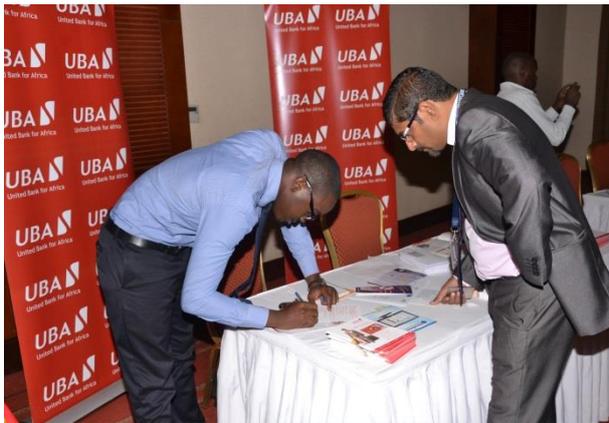


COUNTRY MARKETING PLAN FOR IT/ITES

UGANDA 2015-2020

WHY OUTSOURCE YOUR IT &
ITES SERVICES TO UGANDA



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Abbreviations & Acronyms

B2B	Business to Business
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CBI	Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
EAC	East African Community
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICTAU	ICT Association Uganda
IMS	Information Management Services
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITES	Information Technology Enabled Services
ITO	Information Technology Outsourcing
LDC	Low Developed Country
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MoESTS	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
NITA-U	National Information Technology Authority Uganda
NTF	Netherlands Trust Fund
PC	Personal Computer
PMT	Project Management Team
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSFU	Private Sector Foundation Uganda
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TMEA	Trade Mark East Africa
TSI	Trade Support Institution
UBPOA	Uganda Business Process Outsourcing Association
UEPB	Uganda Export Promotion Board
UIA	Uganda Investment Authority
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNCHE	Uganda National Council for Higher Education
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
URSB	Uganda Registration Services Bureau

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Furthermore, the following teams have contributed to the IT & ITES Export Plan:

National Information Technology Authority of Uganda (NITA-U):

Mr James Saaka, Executive Director

Mr Julius Peter Torach, Director, E-Government Services

Mr Michael Newman Byamugisha, BPO/ITES Coordinator

Uganda Business Process Outsourcing Association (UBPOA)

Mr Badru Ntege, Chairman

Mr Rogers Karebi, General Secretary

Mr Clive Moses

ICT Association of Uganda (ICTAU)

Mr Simon Kaheru, Chairman

Mr Albert Mucunguzi, General Secretary

Charles Olupot, Member of the Board of Directors

International Trade Centre (ITC, UN/WTO)

Dr Olivier Naray, NTF III Programme Officer

Mr Pierre Oberholzer, Senior Technical Consultant IT & ITES

Mr Richard Okuti, National Project Coordinator, NTF III Uganda IT & ITES

Ministry of Information and Communications Technology

Dr David Turahi, Director, Information Technology and Information Management Services

Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU)

Mr Gideon Badagawa, Executive Director

Uganda Investment Authority (UIA)

Mr John M.N Musajjakawa, Senior Investment Executive, Investment Promotion Division

Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB)

Mr Elly Twineyo Kamugisha, Executive Director

Dr Paul Gitta, Director, Market and Product Development Division

Foreword

Uganda commonly referred to as the pearl of Africa for its beautiful vegetation landscape and wildlife is increasingly becoming the business hub for investment in especially Agriculture, Information Technology, Mining and Tourism among others.

The Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) sectors have increasingly attracted international companies and likewise local companies have invested in the sectors providing services to local and international communities. The government has continued to provide an enabling environment as well as investment in innovation hubs, incubators and parks.

In an unprecedented move the IT & ITES sector associations i.e. the Business Process Outsourcing Association (UBPOA) and the ICT Association of Uganda (ICTAU) and their members in collaboration with government of Uganda and the International Trade Centre (ITC) have taken a step to engage the regional and global community in trade in these sectors.

The IT & ITES Export Plan and the Country Marketing Plan have been developed to guide all stakeholders in achieving results of exporting IT & ITES to increase wealth and job creation for Uganda. The initial 30 companies targeted by the Netherlands Trust Fund III programme, funded by the Dutch Centre for the Promotion of Imports (CBI) and implemented by the International Trade Centre (ITC) should catalyse the sector to grow and achieve the desired goal.

The Government of Uganda through the National Information Technology Authority (NITA) and its line Ministry will spearhead the implementation of the plan together with development partners and the private sector. Excerpts have already been taken from this plan to contribute to the National Planning Authority (NPA) and Office of the Prime Minister in developing quick interventions to increase exports in key sectors.

It is our desire and hope that this Country Export Plan achieves the ultimate goal of exposing and including Uganda in the international business arena so as to increase employment and wealth creation.

James Saaka

Executive Director, the National Information Technology Authority of Uganda (NITA-U)

1. Executive summary

In the “IT & ITES Sector Export Plan”, measures have been identified to enhance the export competitiveness of the Ugandan IT & ITES companies in international markets, whether regionally or globally. In support to the proposed measures, this “Country Marketing Plan” identifies the relevant marketing communication components that need to be activated to enhance the visibility of Uganda’s IT & ITES industry.

Notably, this plan will take into consideration the fact that the Ugandan IT & ITES industry’s existence lacks recognition amongst target customers beyond the borders of the country.

Effective communication in target markets will be achieved through the application of consistent brand messaging across multiple marketing channels, using different communication methods that reinforce each other.

The effectiveness of the proposed action plan will be measured by assessing the increase in brand awareness over a three-year period from the start of the first campaigns.

2. Background

The Export Sector Competitiveness Programme, also called Netherlands Trust Fund Programme phase III (NTF III), is based on a partnership agreement signed by the CBI and ITC in July 2013. NTF III aims to enhance export competitiveness of selected sectors in selected countries through an integrated approach to sector competitiveness. NTF III Uganda “Enhancing Export Competitiveness of the IT and ITES sector” is a project under the NTF III programme. This project implementation involves synergies with a parallel NTF III projects in the same sector in Kenya and Bangladesh. The project is built around one outcome – enhanced export competitiveness – and four outputs which contribute to the programme:

1. Validated export plan for the IT & ITES sector in place.
2. Increased export capacity of IT & ITES SMEs.
3. Improved capacity of TSIs in providing services to export-oriented SMEs in the IT & ITES sector.
4. Expanded business linkages and technical partnerships/collaborations.

This document comprises the proposed plan of action to promote the Ugandan IT & ITES industry, in support of the export competitiveness enhancing measures identified in the “IT & ITES Sector Export Plan”. This document is a deliverable under the aforementioned output 3 and is strongly related to output 1 since the two documents are cross-referenced. We decided to categorise it under output 3 to stress the relevant TSIs’ commitment i.e. the National IT Authority (NITA-U), the Uganda BPO Association (BPOA) and ICT Association (ICTAU) as well as the Uganda Investment Authority (UIA) to promote Uganda as a destination that will eventually serve SMEs in the country.

3. Putting Uganda IT/ITES on the map

Uganda has enjoyed increased worldwide recognition for its nature and wildlife, which has enabled the development of the tourism industry that has now become Uganda’s main export industry¹.

Such appreciation has not (yet) been experienced by the IT/ITES outsourcing industry, as Uganda is not a country that comes to mind amongst industry participants in other countries. All the interviews conducted with foreign companies involved in IT/ITES outsourcing confirm that the existence of such industry in Uganda is not well-known.

As a case in point, Uganda was identified neither in the latest Tholons report² of the top 100 outsourcing destination countries nor on A.T. Kearney’s 2014 report of the top 50 potential outsourcing destinations.

¹ See web article “Tourist becomes Uganda’s main export”.

This lack of visibility is the major issue to be addressed by this communication plan.

Regardless of the recommendations made to enhance the visibility of the industry, a central challenge is to ensure congruence between the message being pushed to the target audience i.e. the potential buyers of Ugandan IT & ITES services, and the quality of the actual customer experience that can realistically be expected when using Ugandan IT & ITES services. The risk of overreaching, that is promising benefits which cannot be delivered, could have negative consequences. In such scenarios, buyers who are frustrated by unsatisfying experiences and unfulfilled promises could have a lasting, damaging impact on Uganda’s industry as a whole, and would seriously dent the industry’s reputation as a trusted, potential partner to consider for outsourcing services. This incidentally shows that performance in service delivery is crucial, in particular in the early stages of the project, as one company’s poor performance could easily outweigh the positive image created by another Ugandan company. As the saying goes: “It takes years to build up a positive image, but it takes only seconds to ruin one”.

Uganda IT/ITES brand will need to be created ex-nihilo. Therefore, the first step is to identify the positive attributes to be put forward to a target audience.

The message requires a concerted effort from **all Ugandan stakeholders** since a coherent message to the market will need to flow from **government related organisations** such as NITA-U (National Information Technology Authority-Uganda), PSFU (the Private Sector Foundation Uganda), UIA (Uganda Investment Authority), UEPB (Uganda Export Promotion Board), PSFU (Private Sector Foundation Uganda); Makerere **University**; **industry associations** ITC-AU and UBPOA; **incubators** Outbox and Hive Colab; **IT/ITES service providers**; and their **clients**.

This communication strategy requires the articulation of an overall objective, the availability of relevant content - that is, information material in support of the objective being pursued and channels where communication will take place in which all of these will be in optimal alignment with the target audience.

Consideration should be given to a unifying theme, possibly in the form of a slogan (“Smart Uganda”, “Uganda is IT” etc.).

In the “IT/ITES Sector Export Plan”, the following target markets have been identified:

3.1. Target market for export-led IT initiatives

The export plan recommends that the focus be set on the regional market of East Africa, with direct customer relationships being pursued by Uganda’s IT companies.

3.2. Target market for export-led ITES initiatives

Given the nature of the ITES industry, the export plan recommends that the following audience be targeted:

	Direct end-customer contact		Indirect end-customer contact	
	Face to face contacts	Freelancing platforms	Through established ITES players	Impact sourcing companies
African continent	✓	Minor, opportunistic ³		
Western economies	✓ By participation in events or through agents / diaspora	✓	✓	✓

4. Attributes upon which to build the Uganda Brand

² “[2015 Top 100 Outsourcing Destinations](#)”, Tholons report.

³ Most of the freelancing jobs are from developed countries.

In a B2B relationship between an IT or ITES services provider and its customer, the purchasing decision will mostly be driven by needs and budgets that typically involve more than one person. Therefore, the decision will more likely involve a rational decision making process rather than what is typically experienced in a business-to-consumer relationship.

However, in the case of the Ugandan industry, some subjective factors, which are usually less prevalent in a B2B relationship, will carry great weight. For clients based in Europe or the USA, the perceived risk of dealing with a Ugandan supplier, given the geographical or cultural distance, will inevitably constitute a barrier to be overcome. Such subjective attributes should not be underestimated and will need to be taken into consideration when formulating a marketing message.

As all stakeholders of the Ugandan IT & ITES industry will be confronting the same bias, a common message regarding the country brand is the most cost effective mechanism to reassure their target audience. The actual quality of the delivery (“Say what you do, do what you say”) will also be crucial in gradually building up the credibility of the Ugandan brand.

4.1. Attributes sought by clients

Once attributes on the subjective level have been addressed, the factual, “hard” needs from the target audience must be addressed. To do so, the following should be taken into account:

- An excellent on-line presence is required to establish the credibility of the vendor (refer to “CBI Export Manual - Website Promotion - How to Promote Your Website in the EU, pp. 1–78”).
- A positive image that is reinforced by tangible elements (such as referrals), that the supplier is competent in the area where his intervention is being sought.
- As excellent project management skills are crucial to the success of a project, the attention given by the industry to this fact needs to be conveyed to the target audience, for example by referring to relevant certifications, such as ISO 9000 or ISO 20000.
- Certain buyers value a complete offer rather than a low price (within reason).
- The ability to provide a secure development environment, as well as coding practices that reinforce security aspects is crucial⁴. Data security is one of the main challenges when dealing with sensitive information. Ugandan IT & ITES companies should demonstrate to their potential buyers that data integrity and protection aspects are of high importance to them, for example, by providing information on training of employees, publishing information on business cases from the past or considering implementing ISO27k if not done so already.

The main challenges that have been identified⁵ in relation to outsourcing software development are shown on figure 1 **Error! Reference source not found.** These are the operational challenges Ugandan firms will need to address to reduce the risks in their relationships with their customers.

⁴ See web article [“Mobile security vulnerabilities are often the result of poor coding practices”](#).

⁵ Source : *CBI Tradewatch for Information Technology Outsourcing (ITO)*.

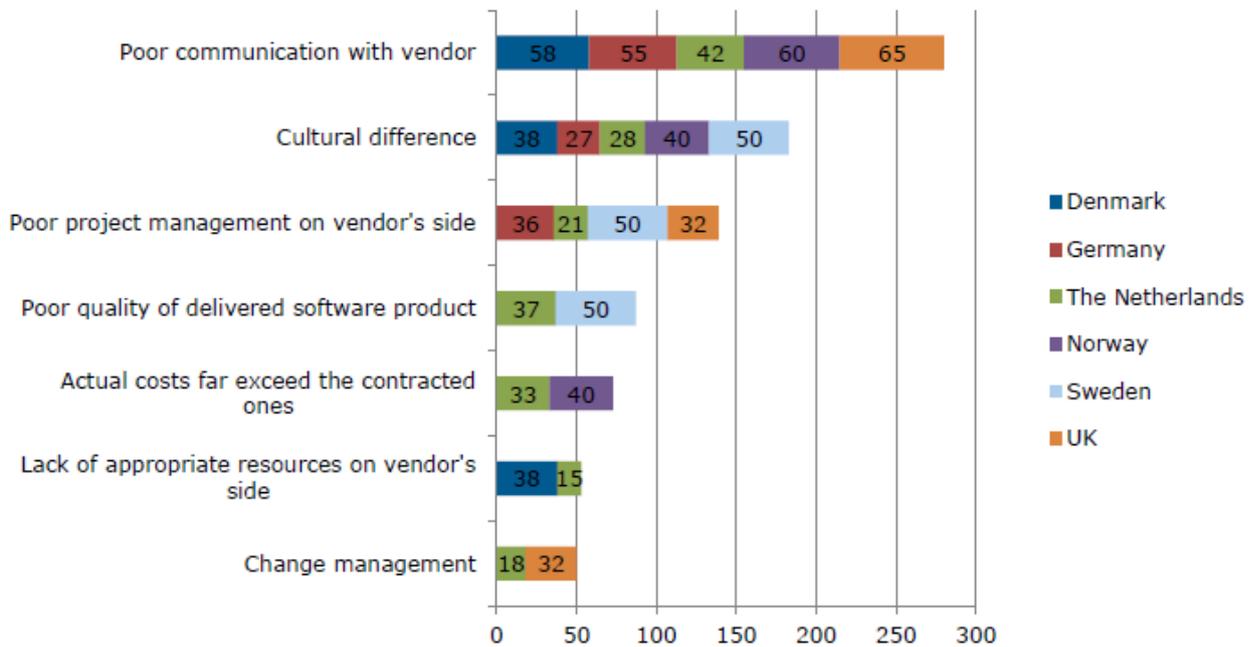


Figure 1 – Main challenges of outsourced development projects, medium and large outsourcing buying companies (% in 2012)

Many of the weaknesses identified above have been captured in the Export Plan, and proposed measures have been recommended. Some weaknesses are of a cultural nature whilst others relate to a lack of “hard” skills, such as project management skills, proper coding practices, and poor communication skills, which hinder their ability to perform to the clients’ standards.

4.2. Positive attributes offered by Uganda

Uganda possesses a number of positive attributes which are relevant to the target audience that should be used to establish the country as a credible provider of IT/ITES services that extend beyond its borders:

- Political environment:
 - A strong political will, at the highest government level, to promote the IT/ITES industry.
 - A stable political climate.
 - Uganda’s liberal, market oriented economy, marked by a solid record of macro-economic stability, single digit inflation and sustainable debt.
 - A fiscal policy that is considered favourable to investors.
- Infrastructure: a “National Backbone” is being deployed. The infrastructure although not yet fully deployed, is noticeably being improved.
- Legal environment: fundamental building blocks of IP protection and cyber law are now enshrined in the legal system.
- Population: Uganda has a young population (50% are less than 15 years old, in 2010). With proper training, this represents a potential in embracing new technologies.
- Education: University IT education is at a reasonably good level.
- Labour costs on the low side (but salary inflation is rapidly eroding this positive attribute, particularly for experienced employees).
- English is the first language of the majority of the population. Ugandan accent is relatively neutral for a native English speaker.

On the negative side, the Ugandan IT & ITES industry should recognize that the above points will become a hindrance if they are not managed properly. Clearly, this is not something that can be dealt with just through communication strategies. Substance would also need to be available.

The industry will also need to reassure its target audience that it is capable of addressing the typical concerns that exist in a B2B relationship in terms of quality, credibility, reliability, and capability.

5. Marketing communication channels

Business customers such as consumers engage with companies through search tools, online communities, and Web-based videos. Therefore, these are potentially powerful tools for delivering and amplifying B2B brand messages.

As shown on figure 2, which evaluates the effectiveness and costs of different communication techniques, content marketing is increasingly sought as a business technique that drives traffic to an on-line audience, such as a company web site or a community portal. On-line audience is of critical importance for an industry that is not yet on the map, as this is how many prospects will engage with their Ugandan suppliers for the first time.



Figure 2 – Source: www.fusionmarketingpartners.com

Content marketing is defined as “...the marketing and business process for creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action...” Good content is about communicating with customers and prospects without appearing to be in an aggressive selling mode expected from industry participants. An example of “altruistic” content could be the creation and maintenance of a worldwide calendar of trade fairs, exhibitions, and training seminars related to the industry. Such calendar would drive traffic to the Ugandan IT & ITES industry web sites and in doing so promote the Uganda IT/ITES brand. Registration could be required to access the calendar, which could contribute to the creation of a database of potential prospects for Uganda’s IT & ITES industry.

As with any marketing initiative, it is not easy to identify what is actually of interest to a target population that can help constitute “interesting content”. However, internet technology and social media have lowered the cost barrier to testing new ideas and adjusted the content offered as information on popularity could be easily gathered. It is important to gradually add new snippets of information on a regular basis, which in itself contributes to better rankings on the most commonly used web search engines.

In order to generate attention-grabbing content, all Ugandan IT & ITES stakeholders will be called upon to contribute, each in their own realm of operation, as shown in table 1.

Table 1 – IT & ITES stakeholder contribution to content

Industry stakeholder	Content contribution
Government	Importance of the IT & ITES industry to the economy of the country

Industry stakeholder	Content contribution
Ministries/Administration	and, hence, the priority this industry has for the government.
	Macroeconomic factors relevant to the industry are managed.
	Concrete steps being taken to improve the legal system.
	Ensures that existing incentives available for investors are promoted.
Network of Ugandan embassies abroad (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	Raises awareness about Uganda as a destination for investments in IT/BPO and a trading partner. Organises both inward and outward trade missions
Uganda Investment Authority (UIA)	Promotes investments and ensures facilitating mechanisms to establish a subsidiary are in place. Promotes existing facilities to ease the cost and time required by foreign companies to establish a base in Uganda.
	FDI data published regularly, marketing communication leverage of large investments done by foreign companies in the country (success stories).
(Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB)	Ensures that Ugandan IT & ITES industry is noticed wherever it establishes a presence, whether virtually (web) or physically (attending events abroad).
University & tertiary institutions	Ensures that forward-looking curricula are built into university education and communicated.
	Statistics on the growing number of graduates. Special attention paid to female students in IT.
	Develops a formal process to ensure optimal linkage with IT & ITES industry representatives, ensuring the curriculum is aligned with needs.
ICTAU and UBPOA	Provide information about achievements of their members in the market.
	Manage industry data base, allowing foreign companies to search for local talent to solve their outsourcing problems.
Incubators	Explicit benefits incubators provide to their community. Success stories of their members.
Private companies	Communicate their successes and promote their business associations (ICTAU and BPOA) indirectly.
Customers	Testimonials about the positive working relationship with their Ugandan suppliers.

Content will be made available in different forms and shapes, using the following communication channels.

5.1. Web portal

In a mature market economy, the marketing communication initiative is best served by letting individual companies develop a web presence of their own. In the case of the Ugandan IT & ITES industry, this will also be the case but not single-handedly, as there is a compelling argument to also develop a web portal serving the IT & ITES industry sector and from there allowing connection to the individual companies' web sites.

The rationale for deploying industry portals is embedded in the critical importance of a high quality web site, and most notably in the ability to drive traffic to the Ugandan industry through the use of SEO techniques. Such techniques require specialized skills, not readily available throughout the Ugandan industry. A study done by the German research firm GfK shows that 76% of purchasing decision-makers in German outsourcing companies rely primarily on internet as a research tool and that 29% conduct research exclusively online⁶.

⁶ Source : *CBI Export Manual - Website Promotion - How to Promote Your Website in the EU*.

Websites such as www.getit-tunisia.com for Tunisia or www.basis.org.bd for Bangladesh are examples of IT/ITES industry portals that have been set up by an industry grouping on behalf of its members.

In designing the Ugandan IT & ITES portal, careful consideration should be given to the two target audiences being addressed by the portal and the way information is conveyed to them, in order to avoid confusion as to whom the message is addressed to. The audiences are:

- Local and foreign prospects searching for a Ugandan IT/ITES services provider.
- Members of ICTAU and UBPOA, the two industry associations.

Recommendation is made to focus The home page is recommended to focus on content that is directly relevant to prospects of the industry as much as possible rather than inundating with content that is targeted at members of the associations. Alternatively, members will find their information in a dedicated “Members” sub-menu.

5.2. Social media

Although social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is more clearly relevant for B2C marketing, consideration should also be given to developing an on-line social presence too. B2B social media offers the following benefits:

- Increases brand awareness.
- Encourages promoters (referrals).
- Improves SEO ranking.

Social media marketing requires significant and timely engagement with the followers. Given the resource allocation decision which will inevitably have to be made in the scarce resource environment faced by the Ugandan IT & ITES industry, it is suggested that SEO and good content be defined as a priority, and a light social media presence to be maintained.

5.3. Trade Fairs & conferences

Carefully chosen companies will represent the Ugandan IT & ITES industry in a selected number of trade fairs and conferences whose attendants come from regional neighbours (Kenya, South Africa) or from countries that are receptive to outsourcing (Germany, Nordic countries, United Kingdom, Netherlands, USA). India should also be included to try and build bridges to the established international BPO players for subcontracting projects.

A Ugandan national pavilion will aim at achieving the following objectives:

- Improve the country's image.
- Inform about the country's capabilities in IT & ITES.
- Communicate trade policies and export schemes.
- Present the latest technologies developed in the country to create an image of innovation.
- Promote investments (FDI).
- Establish and strengthen confidence amongst potential buyers.
- Facilitate business contacts for the individual exhibitors.
- Introduce individual companies.

In time, consideration will be given to attend specialized trade fairs (finance, insurance, HR, etc.) for vertical applications promotion.

Exhibit 1 lists relevant trade fairs and conferences where a Ugandan IT & ITES industry representation will be recommended.

5.4. Marketing collaterals

Paper is in no way obsolete. There are many circumstances, for example exhibitions, where print marketing collaterals are useful tools to convey a message. They allow interaction with a prospective client during a trade fair and ensure that the visitor does not walk away empty-handed.

Various formats will be considered including leaflets, pamphlets and brochures.

“Scotland: A Premier BPO Location” and ITC’s “Netherlands Trust Fund III Bangladesh - Exporter Directory” are good examples of such materials.

5.5. Newsletter

A newsletter is part of an arsenal of communication tools which often has amongst its aims to generate sales leads derived from its subscriber base.

A newsletter is a brief digest of significant information which would be distributed by e-mail (with a request to register). Offering a subscription entails a commitment to send interesting information to a target audience periodically. Newsletters help build relationships with users and offer users an added social benefit in that they can forward relevant newsletters to friends and colleagues.

5.6. White papers

Consideration should also be given to periodically publishing a white paper on a subject that involves the Ugandan IT/ITES industry. A well-crafted white paper is not conspicuously biased towards the product being sold (“the Ugandan IT/ITES industry”), and yet achieves the objective to put them into the minds of decision makers in target markets.

White papers, like newsletters, are also used to build up lists of potential clients.

5.7. Seminars

Seminars, power breakfasts and other forms of one-to-many customer interactions are a good platform to place the Ugandan IT/ITES industry on the map. Advocacy firms such as The Source in the UK or Gartner provide such mechanisms as a part of their services.

5.8. Specialized web portals involved in matching customers and suppliers of IT & ITES services

Contrary to what is sometimes believed, these platforms are not just serving individuals as suppliers of IT & ITES services. In fact, the strategy of some of the largest platforms is to move up the quality scale by offering more visibility to their more professional members. This trend favours structured companies in a better position than individuals to offer best-in-class design and coding practices, code maintainability over a longer period of time or quality assurance techniques. This is why Ugandan IT & ITES companies should not underestimate the benefits of their presence on freelancing platforms such as oDesk or Elance. Winning a small outsourcing job on such platform may pave the way to a deeper commercial relationship with distant customers.

UBPOA and ICTAU should develop expertise to offer their members guidance on how to properly establish a presence on these platforms.

5.9. Public relations

Public relations include conference speeches, industry awards, press conferences, testimonials, news releases, and publicity stunts. This type of communication will require active involvement of Ugandan industry stakeholders.

Focus should also be put on using industry opinion makers to relay certain messages. These opinion makers typically spread their views through specialized trade journals and blogs about certain aspects of an industry that is of interest to its stakeholders. As a newcomer, Uganda's IT/ITES industry is newsworthy and has a different story to tell than the one told by the other incumbent outsourcing companies.

6. Strategic initiatives

6.1. Strategic objective #1. Build a credible brand for Uganda's IT & ITES industry

In defining the attributes that will be central in communicating Uganda's IT & ITES industry capabilities, the message needs to be based on simple, factual attributes that build credibility for the target audience. The same few attributes should be repeated, again and again, to become printed catchphrases that would be increasingly recognized in target markets.

This is why a slogan ("Smart Uganda", "Uganda is IT", etc.) and a logo should be created as the starting point of the communication jingle.

6.2. Strategic objective #2. On-line directory of Uganda's IT & ITES companies

A directory of Ugandan IT & ITES companies is essential to promote the industry. Few Ugandan companies have the means to establish an effective web presence for distant prospects. As described in paragraph 5.1, the ability to drive inbound web traffic is fundamental in communication.

The database underpinning this directory will need to be carefully thought through and specified as this will impact:

- The cost of running and maintaining it, which points to the necessity of one single management point serving different needs.
- The ease for Ugandan companies to enter information.
- The ability for prospects to find the companies that have the skills to solve their outsourcing problem.
- Accuracy and timely updates of the data stored in the directory. The system must be easy to launch data review campaigns, whereby Ugandan companies would periodically get an extract of their information for review.
- Avoiding duplication of tasks. The same directory will be capable of serving different purposes, as long as the information needs of different stakeholders in the Ugandan IT & ITES industry are carefully reviewed and taken into consideration **prior** to launching a large scale development and subsequent deployment of a database. As a case in point, NITA-U is considering setting up a directory of Ugandan companies that have met the sufficient quality criteria to be considered as potential suppliers to the government for outsourcing jobs. The administrative burden has to be reduced, especially given the small size of the average Ugandan company. It should be able, through one registration transaction, to cover the needs of the different users for information that are being provided (the Ugandan IT & ITES directory, the directory of approved government suppliers, etc.).

6.3. Strategic objective #3. Augment UBPOA's and ICTAU's presence on the web and relevant social media

Both associations today have a web presence, but a critical review should be conducted and gaps corrected. A basic SEO benchmarking test confirms that there is room for improvement as shown on figure 3, where the two Ugandan IT & ITES associations are benchmarked against those in countries such as India, Philippines, Egypt, Bangladesh, Kenya, and South Africa.

#	Page URL	Page Rank	Alexa Rank
1	http://www.ubpoa.or.ug		0
2	http://www.ictau.ug		2386340
3	http://www.basis.org.bd		206342
4	http://www.nasscom.in		50460
5	http://www.icta.go.ke		1506889
6	http://www.ibpap.org		1941885
7	http://www.ita.org.za		2543346 2

Figure 3 – Google PageRank Checker benchmark

Note: An Alexa Rank (ranking from Alex, a subsidiary of amazon.com) of “0” means that there is not enough data to rank this website.

A detailed SEO analysis is available for ICTAU and for UBPOA upon request.

On top of SEO optimization initiatives, the two associations will have to integrate access to the industry directory database, as per strategic objective #3, from their website, once it is in operation.

UBPOA and ICTAU will periodically review with their members which relevant content (to the target audience) could be created, in the form of articles, white pages, snippets of relevant information that can drive traffic to their web site. Such content may also be accessed by registering prior to download, leading to the development of a registry of interested parties in which some of them will be part of the target audience of the export initiative.

6.4. Strategic objective #4. Achieve financial self-sustainability of both associations

Financial sustainability will be achieved by increasing the number of paying members. For this to happen, there needs to be a wider perception that value derived from membership is higher than the associated cost (e.g. the membership fee).

In this respect, the establishment of an industry database of paying members will add to the value of the associations’ membership, as optimized SEO techniques will drive new prospects to the industry database and from there to members’ websites, leading to new business opportunities.

It is henceforth necessary that both associations’ missions and the job descriptions that apply to their management be reviewed to ensure that more value is being provided to the members.

Management objectives should be measurable (e.g. “increase membership by 30%” or “improve association’s web site ranking on Alexa by 20% in one year”) and reviewed on a periodic basis, at least once per year.

A clear challenge to be met is finding the right balance between expected value to be delivered and the associated tasks, along with the means to perform them.

6.5. Strategic objective #5. Communication instruments are available at the start of the export-led initiatives

Alongside SEO optimization of the two industry associations’ websites, selected Ugandan companies will participate in business linkage initiatives, a key component of NTF III’s export-driven initiative, in targeted geographies.

For a professional appearance at business linkage events, marketing communication collateral material needs to be created to support a Uganda presence at certain exhibitions or conferences.

Priority should be given to the following:

- A slogan and a logo that highlight key brand attributes. Basic guidelines, procedures, and tools to summarize Uganda's IT & ITES visual identity.
- A Ugandan IT & ITES industry brochure describing the capabilities of the industry.
- A directory of the industry (booklet, phone application).
- Industry level PowerPoint presentations to promote the industry at sponsored events and conferences or as a part of companies' presentations.

7. Implementation framework: key players and roles

The implementation of the IT & ITES export plan will be monitored and harmonised with the implementation of the IT & ITES sector marketing plan. For coherence and simplicity, the same implementation/monitoring mechanism is recommended. Until the NTF III programme is in force until 2017, the local NTF III Project Steering Committee will be in charge of the implementation and monitoring of progress of the two plans. The local NTF III Project Steering Committee (PSC) meetings take place three times a year. Thereafter, the PSC is recommended to remain in place without NTF III. Progress can only be achieved by having work teams come together on a regular basis, as often as needed in between PSC sessions. It was agreed that NITA-U should take the lead in driving the actions identified during the workshop. In line with its commitment, NITA-U will incorporate this export plan into their strategic plan, which is expected to be published in 2016.

In terms of content, the IT & ITES sector marketing plan was reviewed bilaterally with the involved trade support institutions and eventually was validated for finalisation with key sector stakeholders (NITA-U, BPOA, ICTAU, UIA) in a workshop in Kampala on 29 June 2015. The same process took place for the content of this IT & ITES sector export plan, whereby key Ugandan IT & ITES stakeholders were involved bilaterally and then in a workshop (NITA-U, BPOA, ICTAU), which took place on 30 June 2015 in Kampala. Strategic objectives were reviewed and a set of key action points was identified. The teams that were present at the finalisation workshops made a proposal to assess which organisations should be actively involved in driving each of these action points, using the RACI matrix classification (see table 6). The RACI methodology determines who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed.

Success in achieving the strategic objectives identified in this plan will hinge on the capacity of the PSC/Ugandan stakeholders to mobilize their forces in:

1. Identifying the key tasks that will pave the way in reaching these strategic objectives.
2. Forming a dedicated team (the Sector Export Plan Task Force nominated by the local NTF III PSC) to deal with each of these tasks.

Figure 4 shows the cascading relationship between the overall plan, the strategic objectives, and ultimately the tasks that need to be executed in order to deploy the plan successfully.



Figure 4 – Marketing Plan Overall objectives

The overall responsibility for the implementation framework will be assigned to the **Marketing Plan Task Force Director**. In his or her capacity, this person will organize regular progress review meetings with all stakeholders assigned to the identified tasks, as frequently as needed, to ensure consistency in project execution, congruency of tasks (e.g. identified tasks reinforce each other, in pursuit of the overall objective of the plan), and pro-active adjustment to unexpected changes in the surrounding environment. ICTA-U will assume responsibility for this role by assigning Mr. Rogers Karebi the role of **Marketing Plan Task Force Director**. Mr. Rogers Karebi will report on the progress of the task force at each PSC meeting.

Table 2 summarizes the five strategic objectives hinging on communication considerations which should be pursued as a priority in order to enhance export capabilities of the Ugandan IT & ITES industry, with their corresponding action items.

Table 2 – Implementation framework

Marketing Plan Task Force Chairman: Mr. Badru Ntege, Chairman UBPOA

Strategic objectives	Strategic Intervention	Activities	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
S1. Build a credible brand for Uganda's IT & ITES industry.	Customers in target markets will recognize Uganda as a possible outsourcing destination for their IT & ITES services.	Country profiling: identify key attributes of the Ugandan IT & ITES brand	UIA, Foreign Affairs, i.e. embassies abroad	NITA-U	UBPOA ICTAU	MolCT
		Market analysis and targeting (continuous activity)	ICTAU-UBPOA	NITA-U	UIA, UEPB, PSFU,	Educational institutions, MolCT
S2. On-line directory of Uganda's IT & ITES companies.	Target prospects will find it easy to identify & get in touch with Ugandan companies capable of meeting their IT/ITES outsourced services requirements.	Identify various initiatives in place to create industry databases	ICTAU-UBPOA	NITA-U	PSFU, UIA, concerned private enterprises	MolCT, PSFU, Ministry of Trade & Foreign Affairs
		Design, Develop & Maintain				
S3. Augment UBPOA's and ICTAU's presence on the web and relevant social media platforms.	Internet exposure of the two associations enhanced	Review status, formulate content management strategy, execute	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	NITA-U, UEPB, UIA, MoFA, NPA ?	MolCT, MFA, Ministry of Trade

Strategic objectives	Strategic Intervention	Activities	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
S4. Achieve financial self-sustainability of both associations.	Identification and establishment of value-adding programmes to stakeholders.	Review members' needs and derive programmes to address them.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U Association members
		Put in place a feedback mechanism that ensures that the associations are in tune with their members' needs.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U Association members
		Define a pricing strategy for value-added services (what is part of the basic membership and what is paid-for).	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U Association members
		Optimize operational costs.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U
		Identify mechanisms to fund full-time heads of associations.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U
S5. Communication instruments are available at the start of the export-led initiatives.	Communication tools made available to engage in export business transactions (S1 is the pre-requisite).	Create a brand manual.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U; MoICT; Foreign Affairs i.e. embassies abroad
		Formulate a strategy for: Social media Marketing collaterals Press and execute it.	ICTAU-UBPOA	ICTAU-UBPOA	Association members	NITA-U; MoICT; Foreign Affairs i.e. embassies abroad

8. Risk assessment

Risk	Probable Adverse Impact	Mitigation
<p>UBPOA and ICTAU do not succeed in raising the level of benefits to their constituents.</p>	<p>Moderate / High The budget needed for much of the content creation and communication activities is not available. The level of awareness of the industry remains at a low level.</p>	<p>Obtain commitment at board level of the respective associations.</p>
<p>Launch of an industry directory takes longer than expected.</p>	<p>Moderate / High Since it is a prerequisite for an effective web presence, the absence of an industry directory constitutes a significant opportunity cost and lost time.</p>	<p>Attention at the highest levels of NITA-U, UIA, UBPOA and ICTAU. Strong coordination of the industry directory project by a project manager appointed by the two business associations.</p>
<p>IT & ITES industry stakeholders are not creating value-added content for communication's purposes.</p>	<p>Moderate / High Less traffic is drawn to relevant Ugandan web sites. The Ugandan IT & ITES brand remains predominantly unknown within the target audience radar threshold. The business potential is not achieved.</p>	<p>Empower one person to be in charge of chasing content. Reduce the target frequency of new & interesting content to be published.</p>
<p>Mismatch between message and delivery.</p>	<p>High The marketing campaign will lose its credibility given the discrepancy between the message and the actual service delivery. This can have lasting negative impact, with clients being unwilling, for a long time after corrective measures have been taken, to re-trust the brand.</p>	<p>On-going monitoring of the quality of services provided by companies engaged in the export driven-initiatives. Coaching of Ugandan exporting companies to allow them to preempt their difficulties before they reach a point where clients' goodwill will have vanished.</p>
<p>Basic infrastructure deployment does not progress as planned.</p>	<p>Basic ICT infrastructure Including optical backbone, last-mile connectivity improvements and reliability of electricity supply are fundamental to create a level-playing field for the industry when facing competition.</p>	<p>BPOA and ICTAU to advocate at the highest level of government the outright need to be committed to the infrastructure development plan.</p>

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Exhibit 1 – Trade Fairs and Conferences

Country	Trade Fair	About (from the web site)
Kenya	The AITEC East African ICT Summit	AITEC East Africa 2015 will provide a unique platform for ICT professionals and managers from all sectors to gather information, contacts, and knowledge to take back to their organisations to empower them to accelerate delivery of results. In addition, the Summit will act as a clearing house to identify synergies, link initiatives, form partnerships, and avoid duplication of projects and waste of resources.
South Africa	South African Offshoring and Outsourcing Summit	Over the past decade, South Africa has built a solid reputation as a BPO destination of choice. It is not simply cost savings that need to be considered when outsourcing locations are selected and this is why South Africa is a strong contender. It is widely known that the country prides itself on its enthusiastic workforce with excellent English language capabilities combined with the ability to service niche European languages such as French, German and Dutch. South Africa also provides great infrastructure, a strong supporting environment together with a high quality lifestyle.
India	NASSCOM conference	Conference on forward looking topics relevant to the BPO industry.
USA	Outsourcing World Summit	In its 18th year, the Outsourcing World Summit is the premier event devoted to educating outsourcing professionals on the latest trends and best practices shaping the industry today and into the future. With over 800 participants, the Summit is the industry's best-attended conference where attendees network with peers, earn certification credits, and influence the direction of the industry as it continues to evolve.
USA Netherlands India	SSON	The Shared Services & Outsourcing Network (SSON) trade fairs claims to be the largest and most established community of shared services and outsourcing professionals. It provides a networking forum for key industry experts and organizations to share their experience, knowledge and tools, and where practitioners connect with each other from all over the world.
Germany	CeBIT	CeBIT is the world's largest and most international computer expo. The trade fair is held each year on the Hanover fairground, the world's largest fairground in Hanover, Lower Saxony, Germany, and is considered a barometer of the state of the art in information technology.
	Communication World	On the topic of intelligent and flexible mobile IT solutions that has a consistent business focus. This fair shows users and service providers from industry, SMEs and the public sector pioneering practice-oriented strategies and solutions for mobilizing their business processes.
	Call Center World	"Europe's leading trade fair for customer service, communication and call centre".
Sweden	IT INNOVATIONS EXPO	"We've collected seven focus areas under one roof! Besides exhibitions on the most relevant IT topics today, IT INNOVATIONS EXPO is a meeting place full of activities: seminars, lectures, panel debates, breakfast meetings, informal get-togethers, learnShops and much more! If you want to network, get up-to-date on the hottest trends, get an overview of the latest IT solutions, and meet new suppliers, IT INNOVATIONS EXPO is the right show for you".
Spain	Gartner Symposium/ITxpo	Gartner Symposium/ITxpo claims to be the world's most important gathering of CIOs and senior IT executives.
United Kingdom	Gartner Sourcing & Strategic Vendor Relationships Summit	"This conference is the definitive annual event delivering practical guidance and strategic advice on sourcing and IT Services".

Country	Trade Fair	About (from the web site)
	Customer Contact Expo	“Customer Contact Expo is Europe’s No.1 trade exhibition and conference for the contact centre and customer service market, bringing leading suppliers face2face with the industry’s largest gathering of buyers all under one roof”.
Kenya	International Water Congress and Exhibition	<p>The Africa Water Association (AfWA), formerly known as Union of African Water Suppliers (UAWS), is a professional association of establishments, enterprises and utilities operating in the areas of drinking water, sanitation and environment in Africa.</p> <p>The theme for 18th Edition is “Sustainable Access to Water and Sanitation in Africa”.</p>

Exhibit 2 – RACI, the responsibility assignment matrix

The RACI⁷ methodology describes the participation by various roles in completing tasks or deliverables for a project or business process. It is especially useful in clarifying roles and responsibilities in cross-functional or departmental projects and processes.

RACI stands for: Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed.

Responsible

Those who do the work to achieve the task. There is at least one role with a participation type of responsible, although others can be delegated to assist in the work required.

Accountable

Also approver or final approving authority. The one ultimately answerable for the correct and thorough completion of the deliverable or task, and the one who delegates the work to those responsible. In other words, an accountable must sign off (approve) work that the responsible provides. There must be only one accountable specified for each task or deliverable.

Consulted

Those whose opinions are sought, typically subject matter experts, and with whom there is two-way communication.

Informed

Those who are kept up-to-date on progress, often only on completion of the task or deliverable; and with whom there is just one-way communication.

⁷Viswanathan, Balaji. "Understanding Responsibility Assignment Matrix (RACI Matrix)". (2016)