

4

NEWS

17

CSR

18

KNOWLEDGE HUB

22

CAREER

Issue 7 | March 2014

EXCELLENCE

FOR CORPORATE


ramco
GROUP

RAMCO GROUP PUBLICATION



Tel: 0739

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In our work life, vision and passion are necessary character traits to have in order to survive, grow and achieve the goals we have set for ourselves. Often, there are times when one may be demotivated or get sidetracked when they encounter complications; but we cannot afford to do so if we expect to hit the peak in our chosen career path.

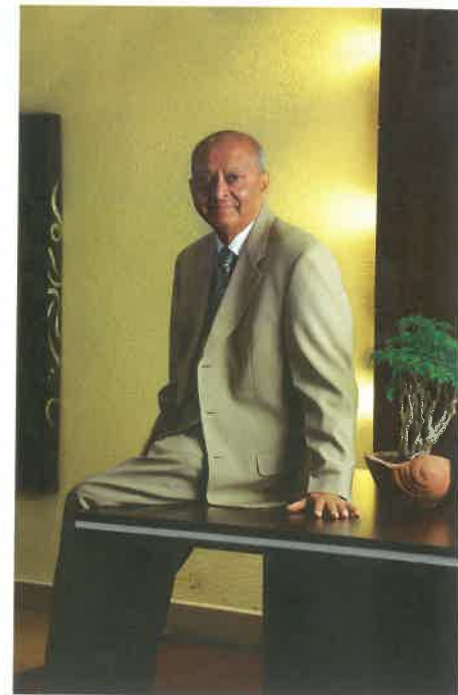
As Ramco Group, we must strive not only to survive but to be the best in the industry; setting benchmarks while holding ourselves to the same high standards of service. The year 2013 was one of tremendous strides in terms of growth and venturing into new

industries. A number of companies within the Group have expanded their premises to allow for their burgeoning growth while others received various awards and recognitions that cemented their standing in their various areas of expertise.

This year, let us endeavor to work towards maintaining that momentum and leaving no doubt that as a Group, we are indeed a force to be reckoned with in the business world.

Kirit Patel

"To be successful, the first thing to do is fall in love with your work." Sister Mary Lauretta



EDITORIAL TEAM

a CreativeEdge design

Editorial: Derek Steel, Prital Patel,
Catherine Maina

Art Director: Trushar Shah

Design: Marylucy Magwambo

Contributors: Qube, Hasit Patel, Alice Mutitu

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



CONTENTS

A BIT OF HISTORY

Following on Ramco Group's remarkable journey from its inception as Rambhai & Company, we have learned quite a bit about Ramco Hardware, Juma Hardware, Polythene Packaging, ASL Steel and Sai Office, which progressively joined the Group between 1976 and 1994. Ramco Printing Works Limited was the sixth company to join the Group.

Ramco Printing was incorporated in 1995 starting out in downtown Nairobi with 12 employees and a single-colour offset printing machine. Three years later, with the ever increasing orders and growing employee ranks, it became a necessity to relocate to a bigger location. Unit 1 was set up in Industrial Area. The additional space also allowed the start-up of the promo division. In 2008, the company further expanded through the construction of a 100,000 square foot print facility along Mombasa road which was dubbed Unit 2.

The printing giant is now one of the largest printing press in the East African region, offering the complete printing package right from design and layout to press and finishing services. Ramco Printing has upheld its commitment to innovation, quality and punctuality throughout the years boosted by state-of-the-art machinery and hardworking professionals.

We, as Ramco Group, need to embrace a spirit of consistent innovation, progression, unbeatable quality and superior customer service in order to become and remain leaders in our various industries.

General News
CSR
Knowledge Hub
Captured Moments

PG 4 – 16
PG 17
PG 18 – 21
PG 23



RECOGNIZED AS FORBES TOP 10 FAMILY BUSINESSES IN AFRICA

In January 2014, Forbes published a list of the Top 10 Family Owned Businesses in Africa and the Ramco Group was amongst them. This was an unexpected honor for the Group, particularly in the context of an Africa-wide competition.

A panel of eight judges from across Africa helped to identify African companies with annual revenues of \$50 million or more.

These companies must be led by the second generation or subsequent to the founder, and the family must control at least 30 percent of the voting rights.

This award is recognition of a vision that started back in 1948 and has been building for the past 65 years. Congratulations to the whole Ramco Group family on this momentous achievement.

The full article and list can be seen at:

<http://afkinsider.com/37126/forbes-top-10-family-businesses-in-africa>



Kirit Patel, Chairman and C.R. Patel, Executive Director of Ramco Group



TOP 100 ACCOLADES FOR ASL CREDIT & TRAVELSHOPPE



ASL Credit staff members proudly display their award and certificate



Travelshoppe bags an award for the fourth year running

ASL Credit and Travelshoppe once again received awards during the prestigious 2013 KPMG Top 100 Mid-Sized Companies annual survey. The survey which is an initiative between KPMG Kenya and Nation Media Group seeks to identify fast growing medium-sized companies in order to showcase business excellence and highlight some of the country's most successful entrepreneurship stories.

The gala dinner was held at Carnivore Restaurant on 11th October 2013. ASL Credit took position number 51 while Travelshoppe followed at position 82.

Hearty congratulations to the two companies for consistently making it among the Top 100 companies.

TRAVELSHOPPE

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS!

Travelshoppe will be celebrating 20 years in business on 14th May 2014. The company was incorporated in May 1994 as a fully-fledged IATA company and over the years has gone from strength to strength, growing its client base and receiving numerous awards and recognitions. They now have 2 offices, one at Eden Square in Westlands, Nairobi and another in Nanyuki. With the wealth of experience garnered by the directors and employees, the company has consistently exceeded client expectations in delivering the best possible personalised holiday packages. Ramco Group congratulates Travelshoppe on this great accomplishment and we look forward to seeing them realise another 20 successful years.



The Travelshoppe team

10 YEARS AND A BRAND NEW LOOK!

The year 2013 saw many achievements for Office Technologies Ltd. One of them being a key milestone – OTL celebrated 10 years. With this came a change in the company's image including rebranding of their logo.

A new look to reflect the constant innovative change in both the products and services

offered by OTL which can be summarised by their new slogan, *"inspired by the future"*.



The OTL team in an ecstatic mood celebrating their 10 year milestone

ASL WIRE & CABLE DIVISION STARTS OPERATIONS

Ramco welcomes ASL Ltd - Wire & Cable Division to the Group. The new manufacturing plant, situated along old Mombasa Road, is now in operation after a meticulous set-up over the last 6 months.

The Wire & Cable Division manufactures flame retardant, PVC insulated electrical, automobile and armoured underground cables for use in homes, industries and offices. The company also manufactures aluminium conductors used for power transmission. The key feature of these products is the flame retardant coating that provides customers with added safety and protection. The products are all manufactured in Kenya at the company's factory thus offering high quality cables and wires at competitive prices.

Heading up this new division is Mr. Unni Krishnan who has worked in the electrical cables industry for the last 8 years. He brings a wealth of knowledge to the company and Group and we wish him all the best as he steers the division to great heights.



OFFICE RESHUFFLE AT EDEN SQUARE

October 2013 saw the move of three Ramco Group companies to bigger offices within the Eden Square office complex in Westlands.



Marketpower was very squeezed in their old premises at Eden Square creating the need for a separate office at Ramco Unit 1. As Operations Director, Joe Muchiri says, *"This move has allowed the Unit 1 team to move to Eden Square giving us better production efficiency, improved communication and faster service delivery to clients."*



Creative Edge which previously occupied the ground floor moved up to the 5th floor occupying a much larger space to cater for its growing number of employees.

This move marks the beginning of a new chapter for Creative Edge and its affiliate companies, 3Sixty Creative and Qube.



ASL Credit made the move from the Ramco Group Industrial Park situated along Mombasa Road to Eden Square.

The move has enabled the hire purchase company to position themselves closer to their target market, which in turn is expected to bring positive returns for the company.

OFFICE MART SECURES BIGGER SPACE AT YAYA CENTRE



In December 2013, Office Mart Limited started operations at the new fully fledged outlet located at Yaya Centre. The space is much bigger than what they had before allowing them to stock more than just stationery. This prime location will enable them to reach a wider audience and with their expanded product offering, the company's sales are sure to increase exponentially.

ASL TRADING SHOWROOM OPENS AT LAVINGTON CURVE

ASL Trading has opened the doors to its upscale showroom situated at the new Lavington Curve premises. The new showroom gives the company a competitive platform to showcase their products and reach out to the high-end market thereby increasing the company's visibility and sales potential. ASL Trading, in conjunction with Crown Classics, has a space occupying approximately 9,000 square feet at the new complex which is situated along James Gichuru Road.



NEW PREMISES FOR ASL HFD



ASL HFD made the move from their offices at Ramco Group Industrial Park to a bigger space in Syokimau in October 2013. The added capacity at the new premises will enable them to take on larger projects. The company has already secured its first turnkey project, which involves the setup of a 50,000 litre per day milk processing plant in Karatina, Mukurweini. ASL HFD has



been awarded the contract to assemble the entire factory which will include a pasteurising module, water chilling system, steam boiler, pouch packing machine and an automatic cleaning system. This is a major achievement for the company and we expect there will be many more great developments to come.

LONG SERVING ASL STEEL DIVISION EMPLOYEE HONOURED

Boniface Watuka Ngundo has been with the company for 25 years, right from when it was Rambhai & Co. Ltd to the present day ASL Steel Division. He started off in 1987 as a casual worker in the press department until 1989, when he was taken on as a full-time employee. Boniface is a skilled press machine operator and has garnered years of experience using the Lagan press machine. He is also conversant with welding, fitting and operation of various machines.

"Besides running the machines, I have also become quite knowledgeable about maintenance, and can even tell what's wrong with a machine just by the sound it makes!", he adds. Boniface enjoys working at ASL Steel Division and appreciates the fact that he has been able to enhance his skill set. He hopes to keep growing with the company.



Boniface operating the Lagan press machine

DR. FIXIT® WATER PROOFING SOLUTIONS INTRODUCED IN KENYA

Crown Classics Limited has partnered with Pidilite Industries, India's leading adhesive, sealants and construction chemicals company to bring Dr. Fixit®, India's finest construction and waterproofing expert to Kenya. Dr. Fixit® provides a wide range of advanced water proofing solutions to meet the needs of the burgeoning construction industry. Providing new product innovations, unique marketing campaigns and a widespread dealer network, these solutions have been at the forefront of India's construction industry. Mr. Hasit Patel, Director of Crown Classics and

Mr. Shankha Banerjee, President Sales and Marketing (Middle East & Africa region), Pidilite Industries reiterated the upsurge in demand for waterproofing solutions in Kenya. This demand is as a result of water leakage problems brought on by heavy rainfall and a high ground water table.

As Mr. Banerjee remarked during the launch, there is underlying potential to be explored in the Kenyan market and the scope of growth is large.



The auspicious launch of Dr. Fixit® in Nairobi



Hasit Patel and Shankha Banerjee seal the deal between Crown Classics and Pidilite Industries

LINO APPOINTED SOLE DISTRIBUTOR OF REXEL SHREDDERS

Lino Stationers is now the sole distributor of Rexel Shredders in Kenya. These high-end shredders have clever new features:

1. Auto feeder tray which takes up to 750 sheets, thus no manual loading required.
2. 4 digit security code to lock the auto tray until shredding is completed.

These clever shredders save the user time and avoid the necessity of manually feeding each sheet through. All the best to the Lino team in introducing these new time-saving shredders into the market.



LINO NOW SOLE DISTRIBUTOR OF UHU GLUE

UHU glue is the latest addition to Lino Stationer's expansive product list. UHU GmbH & Co. KG is based in Bühl, Germany and has been manufacturing adhesive products for over 75 years. Their products are considered among the best quality worldwide.

The company proved its motto, 'UHU Glues Anything, Anytime', when it suspended a 4-tonne Ford pickup truck from a crane in October 2007, using an UHU derivative glue. The stunt was recognised as a world record.

Lino now stocks, sells and distributes UHU glue sticks and all-purpose adhesives in a variety of sizes.



OFFICE MART AWARDED CERTIFICATION



Office Mart Limited was awarded certification by Kaspersky Lab endorsing the company as a registered partner licensed to operate in Kenya after they attained impressive sales figures. This certification allows Office Mart to resell Kaspersky Lab SMB and Corporate products

to end users in strict compliance with their policies. This is a big achievement for the company and elevates their profile among computer hardware and software manufacturers.

ASL PACKAGING PROMOTES SMES TO UPGRADE PACKAGING

In November 2013, ASL Packaging hosted officials and members of the World Packaging Organization and Institute of Packaging Professionals who sought to learn more about the packaging solutions that the company offers.

The company is keen to get Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) on board as clients to help them grow with professional packaging solutions that allow them to stand alongside their bigger competitors. The Managing Director, Mr Rahim, is keen to dispel the perception that packaging is too expensive and solely a reserve of large corporations.



REGIONAL TRAINING FOR Canon

The Office Technologies training centre hosted a technical training with partners from various parts of East Africa. The training was focused on hardware solutions, integration and high speed archiving solutions. The participants who came from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania and Kenya were taken through an intensive two weeks of training by experienced trainers, which ended with market visits once the course was over. The entire OTL technical team attended this training and were certified by Canon Middle East.



Some of the individuals who took part in the OTL training

OTL INTRODUCES SHORT TERM LEASING SERVICES

Office Technologies is breaking the myth on the duration of lease hire on office equipment. You can now hire heavy duty multi-functional machines (both colour and mono), high speed archiving solutions and large format printers under the easy doc plan for as low as one week. Charges are on a per click basis and are inclusive of service, consumables and equipment spare parts.

Sai Office S

KENYA UGANDA TANZANIA RWANDA

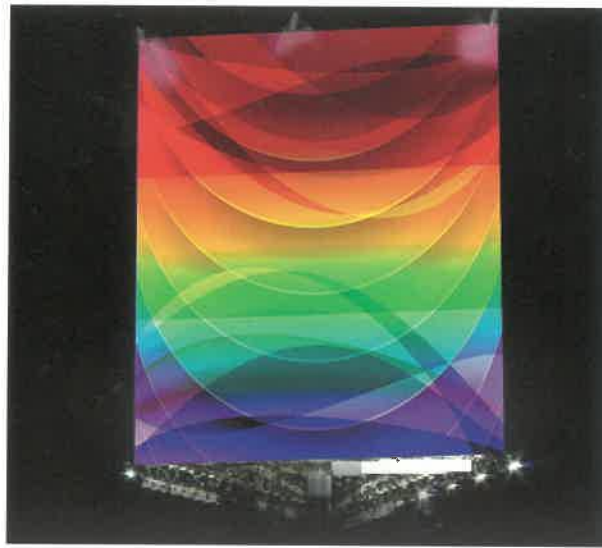
A JOB WELL DONE!

Sai Office took the opportunity at the end of year party to appreciate some of their employees for their long term service and great performance. Benjamin Muhia, Benard Eboya and Harish Dave were recognized for 12 years of dedicated service while Anand Gore received an award for 11 years of outstanding service. In terms of exceptional performance, Chirag Patel and Risper Rambaya took the prize.

ASL PAPER ADDS LARGE FORMAT MEDIA

ASL Paper known for their top quality paper and paperboards across the East African region, has diversified its product offering to include large format digital media. Introduced in September 2013, these are targeted at large format printers like Ovidian and Marketpower who use them for banners, displays and promotional branding.

In addition, ASL Paper has started to import and distribute printing inks and chemicals for offset printers like Ramco Printing. The company is continuously looking to expand its product range to cover all printing consumables in all printing sectors.



ASL Paper's new large format media are used for applications like billboards

HISENSE SIGN A CONTRACT WITH UNEP

On 31st October 2013, Hisense extended an agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to promote sustainable development.

UNEP has always been committed to promoting sustainable development, global environmental and ecological protection. This purpose matches with the Hisense corporate philosophy of "innovative green products, protect the environment." Through the UN platform, Hisense can convey its green innovative products and enhance consumers' environmental awareness and quality of life. Hisense VRF systems (commercial air conditioners) are available at Office Technologies Ltd.

ROTARY DIE BRINGS IN MORE BUSINESS FOR ASL PACKAGING

ASL Packaging has invested in a rotary die in a bid to upgrade their manufacturing technique and solutions. The rotary die is an auxiliary attachment to the printing press that allows for the printing and cutting of a corrugated box to be done on one machine instead of two as before. Previously, the company would print the boards and then take them to a second machine for cutting.

As Mr. Rahim reiterates, *"Combining these 2 steps into one gives us greater cutting accuracy, faster production, improved efficiency and significant waste reduction; all this allows us to be more competitive and serve the customer better."*



The rotary die newly introduced at ASL Packaging

SALES DOUBLE AT FLEXOWORLD

Following the installation of a new digital plate maker in April 2013 and the resounding success of a Customer Open Day, Flexoworld has realised substantial growth over the past 6 months. From a team of 6, they now have 10 employees and the sales figures have doubled.

The sales growth has come from both existing customers giving the company a greater share of their work as well as from new clients discovering the improved print quality achieved by using digital print plates. Flexoworld has also created two implant studios within the premises of their key clients. Having an implant gives Flexoworld's clients faster artwork approvals and improves communication between the plate maker and the press operator. In addition to the increased clientele and sales, Flexoworld has invested in a new delivery motorbike. This will enable the company to make deliveries faster and more efficiently.



The Flexoworld team pose with the newly purchased motorbike

ASL HFD INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE MILK PROCESSING SOLUTIONS

ASL HFD has launched a mini milk processing plant that can process up to 3,000 litres of milk a day from pasteurising, homogenising and chilling the product so that it is ready for packing.

Kenya is the 2nd largest milk producer in Africa, after South Africa, and the recent regulation changes by the Kenya Dairy Board to reduce the amount of unpasteurised milk being sold countrywide have created this new market for the company. With many small scale farmers unable to afford big milk processing plants, this new product from ASL HFD makes milk processing affordable to the small farmer.



The all-in-one milk processing unit from Goma, India

NEW PRINTING MACHINE AT POLYTHENE INDUSTRIES



In a bid to increase their capacity, Polythene Industries has invested in a new printing machine. The new machine is technologically superior and incorporates features such as high speeds and 6 colour capabilities. This is expected to improve product quality, increase the company's output and revenues as well as improve efficiency in the long term.

OFFICE MART INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE NEW PRODUCT LINES



Retailing under the brand names, Officepoint and Skoolpoint, Office Mart is currently stocking a series of new, contemporary products comprising of notebooks, pencil cases and art supplies.

These have been added to their already comprehensive range of products and are available at leading stationery stores countrywide.

MEDIUM DENSITY FIBREBOARD NOW AVAILABLE AT ASL STEEL DIVISION



ASL Steel Division now distributes medium density fibreboard imported from Robin in Malaysia. This type of hardboard is made from wood fibres combined with wax and resin binder. MDFs are made up of separated fibres and are generally denser than plywood thus making them a stronger option. As they are made of fine particles, they don't have an easily recognisable surface grain making them better for painting and filing without damaging the surface. These fibreboards are quite popular in the market and mainly used to make wall panels, cabinets and storage units.

RAMCO PRINTING OPENS A NEW BOOK BINDING DIVISION

Ramco Printing Works Limited initiated a new book binding division in September 2013. This facility is for the manufacture of high-end diaries, journals and note books under the brand name 'Hippo'. The state-of-the-art machinery used to manufacture the diaries is all European standard and ensures the entire process from book block making to case making and final binding is done in-house. The semi-automated system produces between 3,000 and 3,500 diaries a day, using pre-designed artworks or customised options. This operational efficiency results in greater economies of scale for the printing company.

hippo



A NEW BRAND AT ASL TRADING

Renowned for their high quality products, ASL Trading now adds Laufen Sanitary ware to their top-of-the-line selection. The Laufen brand, from Switzerland, is widely known for its artistic bathroom concepts seamlessly merging creativity and quality. With a variety of designs available, the bathrooms are aesthetically pleasing yet highly functional.

LAUFEN bathrooms



Laufen Bathroom Set

MPI INVESTS IN NEW LARGE FORMAT PRINTER

Marketpower recently purchased a 2.3 meter-wide large format printer to replace their 6 year old machine that has since been de-commissioned. The addition of this new printer improves the production efficiency, print quality and speed of delivery.



The newly purchased large format printer

RAMCO GROUP STAFF RUN FOR A WORTHY CAUSE

Ramco Group staff turned out in impressive numbers to take part in the 11th edition of the Standard Chartered Nairobi Marathon on 27th October 2013. The team gathered at Ramco Printing Works Limited and then walked to Nyayo Stadium which was the designated starting point.

Taking part in the 10 km, half and full marathons, everyone was quite energised and excited to be part of the admirable effort to raise money for the **'Seeing is Believing'** campaign which works towards eradicating cases of preventable blindness. The marathon was also a great opportunity for individuals from the different Group companies to meet and socialise in a non-work setting.



Part of the Ramco Group team taking a well deserved rest after the run

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a time for sharing. In the true spirit of the holidays, Creative Edge embarked on a 12 day initiative to make it a memorable Christmas for the children at Mogra Children's Home. The entire company's staff pulled together to buy various food items such as bread, milk, sodas, sugar and biscuits. Tags depicting each item were hang on a Christmas tree and each employee then picked a tag of choice and proceeded to buy that item and deliver it under the tree within 12 days. These were then presented to the home on 20th December 2013, right on time for their Christmas party scheduled for the 21st of December.



Creative Edge employees present Christmas gifts to the management of Mogra children's home

GROW YOUR SALES BY BEING UNIQUE

If you produce the same product as your competitor, what allows you to sell your product for a higher price? What do you do when the competitor drops their price? The habit is to respond by dropping your price as well resulting in a price war.

SO THE KEY QUESTION IS:

How do we differentiate ourselves from our competitors so that we can charge more for that difference?

Differences come in many forms:

1. Credit terms
2. Delivery timeframes
3. After-sales support
4. Sales visits
5. Product guarantees
6. Consumables - availability, quality & price
7. Product availability/distribution
8. The products you offer
9. Price

Consider this list and look at what you currently offer your clients. Do your customers value any of the first 7 items? If they do, can you use this value to differentiate yourself from the competition?

An area you can make a big difference is the products you offer. If you are selling a product that no one else has, you have a monopoly and can charge more. What is important is that as Ramco Group companies, we need to find unique products and services to give us a competitive edge over other companies. There are a number of sources where new product/service ideas come from...

- Ask your customers how you can improve
- What more would they like you to offer them?
- Read industry journals
- Watch industry trends overseas
- Ask your customers how you could be more efficient for them
- Brainstorm internally with the production and sales teams

I love the story about a company called Polaroid that in the late 1940s invented a new way to take photographs. It was a revolutionary step in the photography industry where customers could have their picture printed by the camera immediately after taking it. The company had an 80% market share in the industry. They were in control. Today, they don't exist. Why? In simple terms, they did not change. They did not invest in new ideas. They rested on their success and stood still while their competitors invented the digital camera and pulled the market from under them.

Consider this:

If your competitor stole your biggest customer through implementing a new idea, product or way of doing things, you'd probably respond by copying that new idea. Let's not wait for that to happen. Let us be the companies that come up with those new ideas and instead take customers from our competitors!

Top Marketing Tip

'Always strive to be different!'

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

The phrase '*you are up for appraisal*' is usually met with sinking dread and anxious days and nights as you try to brace yourself for the day in question. But it doesn't need to be so nerve-wracking.

Appraisals, believe it or not, are quite beneficial for all employees as they allow for a candid discussion with your boss which covers:

- Your performance against the job expectation.
- Evaluating your achievements of defined goals from your previous appraisal.
- Identifying your strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement.
- Planning your future growth and setting goals on how to get there.

Once the above is completed, the results serve as a guideline to determine if a salary review is merited and if so, by how much.



THE PROCESS

Most appraisals are conducted in two parts:

I. WRITTEN PART

This involves the employee filling in an appraisal form some days prior to the meeting which comprises sets of questions that will enable you to assess how you think you performed. This gives you ample time to prepare detailed answers before the meeting is due.

Major aspects that are touched upon include:

Knowledge and Skills

This gauges whether you have the necessary skills and knowledge required to perform key tasks expected of you. It also covers the quality, accuracy and speed of your work assignments and whether you are meeting deadlines.

Operational Efficiency

Do you understand the procedures, systems and customers? This enables your boss to determine if your goals and working style are in line with the company's set-out regulations.

Leadership & Management

Do you have what it takes to effectively lead and inspire a team or department? This is a good indicator of your career progression potential.

Personal Attributes

This examines whether you possess core values and traits as a person to represent the company ethically and professionally.

Communication Skills

Your verbal and written skills while interacting with other staff members and clients are assessed.

Self-Improvement & Future Goals

This section covers the ways in which you would like to better yourself and the goals you intend to achieve in the coming year.

II. APPRAISAL MEETING

At the meeting, you and your boss will go through the appraisal form and discuss each set of questions and agree on a rating to determine how well you score against the job description and if you are the right fit for the job and organisation.

It is a platform where you get to learn how your skills and knowledge measure up to the expectations of the position and what areas you need to work harder on. Take the criticism constructively and remind yourself that this process is meant to benefit you and improve your worth as an employee. It is also an opportunity to address any issues you may have come across in your job or an organisational problem that you reckon should be worked on.

Develop a positive attitude towards appraisals and embrace the belief that it will make you a better employee not only in your current position but in future positions as well.

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL PRINTING IN THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

Digital printing has brought about a revolution in the printing industry. Not only in terms of superior quality but also by way of increasing options for the smaller players in various industries. In digital printing, the image is sent directly to the printer using digital files such as PDFs and Adobe Illustrator thus eliminating the need for a printing plate, as is the case with offset printing. This leads to faster turnarounds for printing jobs and allows for printing-on-demand.

The major benefits of digital printing are as follows:

I. COST SAVINGS

For many years, only corporates with deep pockets could afford to experiment and try out different options, leaving smaller players with limited options. However, digital printing has changed all that. Take, for example, a company that would like to change their product packaging, traditional offset printing would limit them in terms of creativity as they would have to print a large quantity to be able to achieve any economies of scale or alternatively, pay a large sum to print a small number of samples. However, with digital printing, they are able to test out ideas at a far more affordable cost.

As the Managing Director of Platinum Packaging Limited, Hasit Patel, reiterates, "With digital printing, a company is able to print small quantities of

packets and labels thus increasing a client's ability to experiment with new packaging ideas without the initial high start-up cost."

II. EFFECTIVE MARKET TESTING

Digital printing allows companies to test the product in the market and accurately gauge reactions before making a large print order. The advantage of this is that sometimes what you see on-screen will turn out differently once printed thus when you present digitally printed samples to the market, you are sure that what the public sees is the actual final product. Thus, with a few samples of each option available, these can be compared easily and a more informed choice can be made.

III. PROMOTIONS

The ability to incorporate variable data gives us the opportunity to add serial numbers and other details, which can be used to award prizes and promote products.



8 THINGS KENYAN COMPANIES SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA

1. BOLD IS THE NEW COOL

Most companies with social media accounts tend to be conservative choosing to only use social media for marketing purposes. This is mainly due to the dynamic nature of social media trends and that most do not seem to have a firm grip on what is needed out of their social media accounts. But going with recent trends, it seems that being bold is the new cool for companies with an online presence. Mobile companies have had a go at each other using their social media accounts which a few years back would be seen as negative. However, contrary to expectations this has led to more interest in what they have to say. Being bold ensures your brand is out there; but do not go overboard with your social media posts.

2. RESPOND TO QUERIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

It is imperative, if you are serious with your social media accounts, to be online 24/7 if possible. As mentioned earlier, social media is dynamic and a lot of posts are put up per minute thus you might miss out on something which ends up blowing up in your face in future. Case and point, the incident that happened with the Railway accident last year. Apparently someone on social media had mentioned the matter to the company but they did not act on it appropriately only for it to come back and haunt them later on. Try and employ a full time social media manager or outsource it to a company that will be on the account at all times to make sure correspondence with your audience is done in a concise manner.

3. THE ONLINE COMMUNITY DOES NOT FORGIVE EASILY

To err is human, a wise man once said. We can understand if you make a mistake but do not choose to ignore it, especially online. Kenyans on Twitter, or KOT as they are commonly referred to, tend to pick up on arrogance from

companies. If you make a mistake, make sure you admit to it, give an apology and seek appropriate measures to ensure it does not harm your brand.

4. HASHTAGS ARE IMPORTANT; SET A TREND

One of the objectives of social media is to engage a community or audience and one of the best ways to do this is to set a trend from which discussions can evolve. A hashtag helps one track what is being said as well as help one engage with those involved in the discussion. You should make sure people are talking about you and not focus on you talking about yourself.

5. REWARD YOUR FOLLOWERS

It is human nature to expect a reward or something in return for a service. Being on social media is no different; it even put our human nature more out there. By rewarding your followers you will be more engaged with them and give them a sense of fulfillment having stuck by your brand. You can start a competition online or set up a raffle. This will go a long way to make sure your followers and fans remain loyal and on your side.

6. KNOW WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE SAYING ONLINE

I'm not saying you should spy on them or put limits on how they use their social media accounts. But you should know that whatever your employees say on social media also reflects on your company. The best way is to make sure you keep your employees happy but if that is too difficult, you can also set up policies and regulations to make sure they do not leak company issues and keep their social media accounts as private as possible.

7. PUT OUT QUALITY CONTENT

By quality I mean issues such as relevance and grammar among many others. If your posts constantly have grammatical errors or are irrelevant, your audience will lose interest.

8. YOUR ACCOUNT IS AN EXTENSION OF YOUR BRAND

At the end of the day, you have to take social media seriously for this one reason. Whatever is put out using your social media is taken as official communication or a reflection of the company's stand. If you are a creative company then your post must reflect this.



ENHANCE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY AT WORK

It's a great feeling to get to the end of a day having achieved all (or most) of the goals that you had set for yourself at the beginning of the day. The key to this lies in maximising your productivity throughout the day. Here are some ways in which you can achieve this.

Set target goals for the day

An early start allows you more time to organise and plan out your day. Make lists and prioritise what needs to be done. Once your list is ready, tackle each item in turn and give yourself certain timelines to resolve each task. It is also important to be realistic about the goals you set, as overstretching yourself may leave you demotivated and too exhausted (either mentally or physically) to do a great job on subsequent tasks.

Make time to exercise

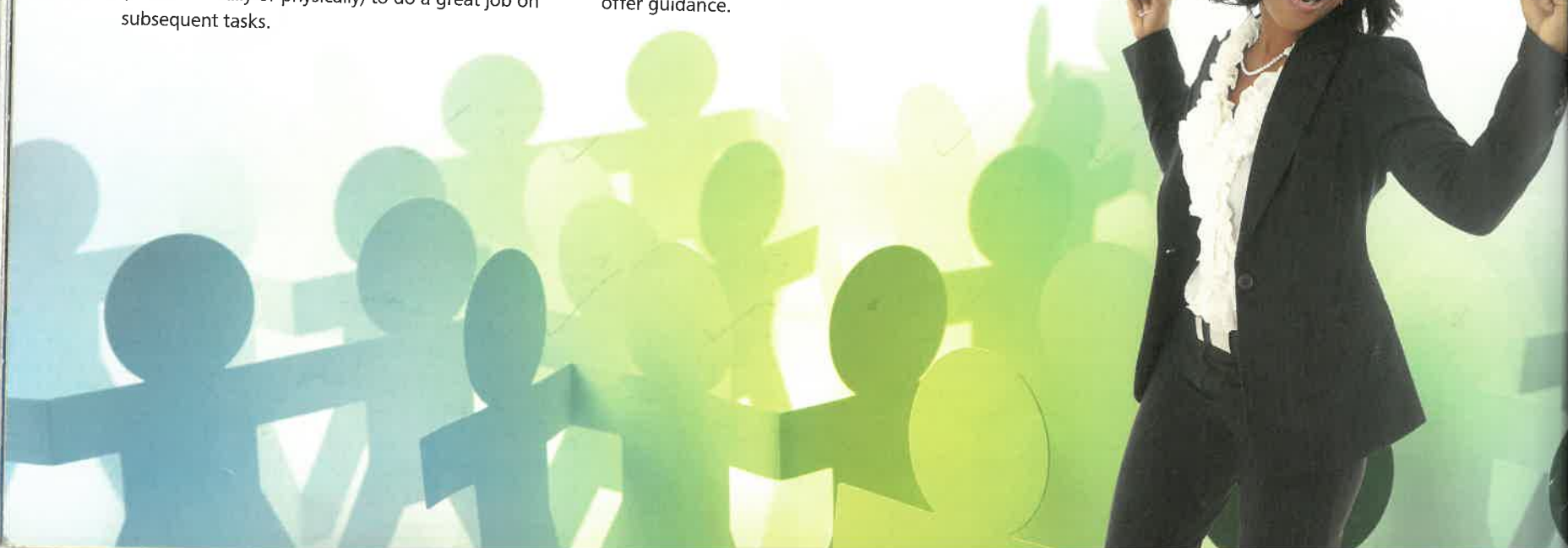
An early morning workout is quite rejuvenating and gives you that extra energy boost to face your day. Working out also increases your mental clarity thus significantly improving your productivity throughout the day.

See challenges as opportunities

Starting off your day worrying about all the tens of things you have to do simply puts you in an anxious state of mind which is not ideal for productive work sessions. View the challenges you encounter as opportunities that will help you learn and grow in your career. If you do get overwhelmed, do not be afraid to ask for assistance from those who can offer guidance.

Make routine tasks fun

Often times, the reason we tend to procrastinate on certain tasks is because we find them repetitive and unexciting. However, you can make routine tasks more interesting by introducing some fun twists such as listening to some uplifting music as you work or giving yourself a 5 minute break whenever you complete each task.





Some of the lovely ladies from Travelshoppe and KLM at the annual Secretaries Party hosted at Fogo Gaucho



Mr. Anand Dave presents a certificate of achievement to Harish Dave for 12 years of dedicated service at Sai Office

Captured Moments



The Marketpower team savour the meal at the end of year party



Ramco Printing, Marketpower and Creative Edge enjoy the end of year celebrations

