



GIVE US A BRIEF ABOUT YOURSELF AND YOUR COMPANY

My name is Adetutu Stephen Oniya and I am a seasoned technology professional with 17 years' experience in the delivery of enterprise and mid-market technology solutions.

I am a Chartered Information Technology Professional and a member of the Computer Professionals Registration Council of Nigeria. I am also a member of the IEEE Computational Intelligence Society and a Senior Professional Member of the Institute of Information Management (Africa).

Softcity Group is a global-focused company and I am currently the CEO of the company and all its subsidiaries. At the moment, Softcity has teams and registered entities in Nigeria, South Africa, India and in the United States of America.

We are a results-oriented team of technology professionals with a passion to build trust and deliver on our brand promises. We currently serve a great number of clients from over 27 countries and we maintain a good onshore and offshore relationship with clients across the globe.

WHAT ARE YOUR SUCCESS STORIES?

The Softcity vision started while I was in my final year in the school of pharmacy, University of Lagos, I had to combine acquiring relevant skills in ICT with studying hard to earn my bachelor of pharmacy degree.

Upon graduation, I was convinced that the Softcity vision was God's plan for my life and I had to wholeheartedly pursue it, hence the birth of the first registered entity of Softcity in Nigeria.

At the start of the business, I must be candid, positioning the brand came with lots of challenges, but as time went by, we began to experience a huge trust-base that attested to the quality of our services and resulted in the rapid increase of our client base across the country. At this point, I had to combine managing the business and also returning to school to obtain another bachelor degree in computer science - which I successfully did.

Myself and my team have organically grown Softcity to a company that is not only committed to prove diligence in service here in Nigeria, but a brand that provide offshore services to clients across the globe.

So far, with the help of our passionate team of professionals and partners across the world, we have evolved to become a one-stop technology powerhouse with expertise in software development, data governance automation, cloud infrastructure management, wireless networking with LAN, corporate telephone systems, digital security systems, smart home and office automation, business intelligence and digital analytics.

CAN YOU HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU CAME ACROSS?

Being the founder of a service-based technology company that scaled organically, my major challenges are actually rooted in keeping up with market transformations and the rapid evolution of global technology.

For those of us in the business of providing technology services that is driven by different types of user specification and custom requirements from every client, we strongly rely on experiential data in our interpretation of specified problems and how we help clients solve them using technology; this data requirement is currently not actionable in Nigeria as against what is obtainable in technologically developed nations. This has posed a major challenge is helping clients solve some critical problems with technology, particularly relating to issues like data sovereignty, RFID adoption, elimination of quackery among others.

I must confess that several efforts have been made by the institutional players to introduce policies and frameworks that are designed to govern some of these challenges, nonetheless, most of these policies and frameworks need the support of Government at all level in order to scale and evolve at the current pace of global transformation.

WHAT ARE YOUR PROJECTIONS IN THE NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS?

I am positive that the next five to ten years will come with immense growth for Softcity Group, we have metamorphosed greatly in the past years and we plan to continue to learn and evolve as a relevant player in the global technology marketplace.

We have some strategic projections towards expansion to the European market and we are confident that we will be able to become Africa's most trusted technology service export within the next five to ten years. This won't come easy, but we are up to the task.

WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON THE ISSUE OF BRAIN DRAIN?

My take on brain drain comes from its advantages to me as an entrepreneur and its disadvantages to my company in the building of a talent base with long term commitment. I do hear several young Nigerians exit the country for several reasons, one of which is lack of opportunities.

Sincerely, I cannot speak on their behalf, but I see a Nigeria that is full of opportunities and the exit of several intelligent young Nigerians simply created room for me to explore the marketplace without much competition.

Nevertheless, it is impossible for a company to build a solid capacity without a talent base that is highly skilled and share the long-term vision of the organization; this is actually a serious issue that needs to be addressed in Nigeria.

WHAT IS YOUR RECOMMENDATION TO GOVERNMENT IN THIS REGARD?

As much I would love to recommend that Government create more opportunities for young Nigerians, I think the proper thing to do is for the Government to reduce barriers that prevent Nigerians from exploring the existing opportunities and improve nation-wide confidence in the effort to fulfill their social contract with the people of Nigeria; this can be achieved through a form of public-private partnership that is driven by honest governance, transparency in leadership, and a culture of inclusiveness that is driven by gender equality, cross-border knowledge transfer and national tolerance.

WHAT IS YOUR TAKE ON THE ISSUE OF EPILEPTIC POWER SUPPLY AND OTHER SUNDRY ISSUES?

Seriously, I do not want to delve too deep on the issue of power supply because I personally think this matter has already become a national embarrassment; it is actually hard to comment on the abysmal state of our public power supply without referencing the economic impact of having to privately generate power through means that are detrimental to the safety of the environ.

Truly, the Nigerian government has made some progress in funding infrastructures that has the capacity to improve power generation, but so much money has been pumped into the power sector in Nigeria and only the state actors seem to be aware of the results. I sincerely think Nigerians deserve better than this on the issue of power supply.

CONCERNING THE ISSUE OF FDI IN NIGERIA, MOST OF THE MULTINATIONAL INDUSTRIALIST HAVE RELOCATED TO GHANA. WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO THE GOVT?

Nigeria as a country need to properly appraise the benefits accrued from the multinationals using actionable data; what are the gains in terms of capital transfer, technology transfer and foreign exchange savings? The argument that the Government's role in creating an enabling business environment and strong investors' confidence is the primary reason for their exit might not be totally true.

I am not an economic expert, but the inability of these multinationals to share a long-term vision and an unbiased passion for a prosperous Nigeria are some of the reasons they take the quick way out whenever the Government policy or economic climate is not in their favor. This does not mean to say that the Government does not have a big role to play in guaranteeing value on foreign investments, however, the Government must ensure that the policies that govern the entry and exit of foreign multinationals must first and foremost protect the interest of Nigeria.

COULD YOU BRIEFLY TELL US ABOUT YOUR LINE OF BUSINESS AND WHAT YOU WANT THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR COMPANY?

Softcity Group is a technology service provider with core expertise in software development, data governance automation, cloud infrastructure management, Wireless networking with LAN, Corporate



telephone systems, digital security systems, smart home and office automation, business intelligence and digital analytics.

We recently won the National Quality Award for the most innovative app development company of the year, and we are primarily in the business of building trust and fulfilling brand promises using the technology-as-a-service approach.

We have evolved, learnt from our mistakes and built a strong capacity to be a one-stop technology powerhouse. We boast of a team of professionals with capacity to deliver quality technology services than can compete globally in terms of quality, standards and compliance.

DO YOU BELONG TO THIS SCHOOL OF THOUGHT THAT YOUTH SHOULD EMBRACE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BE SELF EMPLOYED INSTEAD OF INCESSANTLY LOOKING FOR FED. GOVT WORK? WHAT IS YOUR TAKE.

That school of thought is questionable because not every youth is designed to be an entrepreneur, and being an employee is not a disadvantage. Self-employment is good, but ensuring job security within the government is also great.

I think the expectation from Nigerian youths should be that of a balanced choice of career path, either as an entrepreneur or as an employee. Nigerian youths are smart and I believe each one knows how best to channel their capacity in the pursuit of the bright future.

IN THE PRESENT DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION, HOW DO YOU SEE THE GROWTH OF BUSINESS IN NIGERIA?

Just before I reference the present democratic dispensation, it is important we properly understand that business growth can be associated with several indicators such as increase in revenue, sales, company value, profits, number of employees, number of customers and more.

A company can grow in some of the above areas and decline in others; so the question is, can we say the present democratic dispensation is responsible for every area of a company's growth? and my answer to that will be No.

A company can experience an increase in customers and still have to deal with poor revenue; just the same way a company can experience increase in sales and still be unprofitable.

The present democratic dispensation has introduced several economic initiatives which theoretically should yield results, but when it comes to implementation, one wonders why the impacts are not tenable.

It will only be fair to the present administration to do a proper SWOT analysis that covers the complete cycle of ideation, implementation and impact; this is not to justify the woes of our current economy and its frustrating effect on the common Nigerian, neither is this a confirmation that all policy implementation of the present dispensation is favorable to the growth of businesses in Nigeria.



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Nonetheless, governance is a system that is largely influenced by both local and international forces, so before we completely crucify the present democratic dispensation, we should put in perspective how the dynamics of local politicking and international maneuvers intersect to stifle ideation, influence implementation and determine impact.