

## Digital transformation is key to Africa's future

Any vendor that comes to Africa needs to understand Africa. The problem most companies have is that they think of Africa as one country, where one approach will work, not 50-plus countries, each with their own political, educational, and technological systems. Africa has more than one billion people, with a huge mix of cultures, languages and development levels.

By [Hatem Hariri](#) 29 Mar 2016



Alex Stokes via [123RF](#)

Some companies want to work here remotely, but you can't do that in Africa - you need to have a local presence. It's an old adage that 'people buy from people' - but it is definitely the case in Africa. If you don't have presence on the ground, you can't really understand the diverse cultures and what is required to deliver effectively.

Governments and enterprises around the globe are looking at digitisation strategies to drive operational excellence, greater competitive differentiation, customer and citizen satisfaction, and providing them with a more connected experience. With the majority of Africa's population under 24 years of age, and the World Bank Group predicting the continent's population will reach 2.8 billion by 2060 - more than a quarter of all people on earth - digital transformation is key to Africa's successful future.

### Working in partnership

Governments want to be more accessible to their citizens - that means communication, which is where we help deliver smart government, making life easier for citizens by working in partnership with the government organisations to transform everything to digital. Client-tailored and outcomes-focused digital and smart services elevate organisations of every scale and accelerate growth through their digital journeys.

While Africa's predominantly young, tech-savvy, population means awareness of the so-called third platform technologies - big data and analytics, cloud, social and mobile - are high, adoption is still uneven, given the diverse nature of the market. However, it very much depends on the country.

Some countries have good bandwidth, good infrastructure and good education, and are therefore very

advanced in their adoption of new technology. If you look at countries like South Africa, Morocco and Algeria, our cloud value proposition is gaining tremendous traction, how we integrate video as a service, unified communications and so on.

## **Advanced solutions**

Many countries here have very advanced technology solutions that are ahead of other regions - for instance we have seen the use of mobile phones to conduct banking transactions being pioneered in sub-Saharan Africa.

Other countries may seem behind in technology adoption but they are catching up fast as the infrastructure develops. On a positive note, African countries have all opened the market for service providers to come in so each country has several service providers competing to provide better service, and a better customer experience.

Africa is a fertile land, whatever you put into it will bear fruit. We are investing more and more into the region and we are increasingly looking at what other countries we can invest in because of the potential.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Hatem Hariri, Managing Director, Africa at Avaya

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>