

# An interview with MainOne

## West Africa's premier connectivity and data centre solutions company

MainOne, the premier connectivity and data centre solutions company in West Africa, blazed a trail in Africa with the construction of West Africa's largest Tier III+ Data centre, MDXi. MainOne's data centre is the premier carrier-neutral co-location facility in West Africa because it is the only data centre to have attained PCI DSS, ISO 27001 and ISO 9001, and recently the SAP certification for Infrastructure Services for SAP® solutions. MainOne has blue-chip financial institutions, oil and gas, and fast moving consumer goods companies operating out of their data centre. In addition, they are the data centre of choice for international operators and content providers who have chosen to establish a presence in Nigeria. Minkels Magazine spoke to Ms. Funke Opeke (CEO) and Mr. Egomaron Jegede (Technology Projects Manager) about the companies' impressive achievements.



Ms. Funke Opeke,  
CEO MainOne

**MainOne** **MDXi**

### Facts

- MainOne is the premier connectivity and data centre solutions company in West Africa.
- MainOne launched operations in 2010.
- MainOne invested Two Hundred and Forty Million Dollars (\$240,000,000:00) in a private fibre-optic submarine cable system running between Europe and West Africa.
- MainOne has operations across eight countries in West Africa.
- MainOne has built several hundreds of kilometers of fibre infrastructure spanning the major business districts in Lagos.
- MainOne has established Points of Presence / Meet Me points across all states in Nigeria and beyond Nigeria and Ghana where they have telecom licenses.
- MainOne built West Africa's largest Tier III+ Data centre, MDXi.
- MainOne's data centre is the premier carrier-neutral co-location facility in West Africa.
- MainOne's data centre has attained PCI DSS, ISO 27001 and ISO 9001, and recently the SAP certification for Infrastructure Services for SAP® solutions.
- MainOne invests heavily in growing the broadband ecosystem in West Africa.

### HOW IS THE AFRICAN DATA CENTRE MARKET DEVELOPING?

▀▀ The African data centre market is growing rapidly, largely driven by increased adoption of ICT, availability of fibre infrastructure to provide high speed connectivity, and an upsurge in mobile broadband. The African data centre market currently boasts over 42 data centres; South Africa is leading the continent with 19 data centres, and an estimated 100,000 sq.m. of floor space as of 2014, followed by Mauritius, Nigeria, Morocco and Kenya. With increased infrastructure development in the region, data centre growth on the continent over the next five to ten years will be a cumulative 100 per cent, with South Africa in the vanguard, and Nigeria coming closely behind. Our current focus is the largest and most mature market in the region, which is Nigeria, accounting for 47% of the regional population and with over 80 million internet users."

### CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT MAINONE?

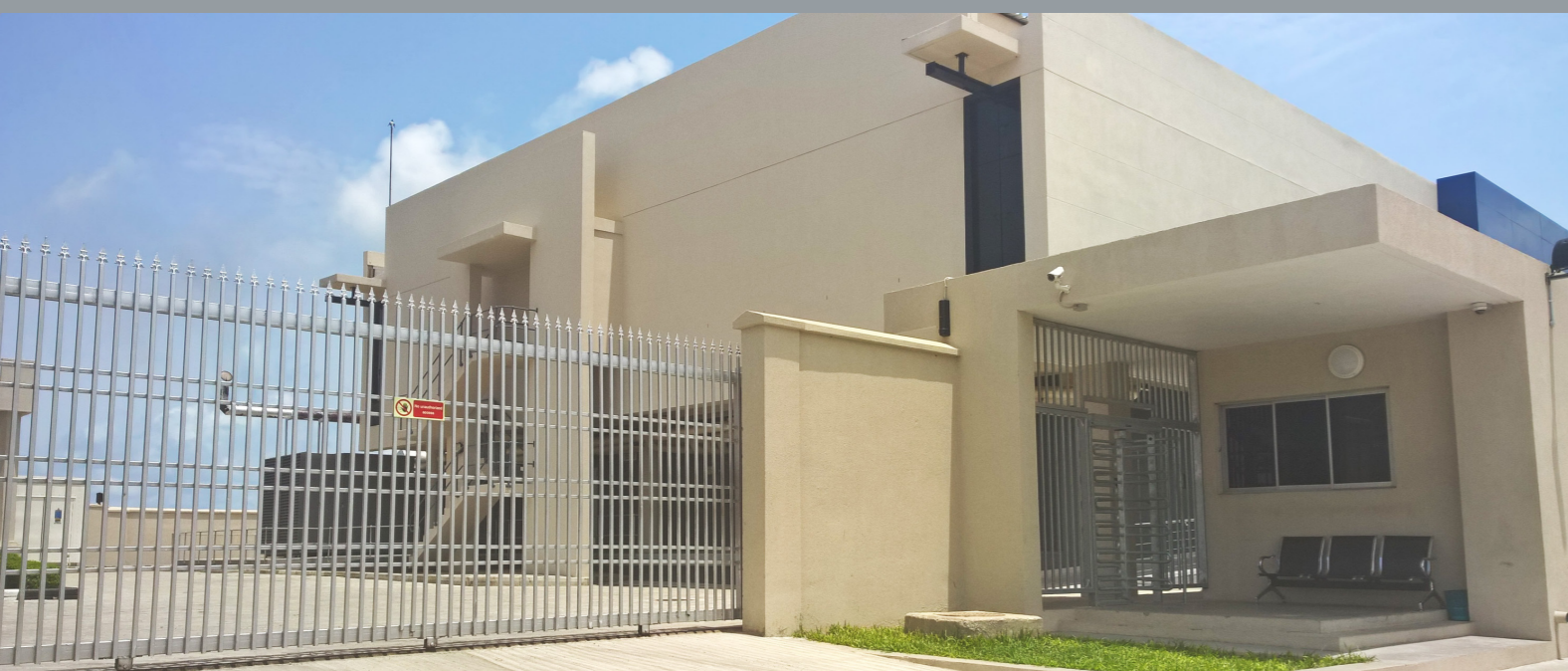
"MainOne currently operates the largest purpose built brick and mortar data centre facility in West Africa and the

only data centre in Nigeria certified to PCI-DSS and ISO 27001 standards. Our facility is also certified as a SAP Infrastructure provider data centre. We partnered with other global companies too such as Microsoft, EMC and Cisco, to provide innovative value-added services. In addition, we are a carrier-neutral facility and the best connected data centre in the region with access to all major operators in 8 countries in West Africa, access to leading internet peering exchanges including London

and Amsterdam and direct access to 4 submarine cable networks and numerous satellite gateways hosted at our facility. Our leading infrastructure investments enabled us to drive Internet use and the emergence of Internet enabled business models across the region."

### WHAT DOES YOUR DATA CENTRE LOOK LIKE?

"The data centre is a 3500 sq.m. building spread over two floors with the ground floor hosting work areas – a Global







Photographer: Ms. Oluwafemi Akintilo



MINKELS

Mr. Egomaron Jegede,  
Technology Projects Manager MainOne

Network Operating Centre (NOC), Office spaces and dual power rooms. The first floor hosts dual network rooms, a staging room and two data halls with 1500 sq.m. whitespace to host 600 customer racks. Rack power density is designed to include a mix of 20% high density (Above 5kW) and 80% low density (3kW) per rack. It is designed to meet ANSI TIA 942 and Uptime Institute's Tier III certification standards ensuring redundancy for all critical Data Centre equipment with no single point of failure."

#### WHY DID MAINONE CHOOSE TO UPGRADE THE EXISTING DATA CENTRE?

"MainOne observed a strong market demand for a world class, carrier-neutral co-location data centre when many of our connectivity clients insisted on hosting their equipment in our Lagos Cable Landing Station in 2012. The market demand rapidly outstripped our

existing co-location space within our Cable Landing Station and necessitated the construction of a purpose built Tier III facility with 600 Rack Capacity. We developed the Lekki DC (MDXi) over 24 months and launched in January 2015 with rapid expansion of the existing infrastructure to keep up with customer demand."

#### WHY DID YOU CHOOSE FOR AN AISLE CONTAINMENT SYSTEM?

"MainOne, in search of best of breed solutions, conducted a global search for a more flexible Cold Aisle Containment System (CAC) to accommodate the various needs of our global customers with racks of varying widths and heights. We considered manufacturing in China to meet our specifications and also direct purchase from various OEMS. A global evaluation followed: all top industry players, custom CAC vendors and local

manufacturers were evaluated to provide racks, Cold Aisle Containment, PDUs and accessories for customers at our data centre."

#### WHY WAS MINKELS CHOSEN?

"Minkels met our requirement to provide a cold aisle containment solution: flexible concerning rack width and height, able to accommodate a free standing 47U solution, and lend itself to caging. In addition, Minkels has the technical ability to understand our requirements and quickly make custom engineering modifications based on experience with many of our global customers. Minkels was very responsive and precise in communicating what they could provide and competitive in the pricing of their solution. The commitment to a quality product and providing advice clearly based on a wealth of experience in the data centre space further contributed to Minkels being chosen."

#### WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

"We have successfully deployed the cold aisle containment solution and custom support frames to meet the requirements of our international co-location customers who will be deploying their server racks shortly. This is a first in West Africa and a notable achievement continuing the trend of MainOne innovating and delivering world-class solutions. Minkels was quite helpful with the provision of videos towards installation, an easy to understand manual for our first time installers and regular follow up by their team to ensure the deployment was successful. We look forward to further business with Minkels. Several of our international clients that are already using Minkels Racks, are very pleased because of the seamless integration between their standard and custom racks deployed within our Minkels CAC. Feedback from our customers is that

they are impressed with the Minkels CAC and it makes the decision and process of co-locating with us easier."

#### WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR MINKELS AND MAINONE?

"I believe there is great opportunity for future business between Minkels and MainOne as we drive the growth of the data centre market in West Africa. We are currently ordering racks from Minkels with cable management accessories for 2 global multinational customers and are in discussions to further explore Minkels products for other current and future needs. Given the success of this first-of-its-kind custom CAC deployment, we are in early discussions exploring the possibility to partner in the further deployment of Minkels solutions across MainOne's MDXi datacentres to ensure we remain very competitive in a dynamic and growing market." ■