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CAREER

Issue 10 | February 2017

FOR


ramco
GROUP

RAMCO GROUP PUBLICATION

Chairman's Message

Ramco Group entered an exciting phase in 2016; the Group has been on a journey to becoming more people-focused. Moving forward the Group will be involved in a lot of employee-centric programmes in order to build a motivated and professional workforce. It has been our long-standing philosophy to build strong relationships with our people and our customers with the aim of it becoming the benchmark against our competitors - making us the employer of choice.

Dr. Stephen R. Covey, an American author, businessman and keynote speaker once said, 'Treat your employees exactly the way you want them to treat your best customers.' Our vision is to create opportunities for all our employees to realize their full potential. Moving forward the Group has put together

an HR structure that will ensure employees' needs are looked after so that they can perform effectively. We aim to continue promoting a culture which fosters an ethos of teamwork and mutual respect.

I truly believe that each one of us will play their role accordingly to ensure we meet this objective. Let us all work together in making Ramco Group an unstoppable force to be reckoned with; one that creates enormous value for its people, customers, and stakeholders.

I wish you a great year ahead full of good health and prosperity.

Best wishes,
Kirit Patel



Our Philosophy is: "Every Relationship is Family and Family Comes First."

EDITORIAL TEAM

a CreativeEdge design

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For any feedback on Core or if you want to join our editorial team, drop your comments & suggestions in your company's suggestion box or e-mail us at core@ramco.co.ke



- PRINT, PACK
- DESIGN, PR
- PAPER

Tel: 0739 8

A Bit of History

We've been tracing the history of our companies in the order in which they joined the Group. In the 9th issue of Core, we featured ASL Packaging and in this issue we shine a light on ASL Heavy Fabrication Division.

ASL Ltd HFD joined Ramco Group in 1999 as ASL Ltd - Heavy Fabrication Division under the leadership of Bala Murali and a team of 10 personnel. To date, the company is synonymous with the manufacturing of unparalleled quality stainless steel products. Currently, the company handles turnkey projects from design stage, fabrication, delivery, installation and commissioning.

At inception, the company's products included dairy processing equipment, commercial kitchen and bakery equipment, industrial tanks and stainless steel piping work for various industries. The company has since expanded to manufacturing of turnkey dairy plants, stainless steel balustrades, pressed steel tanks and essential oil distillation plants. ASL-HFD has received several accolades among them for being the pioneers of essential oil distillation equipment by the United Nations.

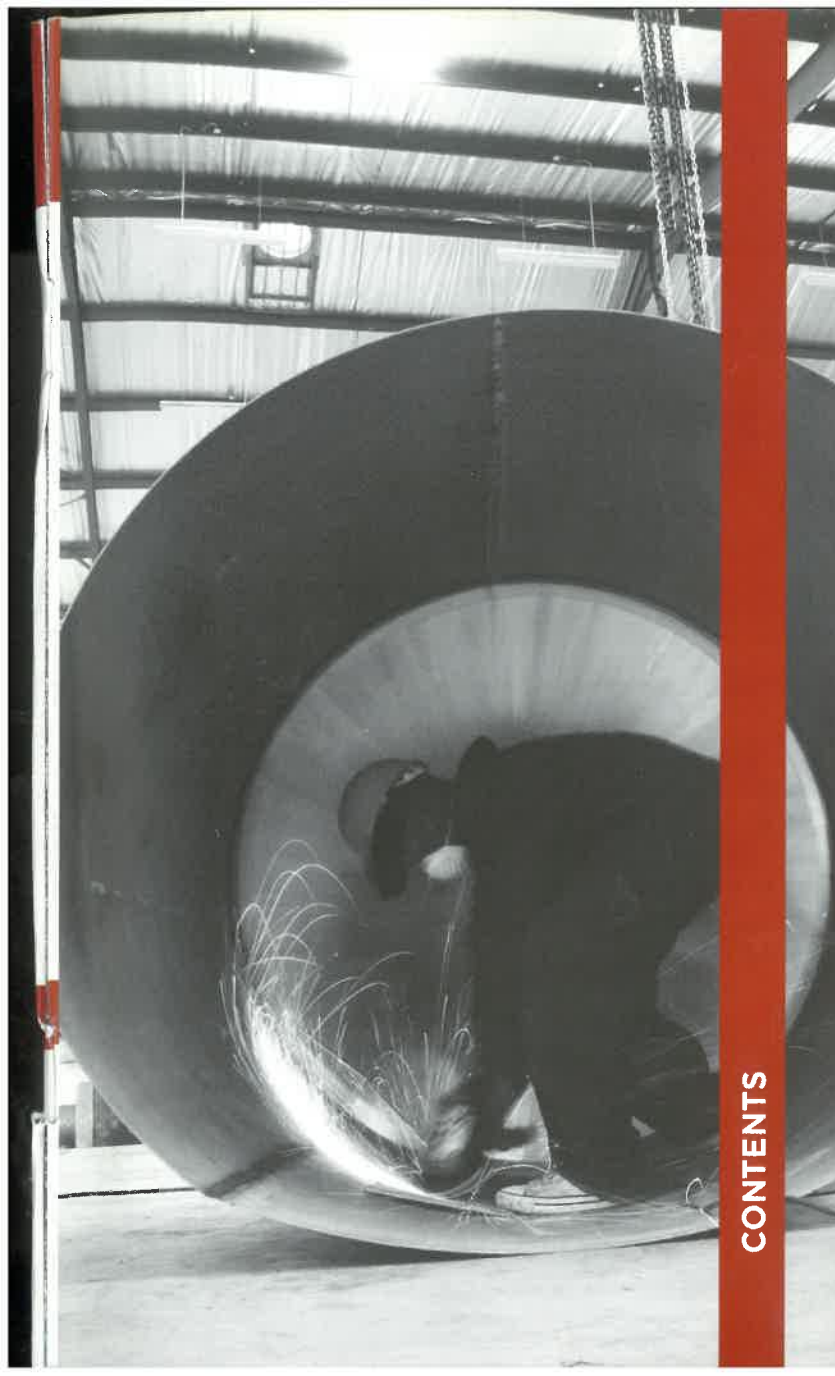
The company has recently installed a fully automatic Column & Boom TIG welding machine and a Universal Metal Working machine. These machines will improve the quality of work and processing time in general.

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° E R O C
RAMCO GROUP PUBLICATION

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Ramco Group companies have to-date been operating as separate entities without clear groupings or sectors. This has now changed with the establishment of 5 distinct verticals that each company falls under. This grouping helps us internally to strategise, plan and manage ourselves. They also help externally when we talk to customers about the Group as a whole and what we can offer them beyond just one company.

PRINT



RAMCO PLEXUS



RAMCO PRINTING



POLYTECHNIC INDUSTRIES LTD



PLATINUM PACKAGING



ASL PACKAGING LIMITED



PRINT STORE



MARKET POWER



FLEXOWORLD LTD



BROEKHOF AFRICA LTD



ECO PALLETS



IVIDIAN UGANDA

HARDWARE



RAMCO EKON



ASL LIMITED TRADING DIVISION



JUMA



ASL HARDWARE LIMITED



CROWN HARDWARE



RAMCO HARDWARE LTD



ASL LIMITED



ASL LIMITED

OFFICE



RAMCO KORA



Sai Office S KENYA UGANDA TANZANIA RWANDA



OIL



OFFICEMART KENYA, TANZANIA



SEAL HONEY LIMITED THE STATIONERY MASTERS

LINO STATIONERS

MANUFACTURING



RAMCO ALTUS



KENTAINERS



ASL LIMITED HEAVY FABRICATION DIVISION



ASL LIMITED STEEL DIVISION



ASL LIMITED WIRE & CABLE DIVISION



ASL LIMITED CHEMICALS DIVISION



ASTRAL



RAMCO CHEMICALS LTD



IVIDIAN KENYA

SERVICES



RAMCO ORITŞU



ASL CREDIT LIMITED



TRAVELSHOPPE



UCT AFRICA



ASL SERVICES LIMITED

What do our vertical names mean?



RAMCO PLEXUS

PLEXUS is an intricate network or web-like formation, similar to our print and packaging sector which has a strong presence, providing solutions from creative concept to finished product.



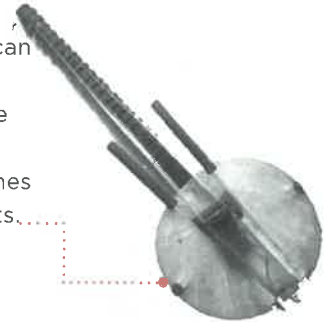
RAMCO EKON

EKON is an African name that means strength or power. We're industry leaders in the hardware sector and our operations stretch across the East African region. We chose the name Ekon to symbolise our strength and heritage.



RAMCO KORA

KORA is a traditional West African musical instrument. The name symbolizes the instrumental role of our office supplies and office automation sector which stretches across 4 countries with 17 outlets.



RAMCO ALTUS

ALTUS is a Latin word which means big or deep. And when it comes to manufacturing, we're big. With 6 manufacturing companies specialising in a variety of industrial products including custom stainless steel products, plumbing pipes and electrical cables.



RAMCO ORITSU

ORITSU is an Asian derivative that means 'being the right partner'. We thought this was a perfect name for our services division as it symbolizes the variety of services that we have to offer.



Senior leadership align their roles in Ramco Group



Amit Patel,
Chief Executive Officer

Briefly explain what your new role entails.

I am now the Chief Executive Officer of Ramco Group. I am now responsible for the overall direction of the Group, strategy and ensuring that we meet our vision.

How would you describe your journey within the Group since you began?

My journey began in September 1996, as an employee at Ramco Printing Works.

I was based at Sheikh Karume road and then moved to Industrial Area. Initially, I worked with the team on ground and learnt the basics of printing and the various machines that the company had.

The press was a new venture, with high finance costs and in those days with a turnover of Kshs 17m a year. We literally worked round-the-clock, 24/7 - 365 days a year. The company grew to approximately Kshs 2 billion turnover over 20 years with approximately 500 staff members and state-of-the-art equipment.

You are solely responsible for where you are in life, be it personal or professional. Take ownership of the situation you're in and make the corrective measures needed to achieve your dreams.

How do you see the Group changing in the next 5 years and how do you see yourself creating that change?

We have created verticals, a board and have a methodology to measure and improve the companies on the 3 pillars of ICE. That is,

investor satisfaction, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction, which I will ensure is delivered. I will provide the support, framework and energy to ensure the Group moves to the next phase.

What is your biggest priority in this new position and how do you hope to achieve it?

My biggest priority is to resolve the employee structure and create a harmonized, efficient, productive and motivated team, that is smart, aggressive, innovative and works as a family.

Who is the one person who's had tremendous impact on you as a leader?

There are four people in my life who have brought me to where I am. At this point I will share with you one who has continued to believe in me and my capabilities and my desire for us to be the best and that is my father, KR Patel. Our relationship is special, as it is professional, personal and very inspirational.

What's your parting shot for the Ramco Group Family?

You are solely responsible for where you are in life, be it personal or professional. Take ownership of the situation you're in and make the corrective measures needed to achieve your dreams.



Hasit Patel, Chief Operations Officer

Briefly explain what your new role entails.

I am the Chief Operations Officer of Ramco Group. Previously, my roles were specific to certain companies – my new role is more universal across all the companies. It primarily looks into the operations of the organization to ensure that we are running optimally and that the systems are set to deliver key information to the board on daily basis. Part of my role also includes gauging the potential of our leaders and ensuring their continuous growth both as leaders and in their careers.

My second role is to ensure that employee satisfaction within the group is enhanced and that we create a working environment that our employees enjoy and one that brings out the best in them.

What is your biggest priority at the moment in this role and how do you plan to achieve it?

My biggest priority is to focus on the businesses that require urgent attention. The ICE team tries to spend at least 2 hours a week at the premises of the business unit and remotely supervise during the rest of the week. In terms of employee satisfaction our current priority is to deploy an effective performance management system throughout the group so that we start recognizing hard working individuals or those who are improving at an accelerated rate.

I am hoping that the first change that employees feel is the change in attitude and mindset of their leaders.

Briefly explain how you will encourage employees to focus on all round improvement - from an individual level all the way to the Group level.

On the process side we intend to define the growth path that leads to Group level

employment. This path also specifies what the individual must achieve in order to qualify for the next role.

We then intend to create a culture whereby employees feel comfortable to convey their challenges and can request for support from their respective companies or from the Group board so as to achieve their growth goals. We also intend to start a university style education system whereby employees can learn and realise their growth.

What other changes should employees expect?

I am hoping that the first change that employees feel is the change in attitude and mindset of their leaders. We want to move away from a culture where we micromanage to one where employees are empowered and are able to innovate and operate with freedom.

What is the best piece of advice you've ever received as a leader?

If you have more knowledge than someone, you should teach them what you know. If they have more knowledge then encourage them to grow their talent. As a leader you don't have to be the best at everything but you must ensure that the people you lead grow and believe that you have nothing but their growth as your priority.



Denis Nyongesa, Group HR Director

Ramco Group welcomed a new Group Human Resources Director, Denis Nyongesa. We had a chance to sit with him and get to know him a bit better.

When did you join Ramco Group?

I joined Ramco Group on 15th June 2016. I am overseeing the HR function across the group. I'll be working closely with Group Board of Directors (GBOD), CEOs, Vertical HR managers and HR officers.

What's your background in HR?

I have been a HR Generalist for over 18 years. I worked with Coca Cola Coastal Bottlers

Ltd. in Mombasa for about 5 years before moving to Unga Group. Later I worked as a HR consultant for a few months before joining Doshi Group, located along Mombasa Road. I later moved to Copy Cat Group before joining Ramco Group.

What's your biggest priority at Ramco Group at the moment?

I would like to create a culture of accountability among the employees. I also want to embed a performance management culture across the group. When employees achieve what is expected of them, managers are able to reward and recognize them accordingly, and on the flip side, when employees don't achieve what's expected of them, then we can come up with programs that will remedy the poor performance e.g. coaching, mentoring or training.

I look forward to helping create an enabling environment where all employees' potential can be realized.

I aspire to help come up with programs that would make employees proud of working for Ramco Group, programs that will keep all employees engaged and cause transformation in the way we treat employees. I will not be able to do this alone, I will heavily rely on the

support of the GBOD, management, union and all employees. I believe as a team, we shall get there.

So far what has been your experience since joining the Group?

There is a lot of goodwill among the employees. There is total commitment from shareholders, the GBOD and all top management. I also met with all Group HRs and they are looking forward to a fresh approach to things. I have met with employees in several feedback sessions and had fruitful discussions. The next step is to implement what we've discussed, translate our aspirations in little and consistent achievable milestones.

What should employees expect from you?

Expect a more systematic way of doing things in regards to HR functions. I look forward to working with employees who are passionate about their work and those who want to challenge management when they over achieve. If we lay a good foundation, everyone's work becomes easier. Everyone should go out of their way to exceed expectations so that we can achieve our objectives, then we can look back and celebrate achievements together.

You can find me on denis@ramco.co.ke or VOIP Number 9142

ASL Trading upgrades its Lusaka Road showroom and opens in Juja City Mall

ASL Trading has given its Lusaka Road showroom a fresh new look with improved lighting and displays that allow customers to see, feel and touch the full product range. The feedback of both customers and the ASL sales team has been very positive.

The company expanded its wings by opening an additional showroom at Juja City Mall. An additional showroom in Mlolongo, along Mombasa Road is set to open doors within the third week of January. The company's vision is to become the market leader in the supply of hardware and ancillary products, for the construction and manufacturing businesses in Kenya.



"The improved showroom allows us to display a larger product range and gives customers the opportunity to see options and compare products. We believe this will translate into a better customer experience and improved sales."

Bharat Patel, ASL Trading



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A new addition to the Group

Ramco Group has added one more feather to its cap. ASL Ltd - Chemicals Division has started its operations on Lusaka Road under the stewardship of Ashwani Ganjoo. The Chemicals Division is involved in importing and

distributing industrial chemicals for the paint, detergent and cosmetics industries. As Ashwani commented, "Our focus is to source and import world-class raw materials from across the globe and supply them to

industries across Kenya and East Africa. The company is committed to giving its clients unmatched quality with competitive prices and honest, friendly service."

OTL awarded by Canon



Office Technologies was awarded by Canon for its achievement in growth of the photo video sector. The event took place at the Enashipai Resort and Spa in Naivasha. The award was handed over by Stefano Zenti the Head of Emerging Markets Business Unit, Canon Europe and received by OTL's Sales and Marketing Director Beena Patel. The event was held during the first Canon Central and North Africa Partner Conference. OTL has engaged in a number of film associations within Kenya to promote the purchase of Canon Filming Equipment, while also assisting the end users to attain financial support to purchase.

Astral Pipes start production of new range fittings

Astral Pipes began the production of a new range of pipes (CPVC and UPVC fittings). These pipes can be used for plumbing for both interiors and exteriors. CPVC and UPVC pipes are not easily corroded hence their life span is much longer than that of other pipes. Astral Pipes Managing Director Gautam Patel commented;

"We're always looking to give our customers more variety when it comes to our products. Since we began production, we've received

positive feedback from our customers and we are hopeful that we'll attract even more customers."



Ramco Hardware rebrands

In order to keep with the times, Ramco Hardware celebrated their 40th anniversary with a change in their corporate identity. The new logo reflects simplicity whilst at the same time retaining the corporate colour red.

Ramco Hardware started in 1976 and has been recognised as a key supplier in the building industry and has attracted a loyal clientele over the years. They have further expanded with additional outlets in the same area and houses a Duracoat Home Solutions Centre.

LIFE BEGINS AT 40

FOR 40 YEARS, WE'VE BEEN THE BACKBONE OF KENYA'S HARDWARE INDUSTRY. AND NOW WE'VE GOT A BRAND NEW LOOK TO CELEBRATE.



Tujenge Pamoja

SHEIKH KARUME ROAD • +254 720 654 010 • +254 786 654 010
INFO@RAMCOHARDWARE.CO.KE • WWW.RAMCOHARDWARE.CO.KE

ASL HFD secures international client



ASL HFD has added IL & FS (an Indian Infrastructure & Financing company) to their list of international clients. IL & FS is sponsoring a dairy project in Kenya through USAID, India. HFD will be supplying the entire machinery as a turnkey project. The value is around USD 700,000/-.

This is a great win for ASL HFD as they expand into international markets.

As Bala Murali, Director ASL HFD said, "This is a huge achievement for our company. Most of our clients have been local and we are excited to secure such a well-established international client into our portfolio. This is the second international client that we've signed after United Nations, Geneva."

Polythene invests in special bag-making machine

Polythene has invested in a special bag-making machine. The machine is used in the production of plastic bags that have an ultra-sonic sealed edge for better display of products at the point of sale. The machine also produces re-sealable and non re-sealable bags such as the ones used by courier service providers and duty free shops. It has the capacity to produce 50,000 bags a day, therefore meeting customers' demands. Additionally, it can produce plastic bags of various widths ranging from 20mm to 400mm. These are some examples of the bags the machine has manufactured.



OFFICEMART branches get a 'face lift'



Office Mart branches now have a new look and feel. The upgrade features new shelving that allows the ultimate customer experience with easier layouts. The stores also have more space which allows for easy movement within the store.

"We plan on expanding our presence countrywide and improving customer experience. We are optimistic that our customers will enjoy their shopping experience at any one of our stores. Vikesh Shah, General Manager Office Mart



Ramco Printing invests in a folding and gluing machine



Ramco Printing has invested in a folding and gluing machine called Bobst Ambition that produces a range of folded and glued products. These include: presentation folders, wallets, brochures and CD/DVD sleeves. The machine is versatile as it is able to produce various products flawlessly.

Ramco Printing has a long-standing tradition of excellence and innovation. In the printing industry, versatility is a key component. Our customers should expect a lot more innovative products in the future.

Sneha Patel, Marketing Manager Ramco Printing

OTL introduces new range of printers

OTL is now a distributor of Canon's new range of printers. These include PIXMA G1400, PIXMA G2400 and PIXMA G3400. The printers were launched in the country at the Intercontinental Hotel, Nairobi.

This new range is capable of printing up to 7,000 colour and 6,000 black pages from a single set of ink bottles, using Canon's new Continuous Ink Supply System. Each printer uses a refillable ink tank to allow for volume printing and hence reduces ink expenditure.

In attendance was Hendrik Verbrugghe, Marketing Director, Canon Middle East and CCNA who made this announcement during the launch of Canon's new African business division dubbed Canon Central and North Africa (CCNA).



EcoPallets scaling new heights



EcoPallets has made significant progress in the Kenyan market since joining the Group in December 2014. The company has acquired many new clients in the fresh produce export sector that are doing full-scale tests with their pallets, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive! On average, EcoPallets saves their clients Ksh.1000/- per pallet shipped, and when you multiply those savings over monthly volumes, the financial benefits are quite dramatic.

The company's pallets were recently recognized as the only pallets worldwide to be a USDA Certified 100% Biobase Product. In a global market that is increasingly concerned with the environment, this certification provides clients with a valuable eco-marketing platform and makes exporters from East Africa that much more competitive around the world.

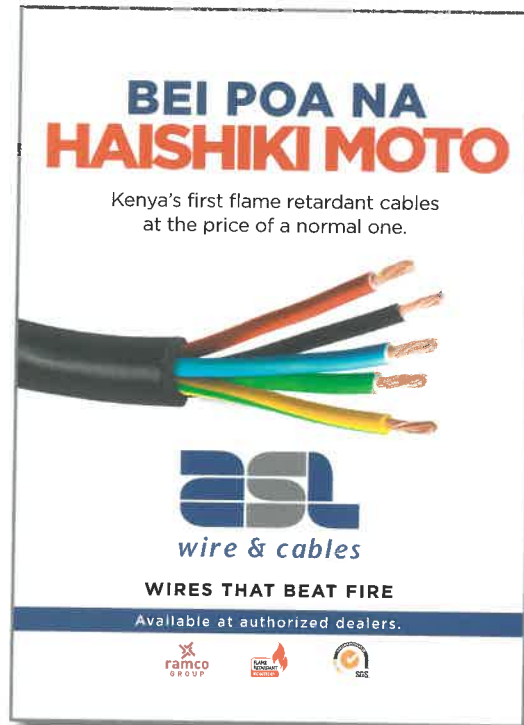
The team is working on several new pallet designs that further reduce weight without any compromise on quality. The team looks forward to continued growth and success as they expand their client base and product line.

ASL Wire & Cable first in East Africa to produce flame retardant cables

ASL Wire and Cable have pioneered in manufacturing a flame retardant cable in East Africa. The new cables provide an important layer of protection which helps the cables meet fire safety standards. Customers had the opportunity to see the cables at the Vibrant Kenya Expo that was organized by the Hindu Council of Kenya. Customers can now contact ASL Wire and Cable to make their orders.

We don't compromise when it comes to safety and quality of our products and we hope the clients that purchase this new product can attest to that.

Unni Krishnan, CEO ASL Wire & Cable



**BEI POA NA
HAISHIKI MOTO**

Kenya's first flame retardant cables
at the price of a normal one.

asl
wire & cables

WIRES THAT BEAT FIRE

Available at authorized dealers.

ramco GROUP
KARIAKI INDUSTRIES
SGS

ICT installs new firewall to enhance security



ICT installed a new firewall-Fortigate to enhance online security within the Group. Being among the best firewalls globally, Fortigate allows the monitoring of each user's online trends and data consumption. One can also block access to specific sites that are unnecessary to the nature of the business for instance social media sites.

Kentainers develops plastic manhole junctions

Kentainers have developed a new product; plastic manhole junctions. The plastic manhole junctions will be used to replace concrete manholes and also as junction sections for optic fibres countrywide. Due to their water-tight quality, plastic manhole junctions prevent water from seeping through the crevices. Plastic chambers have many advantages over concrete chambers. Among them is easy installation and affordable maintenance, the fact that they prevent water seepage makes them the best option - especially during the heavy rains. The company is proud to be working on this project in conjunction with the Government of Kenya and Huawei.



ASL Cables exhibit at Vibrant Kenya Expo



ASL Wire & Cable Division exhibited their product range at the Vibrant Kenya Expo at Visa Oshwal Center.

The event was organized by the Hindu Council of Kenya and had over 60 exhibitors. The event was a great opportunity for ASL Cables to get product and brand exposure with many builders and developers visiting the stand.

As CEO Unni Krishnan commented, "It was the first time for us to exhibit at this event and we were pleased with the attendance and people traffic that came by our stand. We hope that over the coming weeks, the opportunities materialize into new clients."

ICT simplifies financial reporting for Group companies

ICT bought a financial consolidation tool-Profix, which will enable the Group's financials to be consolidated, therefore giving the board members an overall picture of the company's financial position. It is difficult to consolidate the Group's financials when all companies are using different softwares but with this software, the process becomes much easier and efficient.

Flexoworld installs new proofing solution

The Flexoworld prepress studio team had a training session with Shajith of GMG Dubai. He was in Kenya to install a new proofer software and train our studio team on how to use it. The software combined with a new Epson proofer from Sai Office Supplies now allows Flexoworld to offer clients press matching proofs before plates are made.

The new system allows flexo printers to reduce their press make-ready time and achieve colour accuracy faster. This translates into more jobs printed in a day, faster deliveries, reduced costs and happier customers. An all-round win for Flexoworld and its clients.



Kentainers partners with Nairobi City Council on a beautification project



Kentainers partnered with the county government of Nairobi on a project to beautify the area along Airport North Road in Embakasi. Companies along the mentioned road voluntarily took part in this project as a way of giving back to the community they operate in. To this end, Kentainers planted flowers along its perimeter wall and branded

the fence. "It's important to care for our environment, everything we do as individuals and as companies has a direct or indirect impact on the environment. It's about making eco-conscious choices in your everyday life, that's the only way we will be able to maintain what we have," a staff member commented.

ASL Wire & Cable introduce anti-rodent cables

ASL Wire and Cable have started manufacturing an anti-rodent cable that rodents cannot chew on. Rodents cause a lot of damage by chewing on cables resulting in shorts and cable replacement which can be tedious and expensive.

“Anti-rodent cables will save our clients the big headache of replacing damaged cables while giving them long-term savings and a safer environment.”

Unni Krishnan, CEO ASL Wire & Cable

RGL sponsors Muthaiga Golf Card for 4th year

Ramco Group partnered with Muthaiga Golf Club 3 years ago to sponsor their golf score cards. The partnership has proved very successful for both parties with the Golf Club enjoying free golf card printing while Ramco Group having the opportunity to expose its brand and its companies.

As Group Marketing Director Derek Steel said, "Talking directly to decision makers as they play golf provides an ideal opportunity to promote our brands and increase awareness of Ramco Group. This relationship is a win-win for both parties and we look forward to continue partnering with Muthaiga Golf Club."



Flexoworld meet Tanzania Flexo Printers

Flexoworld Director Derek Steel and Sales Manager Richard Okemwa attended a Flexfit Seminar in Dar es Salaam to meet all the flexo printers in the Tanzanian capital. The one-day seminar covered a wide range of flexo subjects from machinery, software to inks and plates.

The principal reason the Flexoworld team attended the event was to meet the Tanzanian printers and explore the possibility of supplying them plates from Kenya as opposed to importing from India and Dubai.



Richard and Derek also spent 2 more days visiting the printers' offices and learning more about their individual needs.

The trip opened doors into new markets and provided an opportunity to understand the customer needs in person.

Derek Steel, Group Marketing Manager

Travelshoppe and Etihad airways hold luncheon

Travelshoppe and Etihad Airways held a luncheon in Machakos for product awareness. Clients flying to various destinations in the world can now book their air ticket from Travelshoppe offices in Nairobi, Machakos and Nanyuki.



Etihad Airways and Travelshoppe officials pose for a group photo during the Travelshoppe Luncheon.

OTL and Canon hold a street photography competition

OTL in conjunction with Canon and House of Photography held a Selphy Street photography competition. Selphy is a range of Canon printers.

Students selected from various universities, were each loaned a camera and photography equipment. Their mission was to take the most captivating photographs according to the set guidelines. They were also required to print the photos on the Selphy printers. The top three students were each awarded with cameras and a Selphy printer.



Broekhof exhibits at IFTEX

Broekhof Africa took part in the 5th edition of the IFTEX (International Flower Trade Expo). The event was held at the Oshwal Centre and attracted over 200 exhibitors and more than 3,500 visitors from 50 countries. Broekhof Africa was proud to win the Best Stand Award - Silver category for Non-Perishable. As General Manager Matt Den Dulk said,

"The event serves as an opportunity for floriculture stakeholders to exhibit their products and is a great platform for us to showcase the Broekhof product range while networking with existing and potential clients."



ott partners with KONICA MINOLTA

Office Technologies is now an authorized partner of Konica Minolta range of products. Konica Minolta is a Japanese based technology firm whose product portfolio includes production print equipment, office equipment, medical imaging, graphic imaging optical devices and measuring instruments.

Among the products available in the Office Technologies store include production print equipment and entry to heavy volume multifunctional printers.



ICT introduces new network for the entire group

ICT introduced Aruba Network to the Group. Aruba is enhanced in regards to security and accessibility from non-Ramco members. Previously, when an outsider logged on to the network, they could access specific company's files and documents, therefore posing a security threat.

Currently when a guest wants to log on to the network, a ticket is generated which also comes with a one-off password that the guest can use.

Aruba also distinguishes between Ramco Group users and other users, therefore when an outsider logs on to the network, they cannot access the company's documents.

otl and Canon hold a DSLR filmmaking and photography workshop



OTL in partnership with Canon held a two-week photographers training at the OTL training centre.

The training featured 25 students selected from various universities and schools of journalism. They were taken through a crash course on filmmaking using DSLR cameras. OTL and Canon have always supported local talent in regard to photography and filmmaking in order to nurture the youths talents.

Flexoworld team attend Esko software training



The Flexoworld prepress studio team had a training session with Hilda & Johan from Esko Belgium. The two were in Kenya to promote their software portfolio and meet existing customers for product training. The five man studio team covered many softwares, shortcuts and ways to work more efficiently.

As Studio Manager Alfred said, "We learned so much. What we learned will make the prepress process easier, faster and more accurate. Very worthwhile."



ASL Steel introduces a new range of household products

ASL Steel introduced a new range of household products under the Sterling brand. These include: electric tea urns, iron boxes, electric kettles, cooking pots and pans, blenders among others.

The introduction of these products has seen ASL Steel expand their market in the consumer-based products sector. The products can be found countrywide in retail outlets such as Ukwala Supermarket and Choppis Enterprises and soon to all other major retail outlets. ASL Steel Sales Manager Manoj Upadhyay who has been at the centre of this project explained;

"The response from the market has been overwhelming, with some of our products selling out in four months. Our products are of good quality and the prices are very competitive. We hope to expand to other major outlets."



Ramco Hardware holds staff appreciation celebration

Ramco Hardware held a staff appreciation celebration at Sahara City Restaurant, off Mombasa Road.

All employees who had worked in the company for five, ten, fifteen and twenty years were awarded a certificate of long service according to their respective years of service. In addition to the certificates, the employees also received an energy-saving jiko dubbed *Jikokoa*.



ASL HFD celebrates long-serving employees

ASL HFD honoured its long-serving employees in a colourful event. The celebrations were in line with the Group's mission of appreciating employees who have served loyally over a

long period of time. The staff members were awarded various gifts depending on the years of service, among the gifts was a 50" flat screen TV and water dispensers.



James Njoroge receives a 50" flat screen TV from Amit Patel for 30 years of service in Ramco Group.

Ramco Group introduces a new HR recruitment module

Ramco Group introduced a group recruitment software that serves to:

- Make the recruitment process seamless for both the applicant, Group recruitment and induction manager.
- Update applicants on job positions available within Ramco Group.

- Attract a diverse and skilled workforce.
- Create a structured on-boarding process.

Interested applicants can simply visit the Ramco Group website, select careers and view available vacancies or register and upload their resumé for archiving. So far the database has attracted over 4000 applicants.



ASL Packaging honours long-serving employees

The management and staff of ASL Packaging Limited appreciated long-serving employees. It was also a special day for Hasit as he thanked employees who began this journey with him and have diligently served this company since 1995. The event was held at Sahara City, off Mombasa Road.

76 employees who had worked for the company between 5-20 years were awarded, with a majority of the employees having



worked for ASL Packaging for more than 15 years. The employees received a certificate, a solar-charged torch and a modern cooking *jiko* dubbed *Jikokoa*. Hasit and Denis Nyongesa issued the certificates and took selfies with the employees.

Kentainers partners with the Aga Khan Foundation to supply water tanks

Kentainers in partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation collaborated to supply water tanks to 125 unprivileged schools in Nairobi and Mombasa. The project saw the installation of gutters to harvest rain water, tank bases and plumbing. It is estimated that 17 million Kenyans still lack access to clean and safe water.

"We are humbled to be part of such an important project that will impact the lives of so many individuals. Competition was tough but we are grateful that the Aga Khan Foundation saw it fit to partner with us." Commented a staff member.





Osman Athuman receiving a Canon EOS 1200D DSLR Camera from Hasit Patel

OTL celebrates long-serving staff

OTL held an annual award to recognize their long-serving staff members at Curries Restaurant in Parklands. The employees were honoured with certificates and mobile phones. The awards were handed to employees who had worked in the company for 5 and 10 years respectively.

Osman Athuman emerged as employee of the year after garnering a majority of

the votes from other staff members. He is part of the administration transport team but was awarded for his all-rounder trait and his positive attitude nature. Osman received a Canon EOS 1200D DSLR Camera. Additionally, staff members commented that he is always ready to assist every member of the organization whenever called upon.

Print Store holds end of year party and honours loyal employees

The Print Store team held their end of year party that also doubled as an event to celebrate loyal employees. Those who have been with the company for more than 5 years. The team enjoyed themselves as Josiah Okumali, Chief Shop Steward at Print Store explained;

"This has been by far our best Christmas party; we thank the management for the good gesture. A great meal was shared amongst all the staff and most importantly for recognizing the employees who have served for more than five years. Our families are in praise of the company after we took home

Jikokoa. They can now cook in the house as the *jiko* does not generate smoke, and has saved us on the purchase of charcoal as the *jiko* consumes minimal charcoal. *Hongera* to the management, we appreciate you."



Josiah Okumali receiving his energy-saving Jikokoa.



ASL Credit end of year Koroga

ASL Credit held a *Koroga* style end of year party at Curries Restaurant in Parklands. The team had a fun filled event and they each got to reveal their secret Santa. They then went ahead to explain why they chose get the specific gift for that person.

OTL go for team building

It was a fun-filled day for the OTL team when they attended a team building event at Karura Forest. Their fitness was put to the test when members of staff opted to walk the 5KMs, 10KMs and 15KMs trail. The team then proceeded to a luncheon where they got to enjoy mouth-watering delicacies as they bonded.



Travelshoppe end the year on a high note

Travelshoppe had a culmination of the year during their end of year party held at the 510 Bar and Restaurant, off James Gichuru Road. During the party, there were various activities such as raffles that people participated in and won different prizes.

Each department got the chance to make a presentation as well as a speech. All the employees were handed a Christmas goodie bag as a Christmas gift.



Polythene hosts employees to an end of year celebration

Polythene Industries hosted all its employees to an end of year party at Sahara City, off Mombasa Rd. This was a great opportunity for employees to socialize while celebrating all that they had achieved as a team in the year ended. The team took part in employee engagement activities as a bonding session.



ICT hosts a staff luncheon

ICT Africa held a staff luncheon at the Polythene Industries gym area. During the event, staff members were awarded for various achievements in the course of the year.

The awards recognized punctuality and attendance, excellence in performance, leadership skills and many more.

Astral Pipes holds end of year party

The Astral Pipes team held an end of year party at Sahara City, off Mombasa Road. This was the first ever end of year party since the company's inception in 2008. The event also doubled as an employee appreciation event.

All staff members who had served the company for more than one year were recognized by the management team. They were each awarded certificates and a token of appreciation for their dedication to the organization. All staff members were glad to receive a Christmas gift courtesy of the company. The team then enjoyed a delicious lunch and drinks thereafter.



Sai Office go on team building

The Sai Office team went for team building event at the Sawela Lodge in Naivasha. The staff members enjoyed the trip and took part in various fun-filled activities that were meant to strengthen their bond. They also appreciated motivational speeches that left them feeling inspired. To top it all off, they enjoyed a luncheon together and mingled.



Lino Stationers Christmas Luncheon

The Lino Stationers team held a Christmas luncheon at Kikopey Restaurant located along the Nakuru-Nairobi Highway. The team came together to celebrate and end the year on a high note. Earlier that day, all the staff members received a token of appreciation for their diligence and loyalty to the company. The gift tokens included a voucher worth KSHs. 2000. This is in line with the Group's mission of becoming people-focused and creating a motivated workforce.



Customer retention

Customer retention is on the minds of all businesses across the globe. As a group, we must come to terms with the rising cost of customer acquisition, businesses need to innovate and assume a proactive role in retaining clients.

Studies show that acquiring new customers can be significantly costlier than simply retaining and growing existing ones. The fact that customer profitability tends to increase over the life of a retained customer is added incentive for businesses to allocate more resources to sharpening their customer retention strategies.

Retaining the customer is key in growth of our organizations, and the following retention strategies will give some inspiration and practical examples to help improve customer retention rates. They address the above problems and provide actionable tips that can be implemented today to maximize retention.

1. Set customer expectations

A great way to foster loyal customers is to “under promise and over deliver” on the expectations you originally laid out in your agreement.

This clear vision enables your company to build KPIs around specific expectations and ensure you are always over delivering.

“A great way to foster loyal customers is to under promise and over deliver on the expectations you originally laid out in your agreement.”

Clients tend to remember negative experiences. So if you have over delivered on the past 20 occasions, but, once, you undelivered – your client will no doubt quote that negative experience as a reason to cancel his or her contract with you.

2. Be the expert

Businesses are becoming more and more dependent on services to run their operation. No matter what industry you occupy, if you can be the expert in your particular field, you will likely retain more customers. Becoming your customers’ trusted advisor will build customer loyalty and reduce customer disappointment.

Becoming a trusted source on the product(s) or service(s) you offer, means you build a relationship that leads to a dependency. Your customers will trust you, rely on you to give the best advice, and recognize you as an integral part of their business success.

If you want to build trust with clients, identify industry-specific problems currently facing those clients.

Give your clients a quick courtesy call – inform them of upcoming changes and provide some



insightful recommendations as to their best plan of attack. This proactive, personalized approach will bolster customer loyalty and render other customer retention strategies more effective.

3. Build trust through relationships

As the age old saying goes, you do business with people you trust. Trust is essential in business, and building relationships with clients will garner that trust.



4 Ways to becoming a happier you

We are a few weeks into the new year and as the year began, it gave each one of us a fresh start and a new promise. Forget about making resolutions that you won't keep and focus on becoming a happier you.

“Happiness is not something ready-made,
it comes from your actions.”

Dalai Lama

Give

It is often said that giving is better than receiving. This is true according to a research conducted by Social Psychologist Lizz Dunn.

The research shows that most people's sense of happiness is greater when they spend more on other people than on themselves.

Dr. Lizz Dunn's research showed that even those with little money reported greater happiness when their proportion of spending on others was bigger than on themselves.

A great example is demonstrated in Cami Walker's memoir *29 Gifts: How a month of giving can change your life*. At the age of 35, Cami was battling multiple sclerosis, a chronic neurological condition that made it difficult to lead a normal life. While seeking a solution to her depression after being hospitalized, she received a prescription from an African medicine woman, give to others for 29 days, 29 gifts. Cami embraced this challenge and dramatically saw her health and overall wellness improve and even launched a worldwide giving movement www.29gifts.org. Most of her gifts were simple, a phone call, spare change and hand wipes.

Connect with others

Great relationships play a big role in contributing to one's happiness. People with strong social relationships are happier and generally live longer than those without. Close relationships provide support, a sense of belonging and self-worth.

Have Gratitude

Alphonse Karr, a French journalist and author once said "Some people grumble that roses have thorns; I am grateful that thorns have roses." You can only find gratitude if you intentionally choose it every day.

Be Positive

A positive attitude helps one cope with the daily pressures of life. It brings optimism and inspiration. The benefits of positive emotions don't stop after a few minutes of the good feelings subsiding, they provide an enhanced ability to build skills and resources that can prove beneficial later in life.



Re-engineering leadership in talent management

Organizations around the world are struggling to strengthen their leadership pipelines. Yet over the past years, businesses fell further behind particularly in their ability to develop millennial leaders.

Eighty six percent of surveyed HR and business leaders cite leadership as one of their most important challenges.

A focus on leadership at all levels, coupled with consistent year over year spending in this area is key to building sustainable performance and engaging employees in the new world of work.

Weak leadership pipeline:

Unless developing leadership is treated as ongoing strategic initiatives by HR and the business, leadership pipelines will be weak and potentially impact the ability of the business to deliver on its strategy.

Where can companies start?

Start with commitment to leadership development from the top. Without CEO ownership, leadership development will likely never be a long-term commitment. Engage top executives to maintain a continuous investment in leadership development.

Develop inclusive leaders at all levels:

While many executives worry about top leadership, mid-level and first level leaders actually operate the company and are the future strategic leaders of the organizations. They also interact with customers every day. Capable and engaging managers and supervisors can drive performance, foster engagement and increase retention. This requires focus on growing segments of leaders such as millennials, global leaders and women - tailoring development to their unique needs and preferences.

Make talent development and succession priority:

Reward leaders for developing successors and sharing talent. Without a process to seed and feed the pipeline with the best, most diverse talent, your leadership investments will not deliver value.

Develop or leverage a capability model:

Build a framework for assessment, development and coaching. New models are now available, but companies can benefit by keeping the model simple and focusing on implementing leadership models and programs.

Extend boundaries to create new leadership development opportunities:

Ramco group is now in partnership with various universities, non-governmental organizations, and other third-party organizations to create a range of new leadership experiences, including pro bono and community service projects.



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