



2008 Vision & Strategy

In 2008 we are looking forward to carry on working for *Microsoft* project managing and acting as the secretariat for its “Digital Pipeline” (DP) initiative. We have played a central role since its inception as a *Microsoft* project in 2004 through to its status as an independent charity, being registered on 3rd April 2007.

30,000 PCs from the Department for Work and Pensions PC are in the process of being donated through EDS, refurbished by Remploy and shipped to schools and community projects all over Africa. The House of Lords and other major organisations are generously providing even more.

Our staff have experience of working with *Microsoft* since 1997 and a long-term relationship of trust and confidence has developed over the years. This is based on proven delivery in-time and on-budget, the highest quality standards and transparent accountability.

Our expertise in PC refurbishing, international logistics, web design, database development, charity management and company secretarial services has helped make Digital Pipeline a success which is sending over 30,000 PCs to Africa. This success is very much to the credit of *Microsoft*, EDS, Remploy, RDC, ComputerAid and Digital-Links who are all excellent supporters and partners in this worthwhile project.

Digital Pipeline is the most advanced environmentally friendly and socially responsible option if you have more than 50 PCs to donate. A proportion of donated PCs are sold to pay for tracking and to create a fund for the end-of-life recycling of PCs in the recipient country.

We are most grateful to Travis Perkins, Wickes and others for allowing us the use of their empty sites on a minimal rent basis. They have also donated their own IT equipment in such quantity to enable complete IT Classrooms to be fitted out with PCs from each company. Their vacant buildings are big enough to put many pallets of computers and quite a few containers in, which is just what we need.

We are continuing to experience problems in Africa in that schools do not have extra classrooms in which to create IT Labs, or if they do the rooms are not secure. It is upsetting to send PCs to a school only for them to be stolen a few days later, especially after all our work in appealing for donations, refurbishing, datawiping, finding appropriate deployment opportunities and shipping them. This defeats our purpose and we need to deliver secure IT rooms as well as the computers to go in them to be successful and achieve our objects.

A solution will be to use converted shipping containers as IT classrooms. The original idea was inspired by seeing internet cafes based inside shipping containers in South African townships in 2006 and has been developing ever since.

We are finding it difficult to try and gain funding for containers. So where practicable, we hope to have on show an example 20' container converted into an internet cafe and a 40' container already converted into an IT Classroom. We will also have a number of unconverted 20' and 40' shipping containers ready to be transformed if someone will sponsor and fund it.

George Cook
Chief Executive
26th November 2007