

# Opportunities in the African telecoms market

"The African telecommunication market is full of opportunity, especially the IP networking and subscriber management sectors" says three6five CEO, Tyrone Carroll.



Tyrone Carroll

"The African telecommunications market is still in the early stages of development, but the sudden profusion of undersea fibre connectivity and new terrestrial infrastructure is resulting in a surge in the growth of internet service providers (ISP's) wishing to offer quality data services to their existing customers and to reach out to new potential customers. This growth is fuelling the entire telecommunications market and presenting the numerous opportunities we are seeing at present," explains Carroll.

"Increasing access to data communications and lowering the costs in Africa will have a positive impact on social and developmental growth on the continent. This will also bring about real change in growth, upliftment opportunities and social equality in many African countries," says Carroll.

## Building a sustainable business

Despite the many opportunities available in the African telecommunications sector, building a successful business on the continent is not without its challenges.

"Local South African service providers seeking to build a sustainable business delivering services into the rest of Africa need to focus on paying attention to detail, delivering quality products and services, having a long term vision and building strong business relationships. They will also need to be patient and have strong fiscal discipline concerning payment terms in order to manage their cash flows.

In addition, and very importantly on the African continent, they should resist the temptation to get involved in underhanded or illegitimate business deals. We have always dealt ethically and legally in all our business dealings, and we have

witnessed the fall of other companies' reputations when they have traded their values for money." adds Carroll.

The impact of legislation on the growth of the telecommunications sector in Africa varies from country to country due to different legislative requirements for each market.

"One of the major challenges faced by a service provider wanting to enter a new African market is when the customer insists on dealing through a locally owned company. These local entities often do not have the skills or expertise to manage the project and could jeopardise the business deal. This is why it is so important to build sustainable in-country partnerships with local technology companies that can represent your brand in that country effectively," explains Carroll.

There are also large growth prospects in the IT landscape in Africa at present, with the market showing many positive, buoyant signs.

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