BI is an ingredient to both and is an ideal next step for companies wishing to invest in technology for the future," concludes Rennhackkamp.

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