

An African evolution: encouraging local innovation to drive local economic growth

Fuelled by increased competition and digital disruption companies continuously need to innovate to streamline processes, drive down costs and meet client needs, therefore, CIOs globally are prioritising driving innovation through technology. Chief investment officer at Business Connexion, Matthew Blewett, believes a culture of innovation will be key to survival.



The company will be hosting the second [My World of Tomorrow Africa Conference and Exhibition](#) in October this year. Themed "An African evolution of technology and innovation", the three-day technology experience provides a much needed platform for organisations to exhibit future products and services by leading innovative brands.

"Environments like My World of Tomorrow Africa encourage foreign investment and help to break down social and technology barriers," says Blewett. "It provides a platform to showcase what is already out there and what can be made possible through technology in the future."

With local innovation comes economic opportunity

Local innovation and entrepreneurship could also play a massive role in driving down South Africa's high unemployment rate. "With local innovation comes economic opportunity. There are already a number of examples where local innovation has led to great things, from malaria test kits to navigational aids for visually impaired people and mHealth solutions that make remote healthcare a reality. These home-grown solutions are proof that we have the ability to address local issues with local innovation," says Blewett. "What we need now, is a platform to showcase that innovation does not only rest in the hands of large multinationals, but with each individual that comes up with a great idea."

This is precisely what MyWorld of Tomorrow aims to do. "From a conference perspective we have a fantastic line-up of international and local speakers that will focus on themes such as the Internet of Things, cybersecurity, social media legislation, renewable energy, future technology trends and more," he says.

"The exhibition, that runs alongside the conference and only wraps up on the Saturday, will showcase innovation, allowing the public to engage and interact with the world of today and tomorrow. It is important to note, however, that the event is just one part of a broader vision, which is to create a movement around innovation in Africa. We believe that if we can get the conversation started around African innovation to solve African issues, we will see a rise in local solutions to the problems we face on the continent."

Doing business in the era of consumerism

The "always-on, always connected" lifestyle has changed the way in which people interact with organisations. This era of consumerism has also fundamentally changed the way in which organisations need to do business. Discussions around IoT are critical for Africa considering that Gartner forecasts that by this year there will be 4.9 billion connected things in use. According to the research house, this will reach 25 billion by 2020.

"Enterprises not only have to keep pace with rapidly changing trends, but must understand their customers better, develop sales cycles with a more personal touch, and find new, innovative ways of engaging with customers in order to remain competitive. The blurring lines between the physical and digital worlds mean that traditional ways of working will no longer be relevant. While this comes with its own set of challenges it also means there are significant opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators in South Africa and the rest of the continent," Blewett concludes.

About MyWorld of Tomorrow

MyWorld of Tomorrow is an African-led movement inspired by technological innovation and bringing thought leaders, communities and experiences together under one roof, creating discussion and solutions for the Internet of Things (IoT) and its meaning for Africa. Far more than just a conference and exhibition, MyWorld of Tomorrow is a platform for interaction and knowledge sharing in the technology and innovation space across industries.

MyWorld of Tomorrow is where technology and humanity intersect to bring us the solutions of the future. By bringing thought leaders from a diverse array of industries together, Business Connexion through MyWorld of Tomorrow creates an exciting space that inspires people to unlock, explore, share and create ideas that can positively contribute to our future through technological innovation.

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