

Power Computers: Leading in total IT solutions

By Godfrey Lutego

TANZANIA is blessed with a lot of computer companies but when one talks of Total IT solutions, Power Computers Telecommunications is a household name.

"We are unique because we have everything at one roof, a good showroom, training, hardware and softwares," Shakil Dharamsi, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of Power Computers Telecommunication Limited, says in an interview.

He says he has excelled in the computers industry because he has combined all the three divisions, training, software and hardware under one roof housed in a good showroom at the head office, Elia complex and Shoppers Plaza branch in Dar es Salaam and Mwanza branch respectively. "We are ahead in terms of total IT solutions," Shakil says.

"Computer solutions are made up of the hardware, the software and the services that integrate and support them. Without all three working together, the solution is not really a solution. It is just a technology.

"At Power Computers Telecommunications, we combine the three aspects together to provide our customers with the best brand name computer equipment and peripherals, the widest selection of the software solutions and the best technical expertise in a wide range of supports services. Whether you are

buying your first office computer or need to upgrade the computing power and capabilities of an entire company, you can rely on us to develop the best possible solution," Shakil observes.

According to the company brochure, their total IT solutions entails web solution, technical supports and maintenance, training centre package, software, hardware, network set up and maintenance, enterprise solutions and tally accounting package.

It is a one stop centre where services offered are time effective, products and services offered are cost effective and clients are provided with genuine, high quality and reliable products and services, prompt after sales service from well educated and professional personnel whose skills are continuously upgraded. "We are constantly tuning our solutions according to market demands yet we are consistently growing and expanding," he says.

Shakil says their vision is to serve their clients with the best computing and office solution so long as they have strong financial strength. "Our mission is to understand customers' needs and efficiently

provide the most effective computing solutions to meet those needs," Shakil says.

Power Computers Telecommunication Limited, an associate of Tanzania Road Haulage (1980) Company of Dar es Salaam, has come a long way. It was formed in 2001 with a staff

of four but to date, it has grown substantially to more than 80 personnel thanks to a good management and a persistent focus and experience in delivering the best possible solutions by directly selling computer products and services on industry standards.

Since then, it has become one of the country's most preferred providers of computer products and services required for customers to build their information technology and internet infrastructures dealing in all major brands, Toshiba, Dell, Canon, Epson etc.

He says their customers are mainly government ministries, large companies and small medium entrepreneurs. To those customers, they provide training to the personnel and one of the beneficiary is the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children.

Shakil says they have trained quite a number of secretaries from that ministry to equip them with the latest computer technical know-how. "We train the secretaries to help them use computers and know how to attend to customers," he says, adding that the idea is to empower as many personnel as possible with computer knowledge to ease their job.

He says they provide short certificate courses in Microsoft Office suite, Networking, desktop publishing (graphics and web design), MCSE, LINUX, RED HAT and



Shakil Dharamsi

CISCO IT programmes, professional management courses, i.e leadership skills and customer service.

In software solutions, they provide website designing and hosting, versatile inventory systems, payroll, asset management and other customized software and tally accounting package while in hardware solutions, they provide their clients with servers, desktops and laptops from Dell, Hp, Acer and Toshiba, all types of accessories and consumables, BOL phones and internet modems, a large variety of printers, photocopiers, fax machines and scanners and gives them networking and technical support to smoothen operation.

Shakil boasts of a lot

of achievements because he believes, they have run their company in line with their vision and mission. However, he observes, despite the achievements, they are continuously monitoring their objectives.

"We train personnel continuously. It is always not enough (skill development). If one knows hardware, we teach him softwares and vice versa. Our drivers are learning computers, cleaners go to learn English, it is continuous," he says, reacting positively to President Jakaya Kikwete's recent decision to form an independent ministry dealing with ICT.

"If take President Kikwete's decision positively, but there is a lot to be done on IT. So far we are doing 10 per cent of the

ICT business industry. IT industry in the country has not reached many people. It has reached only 5-10%. You cannot blame government for this shortfall because the common sense prevails, you cannot promote use of computers while your people are dying due to poverty. If you tell them to choose between livelihood and computer, they will give priority to livelihood and education," he says.

However, he is quick to caution people about the importance of IT by advising them to spare their meagre income or resources to access IT for their development rest they are left behind in this era of science and technology. "People should not just wait for the government to avail them with the IT technology,

rather they should invest themselves in IT.

He believes there are people who do not have money and yet they want to learn IT and others who have money but spend it on other unnecessary things. "These are the people who'd rather buy a TV with dual purpose or use (TV and IT) so that they can also access IT and learn it. They should use money for a good purpose," he challenged the public.

Because many Tanzanians have no access to IT, Shakil says his company is trying to help quite a number of them to access IT and so far they have offered 30 students from the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children with free computer courses that would help them acquire the IT technical know how, at least the basics of it.

It also arranged for secondary and primary schools exhibition in 2007 and has given two laptops to students through promotion done on their website. In the exhibitions, he says, they encouraged people to field in questions for more help and instructions and it paid a lot. However, they feel the government has not done a lot to equip her personnel with IT now that the government intends to go e-government in running its affairs soon or later.

However, Shakil admits they have not done anything big to help out with hospital and agriculture basically because he is not involved with the industries and also because, hospitals need specialized technology which

they have not acquired yet. But he believes, with money available, they can venture into that with full speed. "IT needs more money but the money is not there, what can you do with the little you have?."

To him, media promotion might be the best solution. It needs promotion to cut across the message to the government leaders and the public in general that, IT is equally important now as other services and needs a quick attention to enable many people access it for their development and for the betterment of the industry and the business in general.

But, he is worried that might not soon be achieved because the media is not doing the necessary publicity and when the few does, the targeted audience is not there. For example, he says, those who are in computer industry, they normally don't watch TV because they are most of the time, busy with their computers and the rest who watch TV and the IT adverts aired does not have computer or access to it.

Even in the print media, many IT adverts and supplements are done in English papers which do not have wide readership compared to Kiswahili papers which command a big number of readers, but have no IT ads.

Generally, it needs a lot of investment to make the IT industry a dream come true. Let us name it (investment), and Power Computers Telecommunication will provide it, so is there motto. Let us help them.