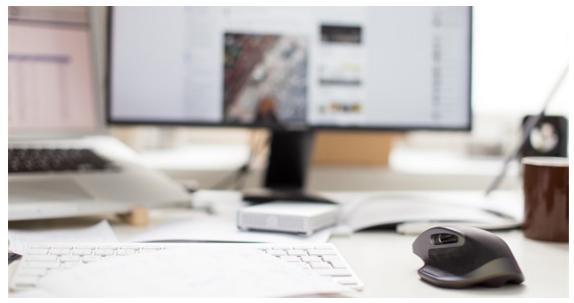# Four ways to profit from IoT

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More and more South African organisations are looking to profit from IoT. According to Vodafone's 2015 M2M Barometer Report, 35% of organisations in Africa now have M2M deployments in place, and IDC predicts significant potential for M2M growth across the African continent in energy, utility, and security services.

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Introducing a new connected network of sensors and devices to enhance the customer experience and automate business processes is creating new opportunities and risks. IT managers are facing a computing world turned upside down due to the decentralisation of information inputs and control.

Here are some new twists to conventional wisdom that can enable a smooth transition to and monetization of IoT.

1. **Work under the radar:** Typically getting management buy-in from the outset of a new project is highly recommended. However, since IoT technology is still rather new to most executive thought processes, a small IoT monetisation proof-of-concept project may be necessary to demonstrate the potential.

Until the benefits of IoT are well understood, it might be more prudent to have only a few collaborators involved instead of trying to educate, evangelise, and integrate the input from several high-level managers.

2. **Leverage existing systems:** While current market hype suggests that you must obtain a new IoT monetization platform in order to successfully monetize IoT, the reality is that many existing ERP systems and integration platforms already have capabilities to handle IoT monetisation. By using your existing systems, you can avoid a major new implementation.

3. **Don't stick to the plan:** While conventional wisdom suggests that you should have all of the details in place and everything perfectly designed down to the subroutine before you begin developing your IoT solution, the reality is that waterfall style development projects often fail, especially in dynamic new market areas.

   Using third-generation development tools combined with Agile or Agile SCRUM development techniques can enable rapid prototyping. Allow stakeholders to provide input all along the process so that the project can be modified quickly to reflect the realities of new IoT applications.

4. **Don't rely solely on outsiders** Conventional wisdom also suggests that your internal resources don't have the knowledge or skill sets to manage the monetization of IoT. The reality is that many of the skilled professionals you already have in your organisation may be the ideal people to work on your IoT monetization projects. While you may supplement your team with outside resources and service providers, nobody knows your business better than you do.

IoT offers the chance for South African enterprises to deliver new applications that improve product delivery and customer service, and increase sales opportunities but these new applications will also bring new challenges and expectations.

While some of the best project management strategies for IoT monetization may be considered mistakes under normal circumstances, new innovations like IoT require creative project management strategies to help realise the full opportunity with an acceptable level of risk.

ABOUT KERRY HOPE

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