

Technology and inhumanity is surpassing the disABLED

 By [Hanni Cronje](#)

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The disabled are always an easy target. They are defenseless and are often preyed on by bullies. Why can we not harness technology rather to improve their lives?



As NGOs or NPCs, we battle to make every cent that we bring in, we have to humble ourselves and ask people to help us. We have come up with business models that bring in income allowing our resident disabled to earn money every month that helps subsidise their state grants. This gives them a sense of purpose and dignity that they are part of our society. This also demonstrates that we are serious about business and our entrepreneurial skills have been honed.

There are technologies out there that could assist many of our autistic clients, but we do not have the funding to acquire this technology. Whilst the state does its best to assist organisations as they themselves don't have the infrastructure and expertise to manage specialised care and skills development facilities like ours – our role in civil society therefore is imperative.

You asked about the trends for 2019, well here is what I see in our future:

- We will continue to struggle to gain a rightful and respectful place in society for the disabled;
- Government subsidies will continue to be under pressure;
- Technologies will continue to be released that can assist the disabled, but we will struggle to access them due to lack of funding;
- We will continue to reinvent the way in which we operate and do business so we can keep our doors open and continue to create futures for those with disABILITIES;
- We will continue to identify, establish, manage and roll out business models that will keep us afloat and even allow us to make changes within our facilities and employ more skilled people from the community to assist us; and
- Our entrepreneurial skills will be tested and the funders and supporters we have will hopefully continue to support us and see the incredible value that our business units offer in the market place.

A current white paper highlights the following that will be needed for the disABLED to be part of the business market and is

something that has to be pursued and will eventually be drafted into legislation and become of everyday life in a work environment and will be a key focus in 2019:

- assistive devices
- assistive technology
- personal assistance
- adaptations of the built environment
- signage
- captioning
- text available in audio
- alerting/alarm systems for evacuation procedures
- dedicated SMS lines to all emergency service call centres, and
- adaptation of (for example) work arrangements and the implementation of flexibility within the workplace to accommodate persons with disABILITIES.

But if I could implore the business sector who themselves are under pressure to perform and reach profit targets – don't forget that you are human and part of our society and what you put out will be what you get back – it's not just about the photograph and caption of you handing over a gift to a disabled person that matters – it's about being part of your community and really caring and partnering with us to become stronger and more relevant in the marketplace.

The disabled are a wonderful and skilled workforce who are ready and able to work and will grab the opportunity to be part of the formal employment sector – you just have to seek out the partnership opportunities that we do offer the business sector.

ABOUT HANNL CRONJE

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