

• The Most Inspiring Business Leaders Redefining Success in 2025 •

CIO Business Leaders

JULY 2025

A Leader
Transforming
Federal Service
Through Innovation

Sr. Director Business Dev
Titan Technologies

JOHN BINKS

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From The Editor

The Leaders Who Changed the Meaning of Winning

In today's corporate world, success is not measured by profit margins or market share. A new generation of leaders are rewriting the code, making purpose, determination, and people the core of their drive. These disruptors are building businesses that not only thrive financially but also inspire social benefit and challenge traditional wisdom. Their leadership is a blend of empathy and ingenuity, crafting cultures where people feel heard, seen, and empowered. What defines them is that they can lead from the heart and address complexity with openness. Theirs are not growth stories, transformation stories. While they remake success, they're modestly remaking the future of business itself. They are leading and sustainable impact, the expectation, not the aspiration; they are a competitive asset. Their influence is sparking a shift in the way industries approach value, and people approach ambition. In a world hungry for meaningful advancement, these leaders are showing us what winning actually is.

At CIO Business Leaders, we honor these empowering leaders by dedicating this issue titled, **"The Most Inspiring Business Leaders Redefining Success in**

2025," to them. Featuring as the cover story we have covered the successful & motivating journey **John Binks, Sr. Director Business Dev at Titan Technologies**. We have also included the inspiring stories of Karen Eicker, Managing Director of Apex Information Systems; Simon Elisha, Founder & Chief Executive Officer of JobsGate Nigeria Limited; Ahmed Detta, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Enviroo; Wayne J. Riley, President of SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, (Downstate); Dr. Kenneth Maundu, Chief Finance Officer at Eclectics International Limited; Ian Vickers, Chief Executive Officer of METCloud; Marc Rippen, Chief Executive Officer of Alertgy; Bernie Lawrence-Watkins, Attorney & Principal at B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates; and Raffi Jamgotchian, President & CTO at Triada Networks LLC.

CIO Business Leaders is a premier business magazine dedicated to showcasing the brilliance, insights, and innovative strategies of today's top business leaders. Our mission is to bridge the gap between visionaries and the wider business community, inspiring others through stories of leadership, perseverance, and transformation. At CIO Business Leaders, we celebrate those who are shaping industries, breaking barriers, and redefining success.

Happy Reading!

Jasmine

Jasmine Brown

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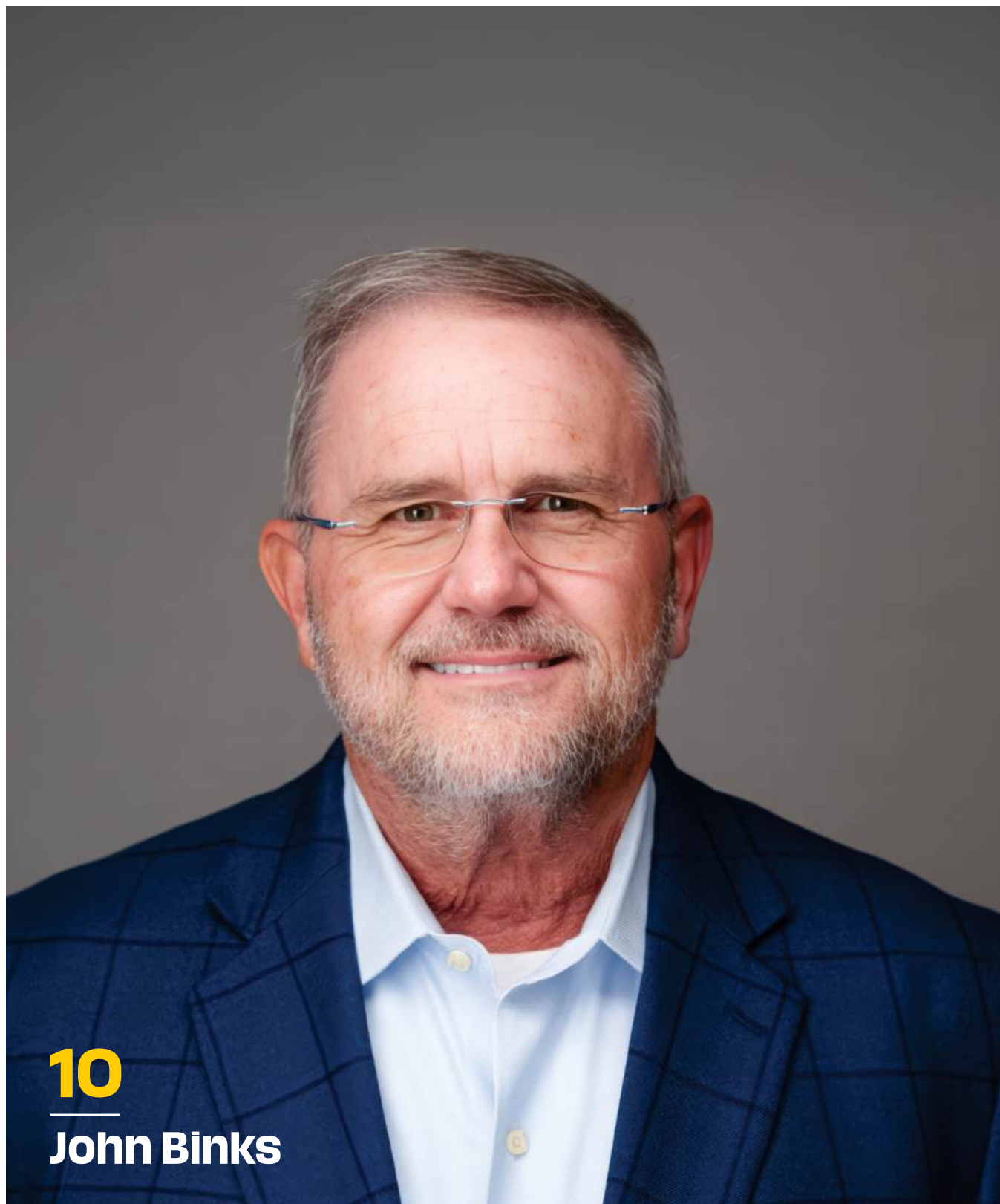


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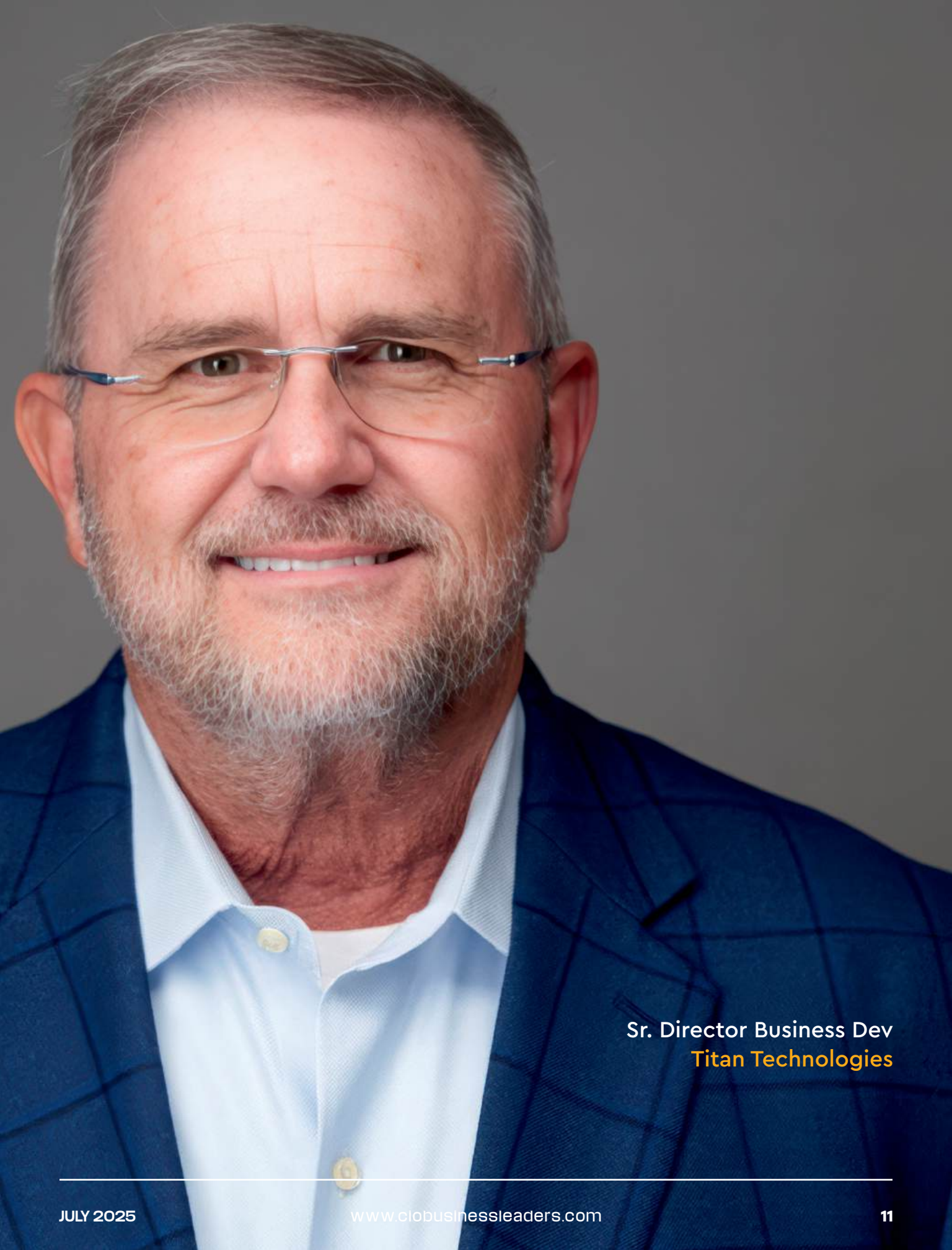




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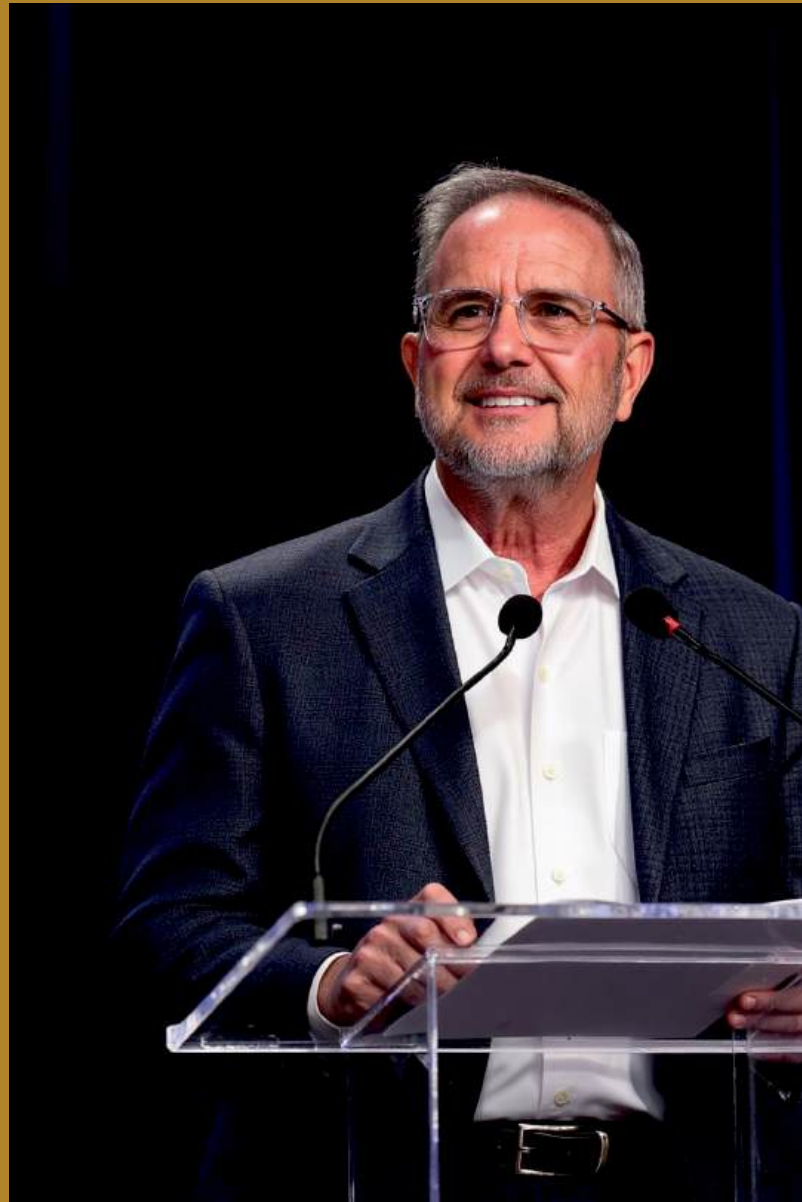
A Leader Transforming Federal
Service Through Innovation



Sr. Director Business Dev
Titan Technologies

As federal challenges mount and public expectations for government services rise, few have succeeded in integrating innovation and service as effectively as John Binks. As Senior Director of Business Development at Titan Technologies LLC, John has become a respected figure in federal civilian contracting, recognized for his insightful foresight, talent for forging strategic partnerships, and relentless dedication to enhancing the public sector. He serves as an essential interpreter, aligning government requirements with the best available technology.

Drawing on more than twenty years of federal experience, including critical roles at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) where he directed significant IT operations and disaster recovery efforts, John possesses an intimate understanding of the federal landscape. During crises, John was



instrumental in ensuring the digital infrastructure remained resilient. His commitment to governmental efficiency, coupled with a practical grasp of both policy and day-to-day operations, has rightly established him as one of the most progressive business leaders in federal technology. He truly "walks the talk" in a highly complex environment.

TODAY, TOMORROW, AND BEYOND

The Defining Moment: When Bureaucracy Met a Hurricane

"It was during my time at FEMA, right after Hurricane Harvey," John recalls, "The entire agency was in overdrive, working around the clock to deliver support. We were like a massive, well-intentioned machine trying to run on fumes and a 1990s operating system. We were also hampered by outdated systems and rigid processes. I remember thinking: this isn't a resource problem, it's a modernization problem. We had dedicated people, but our tools were just holding them back."

He continues, "That was a lightbulb moment for me. A full-on, incandescent 'aha!' moment. I realized that to make a bigger impact, to move the needle genuinely, I had to use my role as a senior leader to bring in the right innovations from the private sector and align them with the government's mission. It was clear that the greatest service I could provide wasn't just working within the existing system, but actively helping to rebuild and retool it from the outside in."

That profound realization completely shifted John's career path, leading him directly to Titan Technologies. There, he now dedicates his energy to helping federal agencies integrate cutting-edge IT solutions and best practices, improving everything from AI/ML to Managed IT Services. He's essentially helping Uncle Sam get a much-needed tech glow-up.

Adapting to Changing Needs: From Order-Taker to Visionary Partner

"Today, it's all about being proactive, not just reacting," John explains. "Federal agencies are under immense pressure to deliver results faster and with greater accountability. It's not enough for them to just keep the lights on; they need to innovate at lightning speed, often with one hand tied behind their backs by endless regulations. That means our job as industry partners has shifted from simply responding to RFPs – essentially, waiting for an instruction manual – to anticipating what agencies need and working with them to create the vision for what's next. We're not just order-takers anymore; we're strategic partners in a very complex dance."

John clarifies that the old-school business development cycle, which used to be pretty transactional, has blossomed into something far more consultative and, crucially, more focused on genuine relationships. "It's about trust. Pure and simple," he emphasizes. "The agency has to believe you understand their mission as well as they do, and sometimes even better when it comes to navigating the dizzying pace of technology. That's why I spend just as much time listening as I do proposing. You can't solve a problem if you don't truly understand its quirks, big and small." It's a lot like being a therapist for federal IT infrastructure.

Redefining Success: Beyond the Scoreboard

For John, redefining success means looking far beyond just winning contracts and watching revenue grow. While those are definitely part of a successful business, they aren't the ultimate measure.

"Professionally, success is about delivering solutions that genuinely makes life better for public servants and the communities they serve," he explains, "If we can modernize a system that lets a disaster survivor get assistance in days instead of weeks, that's success. That's a tangible human impact. If we help secure sensitive federal data from increasingly sophisticated cyber threats, ensuring the safety of critical information, that's success." For him, it's about impact, not just profit.

On a personal level, John defines success through the profound acts of mentorship and leaving a lasting legacy. "I want to leave behind more than metrics. Anyone can count numbers. I want to leave behind people and teams I've helped grow, individuals I've mentored, and a broader ecosystem that's better off because I was a part of it. It's about building something that outlives my time, something that keeps giving back."

To this point, John is honored to be a founding member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) Foundation Legacy Society, which acknowledges individuals who have chosen to include a legacy gift to the AOPA Foundation in their estate planning.

John also shared that while waiting to pick up his daughter at Washington Dulles Airport last year, he wandered into the USO lounge and was deeply inspired by the volunteers and their mission to support military personnel. As a veteran and private pilot, the idea of volunteering at an airport immediately felt like a natural fit, he signed up and has been regularly active volunteering his time ever since.

More than a year later, John continues to volunteer regularly, offering a warm welcome, comfort, and assistance to service members and their families. He's also honored to support the Families of the Fallen program, providing care and compassion during some of their most difficult moments.

Lessons from Adversity: The Humbling Power of Not Listening

"Early in my military career as a Police Sergeant in the Air Force, I was stationed out in the desert, you know, where all the 'aliens' are," he says with a playful grin. I was leading a base security upgrade project connecting the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) into the Nellis Air Force Base computer network," John recalls, "The mission was critical, and we were laser-focused on execution. We were highly motivated and slightly tunnel-visioned. But in our urgency, we didn't engage key base stakeholders like the civilian liaisons, the FBI team, and the Office of Special Investigations (OSI), until it was too late. We rolled out access control changes that made perfect sense on paper, meticulously crafted by us, but



INNOVATIVE & TRANSFORMATIVE



A TITAN OF IMPACT

Revolutionizing Disaster Response

John points to Titan's ongoing work supporting FEMA's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and Office of Response and Recovery. "Those initiatives can involve modernizing how FEMA manages IT across critical disaster functions, something I deeply care about given my past experience," he says. "It's personal."

By leveraging advanced agentic artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), robust cloud technologies, automation, sophisticated analytics, and even staffing call centers, Titan is actively working to help FEMA streamline operations and significantly improve system reliability during disasters. Imagine faster processing times

when people need help most, or more reliable communication channels when every second counts. "This wasn't just about IT; it was about building a deeper layer of trust," John emphasizes. "It's an honor to support this. Knowing that our tech can help someone rebuild their life after a hurricane. That's gold."

Cover Story

created operational bottlenecks for others on base. The backlash was immediate let's just say it wasn't a standing ovation."

John says that failure wasn't due to laziness or incompetence; it was a leadership blind spot, plain and simple. "We were so focused on being 'mission-ready' that we forgot to be mission-aware," he explains. "It was a humble lesson in humility and the hard truth that even the smartest plan can crumble if you forget the human element. Turns out, even the military needs to collaborate effectively, who knew?"

That painful experience, John says, taught him the indelible importance of inclusive leadership. "I realized that real leadership is about making space for dissent, encouraging honest collaboration, and building a culture where failure is treated as a learning opportunity, not a career-ender. You know, learning from your screw-ups instead of just sweeping them under the rug and pretending they never happened." It's a philosophy he's carried with him into every role since, making sure every voice, especially the inconvenient ones, gets a seat at the table.

Balancing Strategy with Agility: The Art of Structured Experimentation

"You have to create breathing room for innovation," John says, leaning forward slightly. "Federal business development can be incredibly rigid, especially with notoriously long procurement cycles and compliance-heavy environments that make the

average bureaucracy look like a free-for-all. But agility is still possible, even within these seemingly immovable structures, if you prioritize it."

He explains that at Titan Technologies, he actively fosters adaptive thinking by hosting and attending regular government and industry networking events, where good ideas often emerge from unexpected conversations. "You need a structure that welcomes experimentation, even within a highly regulated environment," he stresses. "It's like trying to do ballet in a suit of armor; it's challenging, but not impossible if you know where to bend."

Staying True to the Mission: The Empathy Lens

"The key is empathy," John says without hesitation, a core principle he clearly lives by. "I've sat across from disaster survivors, having been deployed to dozens of disasters. During my time at FEMA, some have been historic, including Hurricanes Irma, Maria, and Harvey in 2017, the California Wildfires in 2017, Hurricane Sandy in 2012, and the response to COVID-19. I have had every role imaginable, from handing out bottled water and MREs in the field to directing air missions in the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC) in DC as Director of Air Operations. John has been a private pilot for over 10 years and has a deep passion for it. I've seen firsthand what happens when systems fail, when the bureaucratic gears grind to a halt. That perspective grounds everything I do. It's not just about winning a contract; it's about



solving a real-world problem for real people.”

John also shares that as a native of Florida, he and his family have been on the other end as disaster survivors many times themselves. “I remember as a kid putting duct tape on the windows (still don't know why), to many years later having his son help pick up parts of the roof from the street at the condo.” In fact, his son currently has a blue tarp on his home from a recent hurricane that struck Florida. It's not a theory, it's real.

Every proposal John is a part of is rigorously evaluated through what he calls a “mission lens” – a critical filter to ensure true impact. “Will this genuinely improve service delivery? Will it make life easier, less frustrating, for federal staff who are already doing incredibly tough jobs? Will it protect citizens' data and well-being?” he rattles off. “We're not just providing services. We're strengthening democracy, one optimized system at a time. It sounds lofty, but when you're dealing with public trust, it truly is.”

Daily Habits for High Performance: Structure, Space, and Smart Growth

“Structure keeps me sharp,” John says, describing his disciplined but flexible routine. “I start each morning by defining three priorities for the day. It's like setting my internal GPS for the next 24 hours. I also make dedicated time to unplug, whether it's walks, playing pickleball, axe throwing league, dinner with my friends and family, or just quiet



moments. Those moments can be very hard to find, but it's crucial to mental space, preventing burnout and allowing for creative thought."

He also dedicates time weekly to continuous learning, a non-negotiable for staying ahead in the ever-evolving tech world. "Whether it's listening to an audiobook on the latest in AI or leadership philosophies, or exploring a new tech platform, I make time for professional curiosity. That's how you stay ahead of the curve. People need to invest in themselves professionally. I have done that all my life, and I encourage everyone around me to do the same. It's the best ROI you'll ever get."

John lives by this, being both a technologist and author. John has written and published 3 Best Selling books on management in the age of artificial intelligence, *"Bots & Bosses: The Hilariously Chaotic Symphony of Management in the Age of AI"*, *"Bots & Bytes: An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, ChatGPT, and Machine Learning"*, and *"Bots & Brilliance: 101 Things You Should Know About Artificial Intelligence."* John, along with Bots & Bosses LLC., has recently released his first pop music album, *"Rise Up Keep Pushing The Grind."* This pop music album blends the heart of human emotion and creativity with the cutting edge of AI-driven inspiration.

Mentorship and the Next Generation: Just Be "Real"

"Mentorship doesn't have to be formal. It's about being available, being real," says John, avoiding any rigid, pre-packaged approach. Throughout his career, he frequently invites younger professionals into

high-level discussions, giving them a front-row seat to strategic thinking. He's also known for giving practical, unfiltered advice to former federal employees on their resumes and LinkedIn profiles, looking to break into the industry and sharing the kinds of unfiltered career lessons you won't find in a textbook.

"I also host a small book club where we talk about technology, leadership, and personal growth," he added. "It's a space for honest conversations, a no-judgment zone where people can truly connect and share challenges. And that's where genuine growth happens when people feel safe enough to be vulnerable and learn from each other."

The Power of Collaboration: Building Trust, One Partnership at a Time

"Collaboration is the backbone of transformation. Period," John states unequivocally. "Government improvements don't move unless trust is present, and trust is painstakingly built through authentic partnerships. You can have the best technology in the world, but if there's no trust, it'll just gather dust."

John is widely known for his knack for building diverse coalitions that span contractors, federal program leads, and mission stakeholders. He is bringing disparate groups together to sing from the same sheet of music.

"You don't get to success by protecting turf or hoarding information. That's a recipe for stagnation," he advises. "You get there by aligning incentives and working shoulder to shoulder, recognizing that everyone has a piece of the puzzle. It's about collective progress, not individual glory."

Advice for Aspiring Federal Tech Leaders: Mission First, Mechanics Second

"Learn the mission first. Then learn the mechanics," says John, offering a concise but profound piece of wisdom. "Federal agencies aren't like private-sector clients whose bottom line may be purely profit. You need to deeply understand the policy landscape, the unique culture, and the real pain points that keep federal employees up at night. Only then will your solution resonate. Otherwise, you're just selling a widget into a vacuum."

He adds a crucial second piece of advice: "Also, build your network before you need it. Most opportunities are relationship-driven in this space, more so than almost anywhere else. It's a long game, a marathon, not a sprint. But it's an incredibly meaningful one, with the potential to truly shape the nation."

Shaping the Future of Public Service: A Humane Digital Era

"We're at a turning point," John reflects. "AI, data science, cybersecurity, it's all converging at an unprecedented pace. If done right, this integration can make the government smarter, faster, and crucially, more humane. We have the chance to transform how citizens interact with their government, making it more efficient and user-friendly."

He firmly believes the role of leaders like himself is to guide that integration responsibly and ethically. "Technology isn't neutral. It reflects the values of those who design and deploy it," he explains. "So, we need to ensure that public service remains people-first, that empathy and public



trust are embedded in every algorithm and every system, even in an increasingly digital era. We can't let innovation outpace our humanity."

John continues to share his knowledge with peers as a sought-after speaker and panelist.

The Legacy Vision: Guiding Tomorrow's Leaders

"Provide Guidance Today, so that Others Can Lead Tomorrow" has been John's guiding principle for most of his professional career, a mantra he clearly lives by. "For most of my career, people who worked with me have heard me say that and live that

principle. In the industry, I want to be remembered as someone who made federal partnerships more human, more effective. Someone who didn't just chase contracts but chased purpose, understanding that government work is more than just transactions."

In his community, that legacy is deeply personal. "I want my kids to see that you can lead with integrity, that your word is your bond," he says. "That you can serve your country from both inside and outside the uniform. And that the best kind of leadership is the kind that lifts others with you, leaving a stronger, better foundation for those who follow. It's

not about how high you climb, but how many people you bring up with you."

As John Binks continues to bridge the divide between government mission and private-sector innovation, his work stands as a powerful testament to what's truly possible when purpose meets precision and when leaders choose to redefine success not by accolades but by the tangible, lasting impact they leave behind. He's not just building systems; he's building a better future.







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MS. KAREN EICKER

Navigating Entrepreneurship and Empowerment

Karen Eicker, the Managing Director at Apex Information Systems, developed a keen interest in digital communications early in her career. As a graduate of the Wits School of Architecture & Planning, her background is rooted in corporate architecture, and she has been a prolific contributor to South Africa's leading publications on the built environment and infrastructure for the past two decades. In recognition of her exceptional work, she received the SAPOA Property Feature Journalist of the Year award in 2010.

Karen is part of a generation of women entrepreneurs who have had to navigate their paths in a patriarchal society. She strives to inspire younger women to stand up for themselves, trust their capabilities, create the space they need, and, when necessary, challenge the prevailing norms.

As an entrepreneur, Karen acknowledges the support and kindness she has received from others who believed in her, provided

opportunities, and generously shared their time, energy, and wisdom. She is committed to paying this kindness forward, particularly to the women she has the privilege of working with.

Karen's contributions extend beyond the entrepreneurial sphere and include serving as Commissary General of the 25th International Union of Architects World Congress, UIA2014 Durban. In recognition of her significant contributions to this event, she was honored with a President's Certificate of Meritorious Service by the South African Institute of Architects.

Innovating Communication for Diverse Sectors

Apex Information Systems was established to fill a void in the market, focusing on providing communication and specialized web development services primarily to professionals in the fields of architecture, engineering, and the built environment. Over time, the company's clientele has expanded to encompass a broad spectrum of

diverse sectors, with nature conservation being a significant addition.

“We mostly work with clients who are innovators and thought leaders in their respective fields. I am constantly inspired by their insights and different approaches to addressing some of the built and natural environments' complex challenges. Every day is a learning opportunity.”

Led by Karen, the team at Apex Information Systems possesses the ability to combine innovation, technical expertise, production capabilities, and an unwavering commitment to realizing their clients' visions. They excel in creating customized communication campaigns that effectively and efficiently target their clients' intended audiences. Their comprehensive services encompass strategic reviews and consultations, brand development and management, web development, multimedia content creation, writing and editing, as well as digital marketing.



Boundaries, Balance, and Building Apex Information Systems

Throughout her career, Karen has encountered situations where she was expected to shoulder an excessive workload and a weighty burden of responsibility. With maturity came the realization that she needed to carve out space for herself, not just in terms of time but also in preserving her energy. “Initiating Apex Information Systems was a part of this transformative process,” she says. “Part of my motivation was to create a workspace that would support my overall well-being. The ability to work in a bright, comfortable environment with easy access to nature and wholesome food has become a daily source of joy for me.”

Karen has experienced moments of isolation and endured highly stressful periods independently. “I view these experiences as key moments of growth along my career path,” she says. “They have taught me the importance of asserting myself, setting boundaries, honing my communication skills, and cultivating collaborative relationships with others.”

From Architecture to Leadership and Transformation

Reflecting on her journey, Karen recalls, “Studying architecture required intense focus and unwavering determination. Subsequently, leveraging this knowledge to launch a new career as a writer was a pivotal step that eventually led to where I am now. It has been an immensely rewarding journey.”

Among the significant highlights along the way, she mentions her leadership of a dedicated and resource-constrained team, primarily consisting of exceptional women. Together, they achieved a remarkable



success in successfully organizing and executing the International Union of Architects (UIA) World Congress, held in Durban in August 2014. This accomplishment stands out as a testament to their collective effort and dedication.

Karen explains that a drive to effect positive change remains at the core of her daily motivation. “I have always had a strong desire to challenge established systems. Almost every project I have undertaken has been fueled by a deep-seated aspiration to raise awareness of how things can be transformed to the benefit of both people and the planet.”

In her current role, Karen focuses primarily on client liaison, business development, and project management. The sectors in which she works demand a distinctive skill set for communicating technical information and intricate concepts in a manner that resonates with a wider audience. As a result, she maintains a rigorous approach to ensuring that decisions and deliverables are aligned with her clients' unique visions and objectives.

People, Openness, and Empowerment

Karen's leadership philosophy is grounded in principles of openness, collaboration, and recognition of hard work. She strives to set a positive example and provide opportunities and guidance where needed. She understands that even the smallest expression of interest or encouragement, or a seemingly minor intervention, can have a significant impact on someone else's life.

For Karen, people are at the heart of her business's success. She invests time in identifying the right individuals with the skills required to meet her clients' needs and ensures they understand the value she places on their expertise. She takes great pride in cultivating enduring relationships with long-term clients and colleagues, relationships founded on mutual respect and integrity.

She strongly believes in leveraging each person's individual strengths. Team members are entrusted with substantial responsibilities but are also given support and the freedom to execute tasks in their unique way. She

wholeheartedly supports remote work and flexible hours and actively promotes self-care among her team.

Yoga, Resilience, and Women's Empowerment

Karen's daily routine commences with 15 to 45 minutes of yoga, a non-negotiable part of her day. She regards yoga as the cornerstone of maintaining a composed and positive mindset, even in the face of the most challenging circumstances.

“Building a business demands qualities like courage, resilience, and self-discipline, along with the ability to maintain composure under pressure,” she observes. “These attributes are developed over time and require daily practice.”

Her motivation is fueled by intellectually stimulating work in a sector where the landscape is constantly evolving. Karen also draws inspiration from the women she collaborates with, be they clients, colleagues, or friends. These women, like her, are committed to building something of significance and must strike a balance between personal well-being, family responsibilities, and work demands. She has cultivated fulfilling relationships with several female clients, engaging in mutual support during difficult times, celebrating each other's accomplishments, and sharing in one another's successes.

Philosophy of Success

For Karen, success encompasses any action undertaken with enthusiasm, leading to a sense of fulfillment and overall well-being, irrespective of whether it attains the intended outcome. She says, “I believe that doing something that is meaningful to you is the foundation for a fulfilled and successful work life. Do what



you're passionate about and work won't feel like a chore. For me, this involves raising awareness and fostering discussions around creating sustainable and regenerative systems for future generations and nature to thrive.”

Empowering Advice for Aspiring Women Leaders

Karen's advice to aspiring women leaders is invaluable. She encourages them not to be afraid of asking questions, emphasizing that what might appear as a simple or even silly question at first can often lead to new insights and perspectives, benefiting both the questioner and the person providing the response.

Karen also underscores the importance of mentorship throughout

her own career. “Having mentors who were genuinely committed to helping me achieve my full potential has given me the confidence and open-mindedness to venture into uncertain territories. I strongly urge aspiring women leaders to seek help and guidance when needed, whether from a colleague, friend, or a business coach.” She points out that many successful businesswomen have encountered similar challenges, and that knowledge and practical solutions are available when required. The support is there; it's a matter of reaching out and making use of it.



SIMON ELISHA

A Passionate & Serial Entrepreneur Providing Great HR Consulting Services

Successful businesses and companies need solid leadership to help them thrive, and successful leaders are defined by the behaviours they exhibit as they lead. “Success is an infinite part of a man's life and you only achieve success when you have contributed to the society at large. It is infinite because it is never stopped,” says Simon Elisha, Founder & CEO of JobsGate Nigeria Limited.

Simon is a serial entrepreneur who builds scalable SAAS solutions for the African Continent. He provides HR consulting service for companies and is passionate about process improvement, organizational efficiency and productivity. He believes success is something that inspires you to keep doing what is good and helping the people and the society. “A man is successful when he has impacted positively on people and the

society and thrives to continue on the journey,” he states.

Challenges are hard to recognize and overcoming them builds resilience

Simon remembers the time when he started JobsGate, and how he was faced with numerous challenges. He strongly believes that challenges make you stronger.

“Challenges are pretty good provided you are able to identify them early and agree that they are challenges,” he says. Few months after starting his own company, he had thought he was ready and understood all he needed to be a successful consultant. Few weeks later, he claims he realized it was a different ball game and was faced with glaring challenges.

One of the very first challenges he faced was poor planning. He realised he had not



Founder & CEO,
JobsGate Nigeria Limited

planned enough. He had not made plans for where his clients would be coming from. So he did not have a single client for months. There was no finance to run the business and this almost made him to close the company.

Another challenge was having the right team. Because there was no money, Simon could not engage with skilled and experienced business development specialists. “I had to double as the CEO as well as the business development specialist for a while and when we started getting clients, it was very difficult for me to cope in both roles,” he says.

JobsGate's growth under Simon's successful leadership

Simon says that the growth of his company has been full of good and bad experiences. It was pretty difficult in the beginning. But states that he is thankful to his gut feeling and desire to excel in everything he does.

JobsGate is 5 years now and they have achieved lots of success within this period. From a very one man consulting firm with just Simon as the employee in the year 2017 to more than 20 direct and full time employees, they certainly have done very well. They started as just a recruitment consulting firm and grew to include a full fledged of HR services. “We have served several clients in various industries including Oil and Gas, Manufacturing, Financial Services, Real estates and many more. Our clients are very pleased with us as we keep getting referrals from them,” he exclaims.

Recognitions received as a passionate consulting leader

“I am one of the few people that have been very happy and fortunate with their career. Doing what you love to me is more important than any award. Awards are very good as they signify the acceptance of one's contribution,” says Simon.

After his graduation and the compulsory one year service to his country, Simon states that he was fortunate to commence his career with a consulting firm. He claims that it was the best choice he made and that is what prepared him for his current role. “Having studied Human Resources Management has contributed immensely in putting me in the right direction of my career. I have only changed jobs but not roles in my entire career. So working as an HR professional for about 10 years before deciding to setup my own firm helped a lot,” he explains. He received huge experience from his managers and supervisors. He had the skills required to be a good consultant and had taken several certification courses home and abroad in preparation for his consulting project.

Simon has received much recognition. One that is most particular to him was given to him by a former supervisor from India. He was Simon's HR director at the time. Prior to his exit, he had planned to award everyone in the best way possible and that day he awarded Simon as the most outstanding HR Professional he had ever supervised. “To me, it was the best award I ever received,” he states.

Responsibilities as Founder & CEO

At JobsGate, Simon occupies the Management Consultant position. He provides strategic direction, leadership and guidance towards achieving the vision of the company. Before founding JobsGate, he had worked for several companies. He grew so rapidly in his career and at the age of 32, he was already in the HR Director position. He says that working with great leaders inspired him and built confidence in him. “I am just a simple individual who believes in achieving greatness through hard work and dedication,” he further states.

Simon also says that he has not achieved all that he dreamed of yet. “It is still a journey. We want to be recognized among the top HR Consulting firms globally and this is a huge task for me,” he explains.

Simon's future plans for himself and JobsGate

Simon's plans for JobsGate are these:

1. Expand our business operations globally.
2. Create a work structure where we do not need any employee to resume at any physical building. This means putting in place a remote work structure.
3. Be recognized for providing best HR and Recruitment services.
4. Build and launch our Recruitment Platform that competes with the top ATS in the world.

His personal goal is to ensure the achievement of the above four points.

Staying motivated and maintaining a work-life balance

“I have come to realise that the two must be separated. As much as I put in quality time in my work, I also do not trade my personal and family life with it,” says Simon. While at work it must be seen as work time. When it is closing time, he recognises that he also requires rest and provides that family time to his family.

Simon's proudly states that his employees are the greatest assets he has. At JobsGate they provide an enabling environment for their employees to perform at their best. Whether someone is a newbie or a very experienced employee, everyone is guaranteed quality learning and development initiatives to enhance their skills. They also provide a coaching and mentorship access to all employees. Apart from that, they celebrate success together and organise events where they engage in various forms of recreational activities. Above all, at JobsGate they always listen to their employees.

Simon states that aspiring entrepreneurs need dedication, hard work and patience. He strongly advises them against cutting corners. Aspiring entrepreneurs must ensure they put in place a quality plan before rolling out to avoid mistakes. They must equip themselves with the skills needed to run their businesses effectively. “Having a mentor goes a long way. Look for someone from your business domain that is successful in similar businesses and learn from him,” he further advises.



AHMED DETTA

Shaping a sustainable, circular economy with the power of recycling

With plastic pollution advancing at an unprecedented rate and continually posing a serious threat to humanity, several leaders have taken action to limit plastic waste and recycle it responsibly. One such changemaker is the Founder and CEO of Enviroo Ltd, Ahmed Detta. He came up with the concept to bring a change in human's existing relationship with plastic and driving change by creating habitual behavioural patterns that are easy to adopt and implement. Brimming with passion about restructuring the current recycling industry, his recycling career has evolved from recycling mobile phones, office IT equipment, and progressed to plastic.

He says, “We are all guilty of lambasting plastic but not actually working collaboratively to create solutions. Recycling, if done correctly an opportunity to make a positive change to the world that encapsulates both environmental and social impact gains.”

Laying the foundation of Enviroo Ltd

Enviroo came into existence when Ahmed decided to meet the UN SDGs and create a super-effective social impact strategy and DNA level

circular economy approach to bring about change. His industrious team will be creating food-grade polymers to a recognized standard globally.

Every company faces numerous hurdles in its path to success. Enviroo also faced many problems, and the biggest setback was posed by the lack of legislation. However, Ahmed and his tenacious team always strived hard to conquer the macro challenges faced by the industry and focussed on overcoming all the local challenges to make their mark.

The strong teamwork and a good dose of patience paved their way to success and assisted them in getting over all the impediments on the way.

Overview of Enviroo Ltd

Being an agile and nimble organization, the company stays ready to adapt and react as per the industry changes, and this has offered them an edge over other competitors in a perfect manner. The team at Enviroo always supports as well as interacts with all the industry bodies to be aware of all the upcoming challenges they may face and find relevant solutions beforehand.

Dedicated to making a difference in the world, Enviroo always stays one step ahead with its social impact commitments. They have re-branded to Enviroo and have amalgamated social impact with innovative technology to develop a better environment that is best suited for both current and future generations.

Transforming the Recycling Industry with Enviroo Ltd

Enviroo aims to strike on bringing a shift in the behavioral habits of plastic users so that no plastic gets dumped in the oceans or landfills. The company is responsible for recycling 100% of Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) plastic waste and creating unity among all the circular economy stakeholders. Also, this change is only possible if the entire landscape of the plastic industry gets ready to bend and people witness the implementation of stringent protocols and regulations in the best way.

Ahmed shares, “Contribution to this growth has stemmed from the belief that Enviroo is providing a long-term solution. When you take a long-term view, growth, and scale, this becomes a very clear process that is both tangible and achievable.”



CEO and Founder,
Enviroo

Ahmed has formulated a 5-step process for responsible recycling:

1. Collection of PET plastic by Local Authorities or Waste Operators, which is purchased by Enviroo for further processing.
2. At Enviroo, the processing of the plastic waste is done via a wash line that produces flakes.
3. Then, the transferring process of these flakes to an extruder takes place that converts them into polymers.
4. All these polymers are later used to design pre-molds for bottles by manufacturers.
5. The manufacturers transform the pre-molds into bottles which are then distributed for client consumption

Awards & Accolades

As Enviroo begins to implement its operations successfully, it has been called a Disrupter in the field of recycling. Some of the recent awards include being ranked 10th Most Disruptive Company in the UK as per Disruption50 Index by Disruption Hub, Most Progressive Circular Economy Recycling Firm 2019 by Build Magazine, Social Impact Accreditation Issued by the Social Stock Exchange, one of the top disruptive Tech companies to watch in 2020 by Industry Wired, Top Revolutionary Tech Companies of the year 2020 by GlobalTech Outlook.

Inside Ahmed's Life

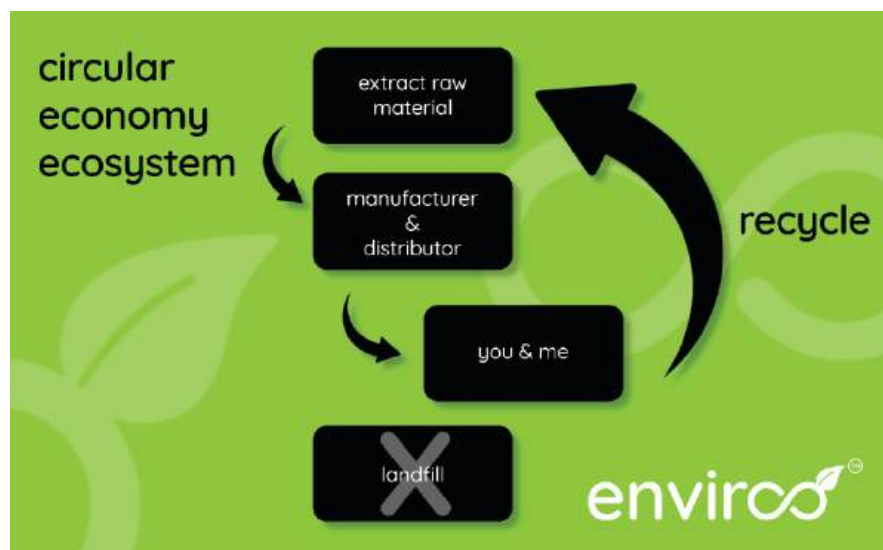
Ahmed always wanted to revamp the present recycling industry, and he became successful by ethically



recycling plastic waste with smart solutions. So, after completing his BSc of Science in Marketing at Lancaster University in 2003, he went on to pursue jobs in marketing until he took the onus of becoming the Program Director at The Green Foundation. After 1 year, he enrolled for his post-graduation in Sustainable Business from the University of

Cambridge. Since then, he worked in numerous roles until he became a founder of Ducycle in 2014 in the UAE.

He is currently pursuing MBA in Business Administration and Management from Quantic School of Business and Technology and will graduate in 2021.



After attaining success, Ahmed wanted to achieve the same success via Enviroo in the UK in 2018. His prime role as the CEO involves Stakeholder engagement, driving growth/profitability/ championing recycling in the industry, and creating long-term solutions.

He even keeps his team motivated by ensuring that their immense knowledge is creating a huge difference in the world. He further explains, “Every single piece of plastic recycled will make a monumental difference over the long term to preserve the beautiful earth we live on for future generations to come.”

Future Roadmap of Enviroo Ltd

Ahmed shares, “We plan to look at a number of different forms of plastic recycling. Once we have established our Polymers across the industry, our next mission is to look at 'tray to tray' recycling as well as PP materials.”

Ahmed had always aimed to make plastic recycling a positive habit that must be inculcated in everyday behavior and instill the belief that profiteering from this process is good for all involved. He led the entire business model from its concept to full equity investment funding for a recycling facility in the Middle East.

In the future, he plans to replicate the same model of creating a visionary recycling business across the UK market as well.

"Security, happiness and peace. These are the hardest things to find. This place is a reprieve from our crazy, upside down world. That feeling of safety lets me throw caution to the wind and try new things."

Joe Zee
International Fashion & Style Arbiter
2x guest
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WAYNE J. RILEY

A Rebrand for SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University recently launched a transformative rebranding campaign that reflects its long-term vision for advancing education, research, and clinical care while honoring Downstate's historical legacy of achievement.

“This rebrand is our effort to capture our true spirit, the prominence of our contributions, and the value of Downstate on the local, national, and global stages,” said **Wayne J. Riley, M.D., MPH, MBA, MACP, president of SUNY Downstate.**

The new brand incorporates the breadth of Downstate's multipart mission. It provides a platform for strategic growth expansion, all while allowing Downstate to better tell its story as an institution committed to innovation, inclusiveness, and health equity.

The launch featured a new logo and website that establishes an approachable and contemporary visual identity. In addition, a sub-brand encompassing all of Downstate's clinical offerings, services, and sites—*Downstate Health*—was announced. Supplementing this change, Downstate's flagship onsite teaching hospital was renamed “University Hospital at Downstate.” The brand

roll-out includes a series of ads targeting key stakeholders and the Brooklyn community to be launched in early spring.

This initiative is the most significant effort undertaken by Downstate to revamp its institutional identity comprehensively. The rebrand was essential given the current healthcare landscape and that academic medical centers must be increasingly forward-thinking and agile to remain competitive.

As part of the research and thought process for representative imagery in the logo, Downstate needed to strike the right balance. In capturing Downstate's mission and legacy, the logo adopted the shield—a traditional symbol of strength—surrounding iconic elements: the Rod of Asclepius to represent clinical care, an open book to capture Downstate's education programs, and a representation of the nitric oxide molecule as an homage to the scientific accomplishments of Dr. Robert F. Furchgott, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine while a member of the Downstate faculty.

Downstate's new website is one of the rebrand's most dramatic and visible components. The new look is a modern design created to accommodate easy navigation, better showcase Downstate, and be user-

friendly. It also offers prospective students, employees, researchers, medical professionals, and other stakeholders a more comprehensive understanding of the Downstate enterprises. In all, more than 30,000 pages of content were migrated to the new look.

“We work in one of the best academic medical centers in the country,” said Carla Boutin-Foster, M.D., Associate Dean for Diversity Education and Research in Downstate's College of Medicine. “When we step out our doors, we see the reality of health disparities. But we also see the possibility of how with innovative ideas, we can center and anchor equity in excellence – and that's the future of medicine and the future of Downstate that we want to tell with this rebrand.”

More information on SUNY Downstate's Brand Transformation can be found at: [A New Year and Exciting New Look for SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University](#).

About SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University is the borough's only academic medical center for health education, research, and patient care.



President,
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, (Downstate) mjh



It is a 342-bed facility serving the healthcare needs of New York City and Brooklyn's 2.6 million residents. In addition, the University Hospital at Downstate serves as the Institution's onsite teaching hospital, backed by an outstanding medical school's expertise and world-class academic center research facilities. More than 800 physicians, representing 53 specialties and subspecialties—many of them ranked as tops in their fields—comprise Downstate's staff. In addition to high-risk neonatal and

infant services, pediatric nephrology, and dialysis (kidney diseases)—and offering the only kidney transplantation program in Brooklyn, among many other distinctive programs—Downstate also sponsors a major learning center for young children with developmental disorders and disabilities.

Downstate also comprises a College of Medicine, College of Nursing, School of Health Professions, a School of Graduate Studies, a School

of Public Health, and a multifaceted biotechnology initiative, including the Downstate Biotechnology Incubator and BioBAT for early-stage and more mature companies, respectively. For more information, visit www.downstate.edu or follow us on Twitter at [@sunydownstate](https://twitter.com/sunydownstate).



DOWNSTATE
HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

NOTHING OR NATURE

Climate change. It's already here.

MERCEDES-EQ





Chief Finance Officer,
Eclectics International Limited

DR. KENNETH MAUNDU

Revolutionizing Finance and Leadership in Africa

In the intricate world of finance, few leaders have made as profound an impact as Dr. Kenneth Maundu, the Chief Finance Officer at Eclectics International Limited. With a career spanning over two decades, Dr. Maundu's journey is a testament to the power of relentless dedication, continuous learning, and unwavering integrity. His story is one of rising through the ranks, overcoming challenges, and driving transformative change in the financial sector.

From Humble Beginnings to Financial Mastery

Dr. Maundu's ascent to the role of CFO at Eclectics International Limited is a tale of perseverance and growth. "I have had the opportunity to work in various positions in Finance and Accounting in diverse industries," he shares.

From starting as an Accounts Assistant to becoming a Chief Finance Officer, his career trajectory is marked by continuous education and adaptation to industry advancements. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, a Master's Degree in Business Administration (Finance), and a Doctorate in Business Administration. Additionally, he is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA Kenya) and a

Lead Auditor and Trainer in multiple ISO standards. His journey is a reflection of his commitment to excellence and his ability to navigate the complexities of the financial world.

Choosing Eclectics International

When asked why he chose Eclectics International, Dr. Maundu explains, "I have always wanted to rise to higher levels that would enable me to supplement my extensive expertise with strategic management thinking and operational know-how."

Eclectics International, a Pan-African company serving over 244 financial institutions across 25 countries, provided the perfect platform for him to leverage his skills and drive impactful change. The company's vision and mission aligned perfectly with Dr. Maundu's professional aspirations, making it an ideal environment for him to thrive and contribute meaningfully.

Rewarding Moments

Reflecting on his career, Dr. Maundu highlights the corporate celebration of wins

achieved through collective effort as some of the most rewarding moments. "Celebrating a commercial contract that has been closed by a colleague or making a corporate decision involving everyone to combat challenges like COVID-19 is very rewarding," he explains. These moments of shared success not only boost morale but also reinforce the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving organizational goals.

Conquering Challenges and Leading with Purpose

One of the significant challenges Dr. Maundu faced was dealing with a major fraud case while working for a multinational organization. "Fraud cases require swift action to prevent

reports to the Managing Director and executive management team, and acts as the chief financial spokesperson for the organization.

"I lead efforts to secure new funding sources to support company initiatives and manage risk to ensure sustainable growth," Dr. Maundu explains. His role is pivotal in driving the financial health and strategic direction of the company, ensuring that it remains competitive and resilient in a rapidly changing market.

Staying Ahead: Trends and the Future of Finance

To stay updated with the latest trends and developments in finance and technology, Dr. Maundu dedicates

increasing use of artificial intelligence. "Finance teams must look ahead and ensure they monitor and measure sustainable business model goals to remain relevant in the next decade," he asserts.

Dr. Maundu believes that the role of the CFO will continue to evolve beyond traditional reporting functionalities to encompass wider value creation and management. His vision for the future is one where finance professionals are equipped with the skills and knowledge to drive innovation and sustainability in their organizations.

Mastering Work-Life Harmony: Dr. Maundu's Secrets

Throughout his career, Dr. Maundu has been guided by a set of core values that shape his decisions and actions. "Integrity, commitment, sacrifice, and celebrating corporate achievement rather than self are some of the values that describe who I am," he asserts.

"Never give in – never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in..." "Quit" was a four-letter profanity."

- Winston Churchill

the good workplace atmosphere and professional culture from crumbling down," he explains. His approach involved gathering information without making onset accusations, ensuring the accused had the right to a proper defense, and making swift decisions while adhering to legal guidelines and corporate procedures. His ability to navigate such complex situations with integrity and decisiveness has been a hallmark of his leadership.

As the Chief Finance Officer at Eclectics International Limited, Dr. Maundu's responsibilities are extensive. He supervises and aligns departmental transactional programs to corporate strategic objectives,

significant time to reading relevant publications, engaging in LinkedIn forums, and networking with professionals. He is also a member of several professional organizations that offer value through seminars, conferences, and workshops. "I have subscribed to professional forums such as CFO.com, which give me weekly insights and advice for CFOs," he shares. By staying informed and connected, he ensures that he is always at the forefront of industry advancements and best practices.

Looking ahead, Dr. Maundu sees the finance function evolving rapidly with technological advancements, demographic shifts, and the

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial for Dr. Maundu. He believes in setting realistic goals and practicing effective time management to achieve equilibrium between personal fulfillment and professional responsibilities. "I have learned to establish clear boundaries between work and personal time to preserve mental and spiritual health," he explains. His supportive network of family, church, mentors, friends, and colleagues plays a significant role in helping him maintain this balance. By prioritizing his well-being and that of his loved ones, he remains grounded and focused on what truly matters.

Dr. Maundu employs several strategies to maintain this balance. He



“After all is said and done, when the dust settles, we all win”

- Senior Pastor of Elijah Centre and President of Congress WBN

emphasizes defining career ambitions alongside personal values, subscribing to effective time management, and knowing when to say no.

Additionally, he stays connected to the values of the Bible, which helps

him maintain a big-picture perspective on life. After a busy day, Dr. Maundu finds solace in listening to gospel music, reading motivational books, and watching action-packed movies. By engaging in activities that nourish his mind, body, and spirit, he maintains high levels of energy and

enthusiasm in both his personal and professional life.

Advice for Young Professionals

For young professionals aspiring to enter the finance industry, Dr. Maundu emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and staying current on the latest trends. "Remain curious and open to new knowledge and skills, build and cultivate strong professional networks, and engage in continuous learning by attending workshops and seeking further certifications," he advises.

Dr. Maundu's guidance reflects his belief in the potential of the next generation to shape the future of finance through dedication, innovation, and ethical leadership.

Conclusion

Dr. Kenneth Maundu's journey is a remarkable example of how dedication, continuous learning, and adherence to core values can lead to a successful and fulfilling career. As the Chief Finance Officer at Eclectics International Limited, he continues to drive impactful changes and inspires future generations of finance professionals. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the importance of maintaining a balance between professional responsibilities and personal fulfillment.

Through his leadership, Dr. Maundu is not only transforming the financial landscape but also setting a standard for excellence and integrity in the industry.



IAN VICKERS

Adding Value to Organizations' Growth through Multilayer Cloud and Cyber Security Solutions

The internet has been one of our most transformative and fast-growing technologies.

Globally the number of internet users increased from only 413 million in 2000 to over **3.4 billion** in 2016. The one billion barrier was crossed in 2005.

The total amount of data created, captured, copied, and consumed globally is forecast to increase rapidly, reaching **64.2 zettabytes in 2020**. Over the next five years up to 2025, global data creation is projected to grow to more than 180 zettabytes.

The exponential growth in data has consequently made it far more difficult to secure. Data is now distributed across multiple cloud platforms and on-premise computers.

It is therefore no coincidence that at the same time as data has grown in volume and importance cybercrime has significantly increased in parallel. To resolve this situation

METCloud, a fast emerging Computer & Network Security company, is securing companies with the highest level of cybersecurity technologies available. The company has tailored its innovative technologies and services to specifically align with user organization's requirements.

Ian Vickers is CEO of METCloud a veteran in the field and has experience in every aspect of the sector. He mentions that there are hundreds if not thousands of cyber vendors, but their technologies are focused at addressing issues in isolation such as end point security, firewall technology, encryption and identity access management just to highlight a few. This complicated landscape makes it increasingly difficult for the customer to make the right decisions on how best to protect themselves. Our goal is to simplify this situation and supply an award-winning cybersecurity platform that provides all the layers of security required.

Why METCloud?

METCloud is on a journey to become the most trusted company globally for connecting people and businesses. He states, *"When Jeff Bezos launched an online bookstore in 1993, I am pretty sure he did not envisage what Amazon has become today."* At METCloud, the company's mantra is Get Connected Cyber Safe so the team is constantly developing the capability to ensure it achieves this goal. The company states, *"Our Mission Statement is Security of data, assets, and people is our mission and our vision is to be the global brand of choice for next-generation secure cloud services."*

Ian points out, *"We will continue to innovate and invest in R&D so that we can achieve our ambition."*

Today, METCloud provides private cloud infrastructure, cloud migration services, cybersoc, security orchestration services, and developing AI/ML and data analytics to maximize security for our customers.



CEO,
METCloud



Meet the Expert

As the CEO of METCloud, Ian is responsible for setting the future vision and direction of the company.

He also ensures that as the team grows new members embrace the ethics and core values of the company and more importantly contribute with new ideas and

innovation. Being at the helm of success, Ian sees success as building something special. He believes that it has to be something that customers highly value and trust. In addition, success means creating an environment for employees in which they feel valued, empowered, and part of something very special.

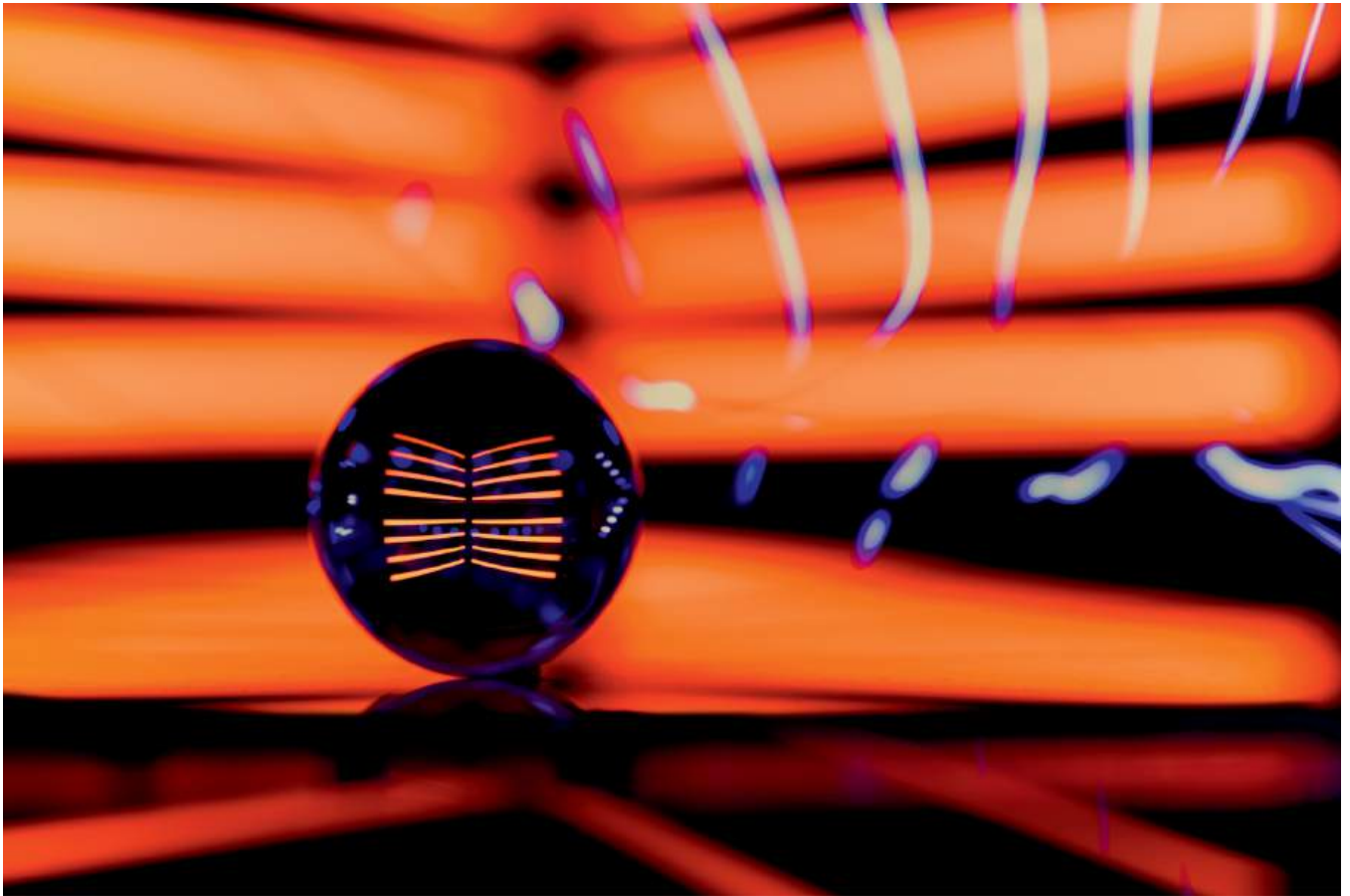
Challenges that Follow the Modern Advancements

With years of extensive experience, Ian understands that the current digital world is completely different from the world 20 years ago. These constant advancements are the key to progress, but they have also brought their share of challenges.

According to Ian, as connectivity increases, the risk of security also increases exponentially. He adds when one sets about doing something radically different and wishes to change things for the better the majority of roadblocks and obstacles occur due to people's ignorance. He refers to Mahatma Gandhi's words, *"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."* He mentions that quote which inspires him to forge ahead.

Consistency in Growth

Over the past few years, the team at METCloud has been mainly concentrating on research and development whilst still growing the business. The company has recently secured significant investment to now scale out the



business. Planning is afoot to expand operations in key territories such as North America, UK, Europe, MENA, and ASIA PAC.

The METCloud brand received a huge lift with the prestigious UK IT Industry Award, 'Cloud Innovation Provider of the Year'. The UK IT Awards is the largest technology award of its kind and judges are from the British Computing Society and the Chartered Institute of IT. Ian asserts, *"We have since gone on to win nearly 50 awards for Innovation and Excellence."* In the next 5 years, the management expects the business to scale beyond

a \$Billion-dollar valuation.

Cybersecurity is a massive industry with new entrants all the time. However, Ian believes that the company will continue to achieve great success if it keeps true to its core values; Excellence, Innovation, Integrity, Respect, and Responsibility.

Core Values and Vision for Future

Cloud and hybrid cloud technologies have invigorated the technology space. METCloud has to date, been a small cog in this ecosystem however the efforts it is

making will lead to continuing growth, and the relevance will grow too. METCloud is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Innovators Community. It is continuing to develop new technologies to overcome the current cyber crisis and building future resiliency for the planet and its citizens.







Become one with nature.





CEO,
Alertgy

MARC RIPPEN

An Entrepreneur whose Goal is to Improve the Lives of Diabetics through Technological Advancements

Digital health technology, particularly in digital and health applications, is rapidly evolving to help people manage their diabetes. Numerous health-related applications are available for use on smartphones and other wireless devices to assist people with diabetes who need to implement lifestyle changes or make medication modifications in response to glucose-monitoring data. However, laws and standards that would standardize how mobile health applications are vetted and monitored for patient safety and clinical validity have yet to catch up with the booming profession.

Marc Rippen, CEO at Alertgy, launched the company with a small group of inventors who had worked together on difficult technological initiatives over the years, with the goal of addressing the greatly wanted capacity to test blood sugar levels with an external wearable sensor device.

Alertgy is now a market leader in non-invasive continuous blood glucose monitoring technology. Alertgy's DeepGluco wearable gadget can correctly monitor blood glucose in real

time, up to three times per minute, thanks to its proprietary radio frequency sensor. Most significantly, DeepGluco's patented AI system can offer users and their chosen HCPs with vital, up-to-the-minute life-saving notifications. Alertgy, unlike other CGMs, removes interstitial latency as well as the painful and unpleasant side effects of patches, needles, and implants. The DeepGluco wrist band can easily be fitted into an existing smart watch form factor, and future versions might be much smaller. Following FDA clearance, these will be available to customers.

An Emblem of Proven Track Record

Marc was a former army officer who most recently served as the director of engineering at Stanford Research Institute's (SRI) International's Marine and Space Technology Division. His degrees are in microbiology, analytical chemistry, and aeronautics. Marc began his career as a material engineer at Pratt & Whitney, where he oversaw advanced research and development initiatives that supported the development of innovative materials for jet and rocket engines. He then

moved on to work as a field engineer for leading atomic and molecular spectroscopy companies, where he provided turnkey materials analysis solutions for a wide range of industries, including agriculture, environmental, manufacturing, and advanced research and development at leading research institutions. He went on to become the head of the FIU College of Engineering NASA tech transfer center, where he assisted firms in commercializing NASA innovations. In this role, Marc assisted small businesses in raising venture capital and applying for SBIR and STTR programs to fund the commercialization of their technologies. Marc then co-founded an Internet start-up firm, financed \$1 million, and was finally able to acquire the company and take it public. He states, *"The combination of my education and experience allowed me the means to launch Alertgy and bring it to where it is today."*

The inception of Alertgy was due to a tragedy; Marc found his wife nearly slipping into a diabetic coma and becoming unresponsive due to being in



Engineering Manager for Concurrent Technologies Corporation, then as Director of Engineering at SRI, where he oversaw 30 million dollar Applied R&D contracts. From there, Marc started Alertgy when his wife also went into a diabetic coma. This was the defining challenge in Marc's life, which appeared not to be well focused until this time. He says, *"I could now connect all the dots and realise that this was my training for the job I now have."*

As the CEO of Alertgy

Marc is a visionary leader, a highly talented engineer, scientist, and

a prolonged low blood sugar state. After he was able to rehabilitate her, he found out that no technology existed anywhere that would alert him for future similar events, so he decided to do something about it and started Alertgy. He describes that "Alert" to alert me "g" for glucose "y" because we need it.

A Habit of Solving Challenges

Marc was born in Tripoli, Libya, in Africa, where his father was stationed in the US Air Force. He has travelled and lived all around the world since then. He's always been interested in how technology can be used to address difficult challenges. In high school, he was a member of a lab research program, where he would travel to the University of Miami Medical School every afternoon to help with the study and development of their teachers, which counted as one of his scientific electives. He recalls, *"One professor was studying the bio-limiting factors in Biscayne Bay to determine the effect of pollutants on algae blooms, and another was developing methods to quickly identify fungi by the*

Never give up on something that really matters to you.

morphology of their fungus when examined by a microscope." Marc went on to do a Peace Corps Project in Guatemala where he vaccinated several hundred small children in villages and plantations in the highlands of that country for several months.

In his first 4 years, Marc worked as a sales engineer for Thermo Electron Corporation in the Atomic and Molecular Spectroscopy business, achieving the #1 "Top Gun" worldwide sales status in the first 4 years, taking the territory from worst to best in sales. Then he transitioned to Director of Technology Transfer Center at FIU College of Engineering, where he supported commercialization of technology and pursued venture capital for start-ups to take technology to market. He left to co-found an internet technology company and took it from start-up to public in 2 years with 1 million dollars in seed funding. Marc returned to government R&D, first as

technical sales and marketing expert with a track record in product development, program management, and sales. Marc's job is 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, since he is dedicated to making deep gluco accessible to the billions of people worldwide who suffer from diabetes. He is doing this by speaking with firms and researchers all across the world at various hours of the day. He works with his technical teams on a regular basis to offer them guidance when needed and to make sure that everyone on the team has a chance to succeed. Marc's job is to lead his team and make sure that everyone puts forth their best effort.

Marc is in charge of identifying each person's capabilities, assisting them in achieving their professional and personal objectives, and giving the vision required to steer the organization in the right direction. He has a responsibility to the company's investors to ensure that they receive a



decent return on their investment, as well as to offer hundreds of millions of diabetics a system that will considerably improve their quality of life and relieve their loved ones of concern. He opines, *"I would say that I am an innovator."*

Leading Simple and Focused Life

Marc makes it a point to spend as much time as possible with his family every day. He normally cooks a crock pot supper before leaving for work on a regular day. He goes to work and completes his tasks, then returns home to prepare dinner for his wife and their disabled youngest daughter, before going to bed and repeating the process. He may ride his slingshot motorcycle to work on nice days to take advantage of the pleasures of living in Florida. He mentions, *"I stay in contact and visit with our other three children and my three grandchildren, as well as my mother."*

Plans for the future of Alertgy

Alertgy is unique in its products' ability to generate a human spectrum that can be used to measure critical biochemical markers in the body that can be used to determine the quantity of specific molecules, such as glucose, in the blood stream continuously. Marc sees Alertgy's technology being used to measure other markers for cardiac, cancer, Alzheimer's, and viral infections for treatment, and early diagnosis.

As per Marc, Alertgy's technology will significantly affect the lives of over 90% of the 420 million diabetics in the world population by providing a way to manage their disease easily and effectively. Marc says, *"We will also help the 2 billion borderline diabetics by giving them the knowledge to prevent themselves from becoming diabetic through better awareness of how their lifestyle affects their glucose*

levels." He further adds that the company will also save their lives as they will know when they become diabetic so they can seek proper treatment before the damage is done and they have to go to the hospital.

A Note on Leadership

To date, it has been to get Alertgy where it is today. Marc motivates people by leading by example, by understanding what is important to them and giving them an opportunity to meet their needs through their work assignments.

Marc's message to aspiring business leaders is to have humility, honesty, empathy, open mindedness, honor, passion, the ability to listen, care for people that work with you, always be open to learning, be willing to fail and learn from your mistakes, be forgiving, and never give up on something that is important.

BERNIE LAWRENCE

A Renowned Entertainment Attorney of B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates

Bernie Lawrence is a seasoned transactional attorney and the principal of **B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates, PC**, a legal practice specializing in entertainment, copyrights and trademarks, new media, and corporate law. Throughout her career, she has been able to carve out a niche for herself by representing multi-platinum selling music producers who have composed hits for notable hip-hop artists such as Lil' Wayne, Drake, Nicki Minaj, Ludacris, 50 Cent, and P. Diddy, as well as R&B and pop artists such as Usher, Justin Bieber, Chris Brown, Beyoncé, and Rihanna, to name a few. Music business executives, music production firms, independent record labels,

musicians, managers, songwriters, film and television production companies, screenwriters, video game developers, and apparel designers are among her clientele. Ms. Lawrence is a frequent guest speaker and panelist at entertainment seminars and conferences around the country.

Bernie began her legal career in 1996 as a paralegal at Kilpatrick Townsend and Stockton LLP, formerly known as Kilpatrick Stockton, LLP, and then worked as a contract attorney in the Commercial Real Estate department. She left the major firm setting in 1999 to work for the City of Atlanta as a Legal Specialist in the Office of Contract Compliance, while

continuing to practice law part-time on the side. She was a legal liaison to the Law Department in the City, oversaw certification experts for the Equal Business Opportunity and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, and established Equal Employment Opportunity and First Source Jobs program processes.

Bernie left the City of Atlanta in late 2002 to run her legal practice full-time and incorporated her company. Ms. Lawrence also worked as a lobbyist for eight years, representing the City of Atlanta as well as Hartsfield Jackson International Airport on federal funding initiatives.



Attorney & Principal,
B. Lawrence Watkins
& Associates, PC

Ms. Lawrence earned her bachelor's degree in business administration from Howard University and her law degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law. She is the proud mother of two sons.

B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates

B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates, P.C. is a transactional legal practice

that focuses on Entertainment, Intellectual Property, and Business Law. The firm specializes in music, film and television, copyright, trademarks, and business transactions. The company has over twenty years of expertise creating and negotiating complex agreements for entertainment and business brands ranging from recording, music publishing, licensing, employment,

corporate transactions, to product endorsement and influencer collaborations.

Bernie is continuously on the lookout for new attorneys that are enthusiastic about the entertainment business. She is also aiming to form strategic alliances in order to open offices in key cities around the country. She further adds that if anyone doesn't believe in the firm's mission, then the firm is not the right match for him or her.

As per Bernie, the firm's mission is to further the professional and personal goals of its clients through the use of education, experience in the entertainment industry, and relationships the team fosters. She shares, "We pride ourselves on maintaining the highest level of integrity in our legal practice."

Motivation behind Joining Sector

Bernie has a love for the arts and is very passionate about helping creative people. She doesn't like seeing people being treated unfairly. When she was a teenager, she thought she would become a performer/entertainer. She recalls, "*One of my brothers became an artist while we were in college. He signed a bad deal, and then ended up getting dropped by the label.*" Bernie saw how it affected him. She then made a commitment to herself to go to law school, and become an entertainment lawyer to help people like him get out of bad deals and be an advocate for those who wanted to pursue a career in entertainment to get them the best deals possible.



She asserts, "My belief is that all things are possible. If you can see it, you can achieve it. The step of faith starts with believing in yourself that you can achieve the goals you set out to accomplish. If I never tested my faith, I would not have a testimony to share with others."

Purpose, Life and Success

"God gives us only what we can handle. The challenges we face in life are our testimony of faith and our ability to overcome," says Bernie. She believes that with challenges comes growth and opportunity. She opines,

"We are able to learn things about ourselves and change what we don't like. Without challenges, we are not able to properly identify our strengths and weaknesses. We all have them. We have to be comfortable being uncomfortable. It causes us to think and to be open to the possibilities that anything can happen."

For Bernie, success is "creating a life you've always wanted to live while engaging a community that is moved, touched, and inspired by your actions, which motivates you to give back." She adds, "When you've been blessed with an opportunity, you should share your

blessings with those who are in need of assistance. We should always be looking for ways to help move, touch, and inspire others to fulfill their purpose."

Recognition for Exemplary Work

Bernie represented multiple music producers whose albums went multi-platinum in the early 2000s. Her producer was nominated for a Grammy, and she was invited to the ceremony. Her name began to spread in the music world, particularly among music producers, allowing her to establish a niche practice working with music producers and songwriters.

Bernie has been able to pull some of her clients out of less favorable contracts and negotiate multi-million dollar deals for others over the years. People are aware of her strong support for client ownership of intellectual property rights. She has succeeded in creating a brand that encourages customers to seek out the firm's services. Bernie states, "Most people in the entertainment industry know me as my motto, 'Bernie Gets You Paid'."

The Attorney/Principal of B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates

Bernie's responsibilities as CEO and Principal Attorney are substantial. Her roles include, but are not limited to the following: managing the employees, contractors, and interns that work for the firm and overseeing their assignments; managing the day-to-day operations of the firm as well as the client-intake process and engaging in business development.

Bernie opines, *"Over the years, I was blessed with the opportunity to be honored by many organizations, receive several awards, and appear in several magazines. It's hard to say which has been the best recognition."* She feels humbled to be recognized and appreciates the recognition as an industry leader.

As per Bernie, every day varies. She starts her day at 6 am with meditation and an early morning exercise. Thereafter she is checking emails from the day prior and responding before 9 am. Between 10 am and 1 pm, she reviews assignments prior to them being sent out to opposing counsel. Between 1 pm and 6 pm, she will participate in zoom calls or in-person meetings with clients. She says, *"We sometimes meet clients at the office and others at a restaurant or their place of work, which could be the recording studio, movie set, or video shoot."* Bernie enjoys yoga, jogging outdoors, and strength training as forms of exercise. The management and staff make an effort to meet on a weekly basis to discuss their duties. Bernie is also very transparent with the team while sharing ideas on how to perform the duties appropriately. *"We also go out to lunch periodically as a group, to change the scenery,"* says Bernie.

Future of B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates

Bernie's goals for B. Lawrence Watkins & Associates include becoming a nationwide brand renowned in all major cities with a strong entertainment presence, hiring additional attorneys interested in practicing in the entertainment field,



and establishing a sports branch to represent athletes. In addition, Bernie is actively involved in a few other business initiatives. One is a music distribution and technology platform that will be a game changer in the entertainment business, as we know it. Bernie also intends to write and publish a book this year.

Trust the Process and Learn from Every Experience

When Bernie first started her practice, she remembers having difficulty getting attorneys to return her calls or respond to her emails. She was a new lawyer on the scene who needed to gain the respect of industry professionals. She states, *"I learned early that you are only as strong as*

your brand. If people don't know you, they won't respect you and will be quick to dismiss you."

Her advice to all emerging female leaders: *"Don't get caught up in the end result. Enjoy the ride of all the possibilities you can and will encounter along the way and embrace them. Those experiences may also help to move, touch, and inspire someone through their journey someday."*





President/CTO,
Triada Networks LLC

RAFFI JAMGOTCHIAN

Protecting Small Businesses by Becoming Cyber Shield for Them

Small businesses in the financial sector face a growing threat from cyber-attacks that covers a wide range of channels. Cyber-attacks are a modern world challenge for small Fintechs and other financial services organizations that harm both credibility and integrity of the business. For attackers, small businesses are easy targets. It occurs primarily due to insufficient funds for the IT infrastructure or security framework of the business that is not as strong as required. As cyber-attacks are more likely to happen with any organization despite its size, it must be taken as one of the high priorities from starting of the business. With all the advancements and digital disrupting techs, this is high time for businesses to acknowledge cybersecurity as a significant element for business growth and not just considering it as an afterthought.

Raffi Jamgotchian, President and CTO of Triada Networks, understands the potential effects of

cyber-breach and believes having cyber-security is essential to protect the business that must be improved over time. Triada Networks started in 2008 to help small investment firms control and harness their technology and reduce cyber risk. The company uses pragmatic security practices and an ever-evolving framework which is the primary reason behind its apparent growth.

At Triada Networks, learning is part of its culture. The team at the company, including Raffi, is part of a greater community of people. He says, *"The technology space, especially in the small business world, is very giving. I believe the more we give, the more we get, and it has panned out."*

Understanding Client's Requirement

The cybersecurity space is one of the fastest-growing competitive sectors where any new advancement and even a new threat can push the competition a step ahead. Raffi reveals evolution is

part of Triada Networks' process; it's baked in. The team is constantly re-evaluating the market to see if they can help with providing better security solutions without slowing their clients down. The critical part is to provide comprehensive solutions to understand the businesses the clients are working. The company states, *"Because we focus primarily on one vertical, we can converse with them and understand where their risks are."*

Stepping into the Industry

One can say, the only thing that is certain in the corporate world is uncertainties. So when the market crashed in 2008 and new funds were starting up, Raffi saw an opportunity and took a shot to create something. He started in cybersecurity as part of his work at an investment firm. He says, *"We were getting online to the Internet and needed to build out firewalls to protect the environment. At the time, these were all done from scratch. It wasn't something you could order and*



install." But, as per Raffi, the actual moment was when the Code Red virus popped up and started to spread. He asserts, *"We were all scrambling trying to contain it. The situation fascinated me. Trying to figure out how the malware worked, how to stop it, and the motivations of people that would write it."*

Challenges and Success

Raffi had received an MBA while he was working at an investment firm. During that period, he didn't prepare to be a business owner. He recalled the time starting as a business owner and how he had made many mistakes along the way. But every mistake comes with learning. For example, Raffi says, *"We learned how to hone our finances, and as we developed relationships with our peers, we got better control of our numbers."*

Raffi's vision to strengthen the financial sector with advanced cybersecurity defense has come true in the form of Triada Networks. He asserts, *"Success is a state of mind. It's about being able to enjoy life while enjoying the work you do. Being able to provide small business owners peace of mind gives us meaning."*

Ensuring the Promises get Fulfilled

At the company, Raffi sees himself responsible for two primary roles. The first one is leading his team to the company's vision, and the second one is ensuring that his team has the tools they need to do the best job they can for the clients. Except for this, everything else is secondary. He further says that people deserve Cybersecurity and IT without compromise. At Triada Networks, the team knows the clients put their trust in the company, and the team has to keep

on to that trust with humility. The team makes sure that clients will always have an honest answer to their questions without pretentiousness.

Small Breaks for Self Improvement

To ensure that everyone gets align with the company's vision and feels motivated, Raffi has to tell his team to dial it back sometimes. He opines, *"There is always some work to be done, but sometimes you need to take a rest. I have to tell this to myself this sometimes too."* From his own experiences and practices, he shares that the more gaps and quiet time he puts into the schedule, the better ideas come out. He further adds, *"We have our days where things get tough. But we all pull together on our Teams chat, and we throw jokes and memes around to keep the levity up."*

Capturing the US Market

There is exponential demand for Cybersecurity and IT services. With its years of experience and expertise, Triada Networks is focusing on providing comprehensive solutions to its clients and visioning to do the same in the future. The company states, *"We aren't planning to build an empire. We do have clients that have overseas team members, but the nature of our work is wrapped up into the US regulatory market, so for now, we'll stay here."* This statement clears the company's expansion plans for the future and appears expansion across the US is certainly in the cards.



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