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January 2013



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RAMCO GROUP PUBLICATION

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As we welcome the new year, we look back at the strides that we, as a Group, have made in 2012. There have been a number of positive developments from all quarters in the form of new partnerships, new companies joining the Group and various awards and achievements. I applaud all those who have been a part of these endeavours.

Our vision as Ramco Group continues to be lived out through each and every one of our people as we work towards becoming a world class conglomerate. We continue on this journey with the aim of surpassing our targets and ultimately realizing our goals in ways that will continue to portray Ramco Group as a leader in the various regions we operate in.

Let us all commit to challenge ourselves to be better, do better and achieve more this year. Let us aspire to be leaders and visionaries in our work and set the bar high for those who come after us.

May 2013 bring forth unprecedented successes and renewed zeal to achieve our shared goals.

Kirit Patel

"The future belongs to those who see possibilities before they become obvious." John Scully

CORE IS BACK!

After a brief hiatus, Core is back with a well-deserved bang! Brimming with news items on the various entities that make up Ramco Group, interesting tidbits on what has been happening within the Group and articles on how to improve your work life, it makes for an engaging read.

We would like to thank everyone who encouraged us to make a comeback and for your continuous support throughout this journey.

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 on core@ramco.co.ke

A BIT OF HISTORY

In previous issues, we have traced the historical journey of Ramco Group right from the inception of Rambhai & Company as the principal company, followed thereafter by Ramco Hardware, Juma Hardware Store and ASL Steel Division.

Fifth in line was Polythene Industries Limited which was started in 1986. Based along Mombasa Road right in the thriving industrial hub of Nairobi, it has proved to be a formidable force in provision of complete packaging solutions. The polythene and flexible packaging industry has experienced fluctuations due to Government legislations over the years but through sheer hard work and visionary determination, Polythene Industries weathered each storm and came out stronger at the other end. With 24 years of experience in manufacturing expertise, professionalism and dedicated customer support, they have been able to introduce new products and lines that are leading brands in the market.

The test of a great company is its ability to bounce back in the face of uncertainty and change. Polythene Industries' resilience teaches us how to keep going even when the chips are down and keep striving to be better at what we do; a lesson that applies both in our personal and work lives. As a Group, let us embody an irrepressible spirit and push each other forward in order to succeed as a team.

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RAMCO GROUP PUBLICATION

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4% OF KPMG TOP 100 WINNERS ARE RAMCO GROUP COMPANIES

Four Ramco Group companies made it into the prestigious KPMG Top 100 Mid-Sized Companies 2012 annual survey which focuses on recognizing the strides of fast growing mid-sized companies in East Africa. The award gala which took place at The Carnivore Grounds on 12th October saw ASL Credit pave the way for Ramco Group by making their debut at No. 17. Travelshoppe moved 26 places higher to come in at No. 70 while Creative Edge and Marketpower International followed at No. 76 and 96 respectively. Hearty congratulations to the 4 companies and we hope to see more awards in future.



ASL Credit team in a jubilant mood as they celebrate their first Top 100 award



Creative Edge team all smiles as they receive their award



The Marketpower team looking dapper as they show off their trophy



The Travelshoppe team display their award and certificate

RAMCO GROUP WELCOMES



ICT Africa Ltd was started in June 2012 to offer independent and professional IT advice to corporate Kenya. There are several IT service providers selling various software or hardware; however, ICT Africa is different as they **DON'T** represent any brand or products. This independence means that they can assess a company's IT requirements and make software and hardware recommendations based on what the company actually needs rather than decisions based on the products they sell.

The services offered by ICT Africa include:

1. Business process study and analysis
2. System design and project management
3. ERP recommendation
4. Mobile applications
5. Identifying hardware, software and networking needs
6. Wireless and network security
7. Cloud computing
8. Business process outsourcing
9. Business intelligence solutions/ Dashboards & KPI's

The company is headed up by Mr. Hariharan Iyer who has 15 years of experience in IT and ERP systems. He is confident that this unique offering will be well received.

As Hari says, "In today's business world, having up-to-the-minute data at your fingertips allows managers to make timely decisions about resource allocation and personnel management in order to achieve optimum efficiency."



3Sixty Creative is a full service advertising agency formed in February 2012. Contrary to the belief that every agency gives the same rap sheet, this agency has what it takes to stand out. Focused on driving client sales and increasing their market share, the agency will get brands noticed for the right reasons.

3Sixty Creative is all about giving outstanding results through personalized, innovative, benefit-led, and empowering services that include advertising (print, broadcast, outdoor and ambient), design and branding strategy as well as digital media strategy.

The General Manager, Jimmi Wanjohi, believes that clients' need for a capable boutique advertising agency providing them with brand stewardship to achieve their marketing and communications objectives is realized in 3Sixty. Coupled with an energetic team and a myriad of ideas and initiatives, they will soon be the go-to agency.

Superbrands

KENTANK AND ASL ARE RECOGNIZED AS SUPERBRANDS IN EAST AFRICA

Kentainers and ASL received the very prestigious honour of being recognized as Superbrands within East Africa. The awards are conducted every 2 years and serve to recognize brands that stand out from the rest.

Kentainers received the award for its Kentank brand while ASL received the recognition for its six divisions comprising of stainless steel, heavy fabrication, trading, packaging, hardware and paper.

From the thousands of entrants, this number is reduced to 607 by a panel of industry professionals. This list is then assessed by over 1800 consumers across East Africa for quality, reliability, service and brand recognition.

Congratulations to Kentainers and ASL from the entire Group and in particular from Ramco Printing Works who are also a Superbrand from 2 years ago.

NEW RAMCO GROUP WEBSITE LAUNCHED



Ramco Group launched its new website on 14th September 2012 complete with a new look and feel. The site provides a public declaration of our goals, mission, vision and the values that define us. In addition, it provides an overview of each group company and the products and services they offer.

A major change is the inclusion of a careers page that allows potential new staff to submit their applications online in a standardized format. It is hoped that this new careers page will help all companies source the best people quickly and efficiently in order to expand and grow the respective businesses. If any staff have friends, family or industry contacts who they feel would improve the Ramco team, please ask them to submit their application online through www.ramco-group.com/careers



NEW DIGITAL PRESS AT PLATINUM PACKAGING

Platinum Packaging is continuously looking for new and innovative ways to differentiate themselves in the market. Their latest USP (unique selling point) is the installation of the first HP Indigo Digital Web Printing Press in East and Central Africa.

This unique printing press allows Platinum to print small quantities of packets, pouches and labels without the initial expensive set-up costs of traditional printing methods. For customers, this means they can reduce their orders or try out new packaging ideas without the high start-up costs.

As Managing Director Hasit Patel reiterated, "Many of our customers wanted to test the market with new product ideas but the cost of printing small quantities prevented them from doing so. Now they can test their ideas at a far more affordable cost and this has opened up new opportunities that weren't possible before."

SEAL HONEY OPENS IN NAKURU

Seal Honey continues to make strides in Kenya and has now expanded its outlets to include a Nakuru branch that was opened at the end of August. The outlet is 4800 square feet and is located in a prime spot along Kenyatta Avenue in downtown Nakuru.

Seal Honey currently operates 10 branches across the country and continues to grow and excel as a leading retailer of office and school stationery, IT hardware and computer consumables.





ORDERS FOR Z-CARDS® STREAMING INTO RAMCO

Ramco Printing Works, PocketMedia®'s production hub for East Africa is fully operational. The company has already installed the machinery and is now able to produce all Z-Cards® from Kenya. The Z-Card® is not limited to any particular industry and so far has proved to be quite popular within the telecommunications, tourism, health, education and banking sectors.

Amit Patel, Managing Director of Ramco Printing Works describes the Z-Card® as a distinctive way to ensure your target market not only becomes aware of your business proposition, but that they also retain this information in the form of an attractive and compact package.

"The orders are streaming in for this innovative product and we are glad to note that companies have realized the positive impact that the Z-Card® could have on their marketing campaigns," confirms Amit.



OFFICE TECHNOLOGIES LAUNCHES A CERTIFIED SERVICE CENTRE

Office Technologies opened the doors to its first Canon Certified Service Centre in Nairobi on the 28th of June 2012. As Canon's distributor for imaging and business solutions in Kenya, the opening of the centre represented the company's ongoing commitment to providing the highest level of service and support to its customers. The centre was inaugurated by Mr. K. R. Patel, the Chairman of Ramco Group in the presence of the Group's Board of Directors and Canon Middle East delegates.

The new service centre is fully equipped and manned by trained and certified Canon technicians to service any canon products from photocopiers, printers, cameras and lens. As the first such service centre in the region, it now gives Canon customers the confidence in having local after-sales support for their equipment.



Ramco Group Management and Canon Middle East delegates at the launch of the centre

OFFICE MART CROSSES INTO TANZANIA

This year has seen the setup of the first Office Mart outlet outside of Kenya with the opening of Office Mart, Tanzania. The expansion into Tanzania is part of the company's regional strategy to be the leading stationery and office supplies company for the greater East African community. Kudos to the Office Mart team for the great strides it is making!

OFFICE MART INTRODUCES M-PESA PAYMENTS

M-Pesa has become synonymous with easy payments within Kenya and in a bid to make client transactions faster, easier and more efficient, Office Mart has joined the move towards receiving payments by M-Pesa. This easy payment method helps to reduce credit risk as well as offering customers a payment channel they have been asking for. Now that's what you call implementing customer suggestions effectively!

ASL PACKAGING TAKES ON KAIZEN

Kaizen is a Japanese word meaning "continuous improvement". It is a system that involves the entire organization and is more about making little changes on a regular basis as opposed to big changes once a year. This motivates employees to give suggestions on how to improve operations and procedures that they use on a daily basis. ASL Packaging adopted Kaizen in 2010 with a view to maintain continual process improvement in

their day-to-day activities in order to better utilize resources, optimize operations, improve production and monitor and control waste. So far, it has produced encouraging results such as reduced time spent for die cutting operations, better monitoring and control of rejects and enhanced working conditions for all workers. Kudos to the ASL Packaging team!



Part of the ASL Packaging team undertaking Kaizen

SATB PARTNERS WITH TRAVELSHOPPE

The **South African Tourism Board** has appointed Travelshoppe as their partner in Kenya to promote South Africa as a holiday destination. Travelshoppe successfully completed the tender process and will now be supported by SATB to market South Africa to Kenyan holidaymakers. South Africa is a country of incredible contrast and beauty with wild nature, fine wines and great shopping. In fact, Travelshoppe prepared fantastic holiday packages for the Johannesburg Shopping Festival that took place in September.



ASL TRADING APPOINTED GROHE DISTRIBUTOR



Grohe AG, Europe's largest and the world's leading single-brand manufacturer and supplier of sanitary fittings has appointed ASL Limited - Trading Division as their distributor in Kenya. Grohe have a global reputation for innovative design and practical functionality and their bathroom fittings can be found across the world. The range of fittings can be seen at either of the ASL Trading showrooms in Parklands or Industrial Area or online on www.grohe-group.com

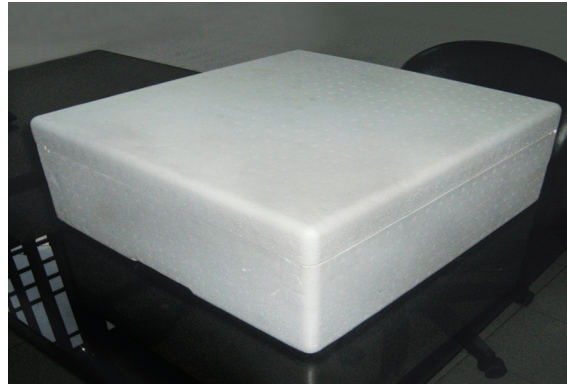
OFFICE MART STORES ON THE MOVE

Office Mart recently made the move to centralize their stores at their Homa Bay Road premises instead of within their CBD branches. The reasons behind this move were to improve distribution efficiency, avoid city traffic and reduce high rent storage in the CBD. It also has the added benefit of freeing up space in their retail stores to display a greater range of products. The change also saw the corporate sales team and the entire accounts team relocate to the new premises. The move is only a few months old but is already delivering better results.



NEW EPS MOULD

ASL Packaging is set to unveil a new lightweight EPS box that is primarily targeted at the Agro industry. This new packaging is air-cargo pallet friendly and especially convenient for transporting ready-to-eat vegetable pre-packs. The EPS Mould is great as it protects the contents against sudden temperature changes thus protecting the quality of the products therein and reducing wastage.



SWANKY NEW SHOWROOM

In any business, there comes a point in time when the following question arises, "What can we do to grow our business?" In answer to this question, Marketpower expanded their showroom at their Eden Square premises in order to attractively display their current range of products to customers. The Marketpower showroom does not only give the customer a visual of the end-product they expect but also provides them with an appealing visual array of the various products on offer and finishing options available. This has grown the company's revenues and also made job specifications easier.



ASL HOSPITALITY TAKES ON NEW DISTRIBUTORS

ASL Hospitality had quite a whirlwind of a year in 2011 in which they were appointed distributors for a number of international brands from Germany, Thailand, Italy, France and the Netherlands. These well-known brands include Vito, Sanden Intercool, Sirman, Casadio, Santos and Tecnodom. Most of these appointments were on an exclusive basis which gives them a competitive edge over other players in the industry. The products under their dealership now include top-of-the-range Cold Rooms, Cappuccino Machines, Pastry Display Units, Food & Juice Processors and Milk Cooling Tanks. We anticipate even more distributor agreements from ASL Hospitality in the near future.



NEW ONLINE FLIGHT BOOKING PORTAL

Travelshoppe has a new addition on their website in the form of a Flight Booking Portal that enables clients to manage their bookings online. Clients will be able to make and change flight bookings using this Amadeus provided service.

The new service will help reduce the ticket service fee and provide clients with instant options and flight comparison details. The system also allows for online payments via credit cards, M-Pesa or direct bank transfer.



LINO STATIONERS APPOINTED DISTRIBUTORS FOR RENOWNED BRANDS

Lino Stationers have been appointed the sole Kenyan distributors for Nataraj - the world's highest selling pencil brand. Along with Nataraj, the company is also the sole distributor for Rapid/Leitz/Esselette and Rexel as well as a co-distributor for Kangaroo and Oxford. This speaks volumes about the company's distribution network and reputation in the industry in which it has thrived for over 40 years. Congratulations to the Lino team on these appointments.

OTL OPENS NEW TRAINING VENUE – AVAILABLE FOR HIRE

The Regional Training Centre is located on the ground floor of the Office Technologies building within the Ramco Group Industrial Park on Mombasa Road. This state-of-the-art facility is equipped with full multimedia infrastructure and can accommodate up to 50 people. There is ample parking and full catering is available.

With Nairobi's traffic resulting in the loss of many business hours, this facility now offers companies based in industrial area a world class solution for in-house training sessions and product launches.

Bookings can be made through marketing@officetechnologies.co.ke or +254 20 8042780



Ramco Group Chairman Mr. Kirit Patel (right) with Regional Sales Director, Canon Middle East, Mr. Somesh Adukia (left) at the official opening



The new training centre

BLUEFLAME FIELD TESTS

Kentainers has dispatched eight units of BlueFlame digesters to various locations, namely Nanyuki, Ngong town, Ngong Kibiko, Nakuru, Syokimau, Kasarani, GSU Ruaraka and Kilungu. Six of these digesters were purchased by the users while two are for Kentainer's own testing. Field tests of BlueFlame biogas have begun and close monitoring is being carried out to ascertain performance. Biogas digesters are used to create biogas which is produced through the breakdown of organic or biodegradable matter in the absence of oxygen. It is more environmentally friendly than regular gas production and the output from the digester can be used as organic fertilizer.



Kentainers representative conducting field test

CREATIVE EDGE LAUNCHES ASK WEBSITE

On 30th August 2012, Zishan Mohamed, the General Manager of Creative Edge had the pleasure of presenting the new Agricultural Society of Kenya website to the President. It was unveiled at the Mombasa Show.



Mohamed presents the website to His Excellency, the President Hon. Mwai Kibaki

OUTSOURCE IT!

All companies need someone to fix their IT problems – “I can’t see the network” or “How do I configure my printer” or “How do I add a new computer” or or or The problems are endless. Most companies have an in-house employee to address these problems, but now, a new solution is available.

Proserve is the IT Services Centre within Sai Office Supplies and is now offering corporate Kenya the opportunity to outsource their IT management to a 3rd party thus allowing them to get on with their core activity. The service is predominantly provided remotely but is done in person when needed – and within hours.

Proserve also extend their services to providing IT advice on issues such as

network configuration, power backup, automated off-site archiving, antivirus solutions as well as software and hardware selection.

In addition, Proserve have a fully equipped and manned service centre that provides full after-sales support for many global brands such as Epson, Sukam, APC and Fellowes.

Proserve has a team of 30 people and is headed up by Kim Gichia who has been with the Ramco Group for 12 years.

He is responsible for the Ramco Group IT infrastructure and manages IT for many clients in the insurance, hospitality, medical and industrial sectors. Enquiries can be made through info@proserve.co.ke



AHOY SOCIAL MEDIA!

Ramco Printing Works Ltd is right on the pulse of changing trends and communication strategies, the latest of which is social media. Recognizing the need for a strong online presence and an effective medium to connect with customers, both current and potential, they are now operating actively on Facebook and Twitter. A dedicated team is at hand and plays a vital role in handling client service, estimations and responding to customer enquiries. The platform is also used to provide information on what is on offer each month. Like their facebook page, **Ramco Printing Works Ltd**. Or follow them on **@RamcoPrinting** for up-to-date tidbits on what is going on in the printing world. They would be happy to hear from you.



SALES AND MARKETING TRAINING FOR OFFICE TECHNOLOGIES STAFF

Office Technologies recently held a Canon sales training session for the sales team at their Training Centre located in Ramco Group Industrial Park. The four day event was hosted by Canon Middle East and was held between July 2nd and 5th. The goal of the training was to introduce innovative sales and marketing techniques to help increase the sales in the region. The mantra for the training was value = benefits - cost.

The training encouraged the sales team to see the VALUE in their products. This value is determined by the BENEFITS to the customer less the COST of purchasing the equipment. All too often, salespeople only focus on the price and forget to see the benefits to the customer. A good salesperson identifies the product features that the customer values and ensures these are focused on. All customers are different – some value price; some value



Participants display their certificates on completion of training

unique features of the product or service; some value payment terms; some value delivery time frame; some value the long term savings while others value all of the above. The conclusion of the training session was that a successful salesperson must “read” their customer and work out what is important to them. Each participant received a certificate from the training institute upon completion.

GROUP OFFICES IN WESTLANDS

At the start of the year 2012, a Ramco Group Office was set up within the Travelshoppe premises to serve as an easily accessible location for Group meetings and presentations. There were even some Ramco Group “Hot Desks” set up for industrial area staff to use before or after work to avoid the traffic jams. This building has proved to be a great location with lots of free parking space thus allowing visitors easy access.



Canon PROMOTION A WHOPPING SUCCESS

Canon, in partnership with Office Technologies, conducted a retail promotion at the Office Mart 680 branch which surpassed everyone's expectations. The promotion focused on the Canon Printer and Copier range which includes their flagship products.

The Office Mart and Office Technologies sales teams exceeded their sales targets for the first quarter and there are plans underway to run this promotion at other Office Mart branches.



Sai Office RWANDA IS NOW ONE YEAR OLD

The Rwandan branch of Sai Office Supplies has successfully completed a year of operations and in this time, it has successfully managed to establish the APC, Epson, Office Point and Pelikan brands in the market.

The team has worked tirelessly to ensure the brands are well received and recognized in the market and their efforts are paying off. Sai Rwanda also plans to officially launch Lenovo in conjunction with a warranty service center.



PPL INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE INCENTIVE PROGRAMME



Let's face it, we all love a bit of extra cash lining our pockets and would push ourselves just a bit harder to achieve this. In light of this, Platinum Packaging has introduced a new way to incentivize and motivate employees that is aptly dubbed the Bonga Point system. The management has set daily targets for the production staff based on capacity of the machines, past

trends and establishment of man-hour capacities of the equipment and personnel. Meeting or surpassing the targets results in points being earned which are then converted to cash over-and-above their salaries. So far, the results have been great and the system shows great promise in sustaining motivational levels and increased efficiency. Bravo PPL!

LINO STATIONERS HQ MOVES TO INDUSTRIAL AREA

Lino Stationers moved their stores and corporate sales team from their Kimathi Street Head Office to Enterprise Road. This move was completed on the 5th of November. The new space is an 8000 sq. ft. godown with ample parking and will allow the company more space to expand their stores and administration team. The entire team will be located at the new premises however the company will still retain its retail outlet on Kimathi Street for retail traffic and as a showroom for their corporate clients.

Lino has been based in Victor House on Kimathi Street for 40 years so this move certainly marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new phase for the company. The entire Ramco Group of companies wishes them all the best with this big change.

MARKETPOWER SPREADS ITS WINGS

True to their progressive form, Marketpower plans to spread its digital print expertise by opening a new branch in town. The branch will be housed within Office Mart 680's premises and will serve the town market with print-on-demand services while the client waits. This project is expected to be up and running in November 2012. Marketpower realized that there are many copy shops working from a hard copy original but few receiving electronic artwork. The Ramco family wishes Marketpower every success with this new venture.

JUMA HARDWARE APPOINTED KALUWORKS SOLE DISTRIBUTOR

Kaluworks has been an established brand in Kenya for over 80 years. They manufacture aluminum cookware and have recently started to make aluminum roofing and sheeting to prevent rusting. Juma Hardware has been appointed as their Sole Distributor in Nairobi and Up-Country for this range of aluminum sheets, roofing, coils and plates. The range of products can be seen at the Juma Hardware showroom on Kombo Muniyiri Road or on Embakasi Road in Nairobi. Juma Hardware stock and ship the full range across Kenya.



RAMCO LAUNCHES TWO UNIQUE PRODUCTS

Standing out from your competitors is not easy but the Ramco Promo team has come up with two new products that may help you achieve this. The Human Banner ensures the wearer gets noticed (not to mention making their job more bearable) and the message is cleverly delivered. The Secret USB stick ensures that your USB does not get damaged as it is cleverly hidden away and protected. To see these products, please contact Tonny on tonny@printing.ramco-group.com



SMART PHONES FOR PLATINUM EMPLOYEES

Smart phones have become more or less a way of life for most urbane denizens; it combines the functionality of a mobile phone and computer all in one handy gadget. Platinum Packaging has partnered with Rapid Communications which has subsidized the cost of smart phones by 25% for employees as well as offered a good credit plan to enable the majority of staff members to own one. The project is being trialed at Platinum Packaging and once the initial teething problems are overcome, it will be replicated across the rest of the group.

MARKETPOWER STAFF ROTATION

In a bid to keep things interesting for its employees, Marketpower International carries out an annual staff rotation project whereby team members are moved around its different sites. This equips individuals with experience and knowledge in different aspects of the company as well as enhancing their skill set and increasing their level of confidence in their abilities. At the end of the project, the entire staff of Marketpower is enriched translating into higher productivity within the company.

CONGRATULATIONS KENTAINERS!!

A hearty congratulatory message to Kentainers for receiving Kenya Bureau of Standards 2012 accreditation for Kentank yet again. They first received this accreditation in February 2009 and this has been renewed every year since then. This recognition essentially means that Kentank has met the high standards of quality measured by KEBS and their products have consistently met customers' requirements. Bravo Kentainers! Onto bigger and better things!



GOT SUGGESTIONS?

In every Ramco Group office, you'll find a suggestion box. These suggestion boxes are there so that every member of the company can have their say. If YOU have an idea that you think will make the company better, put it on paper and drop it in the suggestion box.

A company is like a big family where everyone is working towards the same goal. We all do different jobs but we all have the same goal. There are bound to be times when you see a better way to do YOUR job; it could make it faster or more efficient or save money. Next time you have that thought, put your idea on paper and drop it in the suggestion box. Don't forget that no one knows YOUR job better than you and that's what makes YOU the perfect person to improve it.

Sometimes suggestions aren't about your job but instead about the environment you work in or the way the company runs. If you think there is a better way, have your say.



RAMCO GROUP STAFF MEMBERS RUN IN THE STANCHART MARATHON

229 staff members of the Ramco Group were up bright and early on October 28th to run in the Standard Chartered Nairobi Marathon. The participants met at Ramco Printing Works and walked to the starting line outside Nyayo Stadium. Most of the team ran in the 10km race while a select few took part in the half and full marathons. Last year there were 191 entrants from group companies so this increased popularity is hoped to continue next year. In addition to creating the Ramco Group team spirit, it was an enjoyable day for all with the added benefit of giving back to society. Congratulations to all who took part.



KENTAINERS ENGAGES IN SANITATION UPGRADING PROGRAM

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) approached Kentainers to engage in a sanitation upgrading program which aims to develop sanitation products. This is being done in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, various microfinance institutes and Water.Org. Product development is currently ongoing and prototyping has already begun after collection of the first field research results.

GIZ has also engaged Kentainers Limited in developing their sanitation solutions after reviewing the company's existing products with satisfaction and recommending some of them for their program. Congratulations to Kentainers for the great strides it is making.

RHINO CHARGE SPONSORSHIP

Travelshoppe and the Ramco Group have been supporting the Rhino Charge for a number of years as part of its CSR program. The Rhino Charge is a motor sports event that raises money to fence the water catchment towers of Kenya. So far, the organization has erected a 400km fence around the Aberdares and is now starting on the Mt Kenya tower and the Mau Escarpment tower. Travelshoppe and Ramco Group are proud to be sponsors of this worthwhile cause that protects the water supply for Nairobi and its surrounds.



PLATINUM PACKAGING INTRODUCES ECO POSTS

As a part of their corporate social responsibility endeavor, Platinum Packaging Limited has invested in a facility to turn waste into environmentally friendly posts/poles that can be utilized for the purpose of fencing and building light structures. These posts are manufactured using 100% recycled material and due to their lightness and ease of use, the health and safety risks ever present with concrete posts or wooden posts are nonexistent. These posts do not chip or require maintenance for protection against termites, rot and decay.

Platinum's range of posts are suitable for fencing on farms, game parks & reserves and commercial premises such as hotels and tourist resorts. Smaller profiles can be used to make animal houses, low cost school chairs, benches, desks etc. The product range will eventually expand to include profiles that can be used for pickets, decking boards and for constructing outdoor furniture as well as industrial pallets.

For further information, kindly get in touch with our sales team on info@ppl.co.ke



An example of a bench made using environmentally friendly posts

EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN

You are done with school, accumulated all the degrees you hope to get in this lifetime and knuckled down to concentrate on your career. This is all fine and dandy but just because your schooling years are behind you doesn't mean that you shouldn't exercise your brain. Actively engaging your brain in various activities that challenge it helps you process information faster and more efficiently which subsequently leads to performing your tasks better. It also increases your concentration levels, memory and ability to multi-task. Give your brain a 'workout' with these simple exercises:

Puzzle Galore

These can range from word puzzles to Sudoku; they stimulate your brain and increase your knowledge simultaneously.

Become a Mathlete

Solving mathematical problems or equations can prove to be a challenging endeavor that sharpens your analytical skills and powers of deduction.

Rubik's Cube

Anyone who has tried to solve this cube knows how much patience and concentration is needed. It stimulates the brain while improving visual memory.

Play a Game of Chess

This calls for strategic and creative thinking which boosts memory and IQ.

Get Creative

Put pen to paper and write, draw, compose music or engage your mind in something that lets your mind wander and explore different ideas. This exercise helps to employ your creative abilities and relaxes your mind in the process.



GOOGLE APPS SUITE

As Ramco Group, we believe in the advancement of technology as a driver for creating efficiency in our various areas of operation and we are keen to adopt the industry best practices to deliver these efficiencies. A couple of years back we embarked on an ambitious project to interconnect all our 24 companies in a network that will enable sharing of resources and we have realised many benefits of this investment so far. In keeping with the dynamic market place, we realise mobility is a key component of how we run business today and hence the need to stay connected from anywhere and at any time.

Google Apps is a suite of applications including email, television and video conferencing and collaboration that is provisioned off the cloud via internet. By migrating our email system to the cloud, we have ensured that all our users can stay connected to their emails from the office as well as on the road using a variety of easily accessible mobile devices. With Google+ (Google Plus) users are able to enrich their online communication and collaboration beyond voice. Video conferencing is made easy and cheap via Google+ hangouts, one can use a basic feature smartphone while sitting in a public transport vehicle to hold a rich video conference with colleagues back in the office or the director halfway across the globe. This feature also enables sharing of resources such as files or desktop screens making remote training sessions possible.

Google Chat feature which is embedded in the Gmail service makes on-the-fly communication possible without the need to draft long emails. The history of chat conversations may also be saved in the mailbox for future reference. Other exciting features on Google Apps to try out include Calendar sharing which allows for sharing of calendars at different levels with colleagues and Collaborative inbox which allows themed group communication. For more info please contact googleapps@proserve.co.ke



KICK START YOUR WORK LIFE

Have you ever got to a stage in your work life when you feel less-than-thrilled to face the workload making designs on your desk? Times when your energy is at an all-time low, your concentration levels zigzag between zero and waning and you feel weighed down by everything you have to deal with?

The best of us have been there at one time or another so take heart. However, if not dealt with immediately, you could end up in a rut that may be hard to claw your way out of. What you need to do when you find yourself demotivated is kick start your way back to optimum motivation levels. Here are a few tips to help you along:

Prioritize

At the start of each day, set a few minutes aside to go through the list of tasks you need to accomplish and set about them in terms of priority. This helps to alleviate the overwhelming feeling of deadlines all raining down on you at the same time.

Find something to excite you about your job

Whether it is that 10 minute coffee break, having a brief chat with work colleagues or scoring a new client for the company, you need to tap into that

thing that gets you excited about your job. This will tide you over on the bad days and buoy you on the good days.

Get out of the box

It is easy to get complacent and feel boxed in when you settle into a routine, but don't allow yourself to fall into that trap. Rather than even think outside-the-box, imagine there is no box! This eliminates any illusion of limitations on your creativity and what you can achieve.

Illustrate your vision

Draw up a vision board detailing all the goals you are working towards achieving and have them somewhere you will see them every day, for example, use it as a screen saver. This will keep your goals at the top of your mind and whenever you strike off one of your achieved goals, that feeling will motivate you to work harder to strike them all off.

Have a support network

No man is an island is a cliché we have all heard at one point or another, but the fact that it is still widely used alludes to its validity. Team work is essential to a healthy work environment

and goes a long way in providing that much needed push when one's motivation wanes.

Celebrate the small victories

Don't wait until you achieve something monumental to celebrate; take a couple of minutes to celebrate the small victories, such as targets met, new contracts signed and successfully executed campaigns. These regular motivational boosts will keep your spirits high and push you to achieve even greater victories.



GROUP HUMAN RESOURCE INITIATIVES

One of the core values of Ramco Group is to have a performance based management system. Performance management is a systematic process by which the overall performance of the company is improved by reviewing the performance of individuals within a team framework and thus promoting superior performance by communicating expectations, defining roles within a required competence framework and establishing achievable benchmarks. The process involves developing clear job descriptions and employee performance plans which includes defining the key performance indicators and measures. Individual, team and company performance can now be measured and reviewed from time to time and employees rewarded accordingly through an appraisal system.

Performance has been rated using a number of parameters such as quality, creativity, quantity, use of resources, timeliness, and accuracy among others at different organizational structure levels. Fair and competitive reward systems have been created in various group companies such as Platinum Packaging, resulting in a motivated and competitive workforce. Some of the reward systems that have been introduced and implemented are employee-of-the-month initiatives, a gain and share system commonly called, bonga points and recognizing company stars. The human resource function has worked towards facilitating and improving the performance of the employees by building a conducive work environment and providing maximum opportunities to the employees for participating in organizational planning and the decision making process. Employee discipline has really improved as the performance system is able to create individual accountability and ownership business mentality as well.



PPL employees receive awards for good performance

EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP



The above scheme was started in 2011 as a staff retention and recognition initiative of high performing, long serving employees whose children are excelling in their secondary school grades. Ramco Group has since then sponsored nineteen students with thirteen of them being girls. The scheme has had a total of four students, Roy Maluki, Imbosa Okore, Evelyn Wanjiku and Ann Nzioka (of employees at Office Mart, Lino Stationers, ASL Packaging and Juma Hardware) complete their studies to date.

For the year 2013, the scheme has received forty two applications with seven (as shown below) having been approved to commence in January 2013 together with the other balance of fifteen students from the year 2011 making a total of twenty two.

RAMCO GROUP - EDUCATION SPONSORSHIPS 2013

NAME	COMPANY	NAME OF CHILD	PAYEE
Emmanuel Kyalo Titus	ASL Steel	Winifred Mwikali Kyalo	Moi Girls' High School
Vincent Nduko Onchwati	Polythene	Sylvester Boraya Nduko	St. Augustine's Ombor High School
Bernard Aoga Oguye	ASL Packaging	Lvy Nyabonyi Oguye	Vyulya Girls' Secondary School
Ntabo Bisera	ASL Steel	Pauline Nyanchama Ntabo	Kereri Girls High School
Bernard Maingi Mbithi	ASL Steel	Derrick Muema Maingi	Mwala School
Pius Mwau Kyengo	ASL Packaging	Faith Wayua Mwau	Mitaboni ABC Girls Secondary School
Solomon Ogenche Nyagata	ASL Packaging	Geofrey Kirera Ogenche	Sameta High School

ASL TRADING - THE 2012 FOOTBALL RAMCO TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS

It is official – ASL Trading are the football champions for 2012. An enthralling final took place on Saturday November 10th between Office Technologies and ASL Trading. The score was 0-0 at full time and was decided on penalties in which ASL Trading won with a score of 2 to OTL's 1 goal.

In the match for 3rd and 4th place between Polythene and Sai, it was Sai that won with a 2-1 score line. The Ramco Group ladies were not left behind as they played an entertaining match.

The day was a huge success with many spectators and supporters cheering on their sides. The vuvuzelas, commentator and continuous music created a carnival atmosphere that was enjoyed by all.

This year's tournament has been an exciting affair as the 13 teams fought it out for supremacy on the pitch and the chance to take the trophy, appropriately christened the 'Ramco Cup' home. What started as a random idea over a pint of beer between a group of friends working at Sai Office Supplies and Creative Edge has evolved into a full-fledged tournament that has helped to enhance social integration and solidify teamwork within the Ramco Group family.

A huge thanks goes to Mr. Kirit Patel, the Group Chairman for supporting the event; the Group CTO, Kimani Gichia and Group Human Resource Manager, Alice Mutitu, together with her very able and committed organizing committee for ensuring the tournament was a success. The winning team was awarded a trip to the Masai Mara in recognition of their achievement. Office Technologies, Sai and Polythene were 2nd, 3rd and 4th runners up respectively and were awarded Kshs. 45,000/=, 35,000/= and 15,000/= per team for their achievement. The best female scorer, Lilian Nzilani scored 1 goal while the best male scorer, Anthony Mutua scored 9 goals. Both from OTL, they were awarded with Kshs. 3000/= each for their individual talent. Good luck to all teams in 2013 as they seek the coveted title that ASL Trading holds proudly until then. See you next season for a reloaded Ramco Group Football league!



The winners, ASL Trading, enjoy their hard earned victory

Quick Facts:

Winners of 2013 League:
ASL TRADING

1st Runners Up: Office Technologies

2nd Runners Up: Sai Office

3rd Runners Up: Polythene Industries

Number of Teams: 13

Games Played: 50 matches per season

Venue of the Games: Nairobi Railways Club





WE PLANTED 1800 TREES!

"A man doesn't plant a tree for himself. He plants it for posterity." Alexander Smith

Ramco Group employees turned out in numbers on 15th December to participate in a tree planting exercise organized in conjunction with

Kenya Forest Service. Approximately 1800 trees were planted and watered in the Ngong Hills over an area covering 1 hectare. Such initiatives are part of the Group's effort to become more environmentally friendly and aware.



A Ramco Group staff member preparing a tree for planting



The team hard at work planting the seedlings



The Ramco team pose at the tree planting site



Creative Edge staff take a breather during their team building



A buzz of activity around the Ramco Group tent during the 2012 Christmas Fair



The new Ramco Group street lights outside Westgate shopping mall

Captured Moments



Ramco Group staff members strike a pose before setting off for the Stanchart Marathon



Ramco ladies put their best foot forward during the 2012 Football Tournament



Marketpower staff in a jubilant mood during their team building

