

# PRESS RELEASE

## Transforming brick-and-mortar companies into effective digital platforms

**13 September 2019:** While the Fourth Industrial Revolution has been welcomed as ushering in a new digital age in many traditional industries, senior management is grappling with how best to implement it in their businesses, and what digital tools are best to use.

Assisting brick-and-mortar companies with a smooth transition to a digital platform is the speciality of the Bramhope Group, whose CEO **Isak Marais** has a passion for innovation and empowerment. Marais is a strategist and business leader who believes in applying creativity to business growth for optimal results.

He founded the Bramhope International School of Innovation (BISI), which has allowed him to address a wider audience about the importance of ongoing innovation in the future of inventory management. Marais holds an MBA from the Henley Management College. A sought-after and respected speaker and opinion leader, he has authored numerous industry-specific articles.

Marais cites his driving focus as unveiling the potential for transformation within most companies. "From a strategic point of view, the most important factor is understanding a company's core value proposition. While this evolves from the core business of the company, platform thinking can be introduced to assist in identifying and refining a unique value proposition."

Marais identifies this approach to business optimisation as 'Staying true to the true north'. It centres on continuously refining a company's strategy and direction. "A significant focus is envisioning how technology will allow brick-and-mortar businesses to transition to digital platforms," he points out. What gives the Bramhope Group a leading edge in this regard is that it has accumulated extensive experience and expertise to date.

The platform approach began with the idea to reduce the total cost of ownership and risk for companies. This meant that core business processes had to be digitised, which led to the realisation that the key value proposition is understanding and managing customer consumption to unlock significant value for both companies and businesses.

"Platform thinking involves analysing how the essential value proposition is supported through partnerships. Such platform partners have access to new markets and increased demand from their existing customer base. Platform thinking exploits big data to more accurately measure and predict consumer behaviour."

Marais likens the evolution of the Bramhope Group to established unicorn platform companies such as Uber and Air B&B, which have developed unique value-creation models that have deepened over time. In this regard, the Bramhope Group has been refining its platform approach since 2002, to the point where today it can measure and predict critical areas such as consumer behaviour at a micro level.

The end result is that customers can stand to save up to 60% of their costs, in addition to maintaining stock availability at all times. While traditionally such MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operations) services have been out of the reach of most companies, Marais has developed an industry-first business model whereby such systems can be 'leased' at a fraction of the full purchase price.

"We have had a lot of enquiries in this regard from companies wanting to manage their own stock and keep track of their purchases. Essentially companies can 'rent' a licence at a nominal fee per user to assist them in managing their stores," Marais explains. This makes the transformation to a

digital platform that much easier for many brick-and-mortar companies that considered such an evolutionary step beyond their capabilities and resources. It takes platform thinking to a whole new level.

By adopting the platform approach, companies can eliminate inefficiencies, reduce costs, carbon footprint and other risks, improve service and quality, streamline processes, and increase productivity. The significance of this is obvious when dealing with millions of items and transactions, where increased spend visibility, data analytics, and supplier optimisation are crucial to optimise the digital platform.

Data-cleansing technology ensures that pricing and supplier sourcing and management are optimised across multiple purchasing points, while streamlined Vendor Management Inventory (VMI) and supplier relationship management impact positively on the bottom line.

“Inaccurate data is a persistent and costly problem in MRO inventory management,” Marais notes. Predictive analytics is hence vital to determine optimal inventory practices to minimise cost and waste, while boosting productivity and responsiveness.

The application of ‘smart’ technologies guarantees an uptick in resource and procurement process efficiency, while refined reporting tools allow for comprehensive data compilation that remains intuitively analysable and adjustable for the best-optimised MRO supply chain.

It is due to such an industry-leading approach that the Bramhope Group has been recognised by Accenture as one of the Top 3 Most Innovative Companies in South Africa in its category. It has achieved TT100 (Top Technology 100 Awards) status for two consecutive years, and was recently awarded the sub-Saharan Africa PPE Industry Customer Value Leadership Award by Frost & Sullivan.

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### **Notes to the Editor**

To download hi-res images for this release, please visit <http://media.ngage.co.za> and click the Bramhope Group link to view the company’s press office.

### **About Bramhope Group**

Since 2002, the Bramhope Group has specialised in industrial supply, including MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Operations) goods and consulting services, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), health, safety and hygiene products, as well as specialised products for the outdoor and leisure markets. Innovative e-business solutions for the sourcing, procurement and supply-chain-as-a-service assist clients with streamlining business processes in order to ensure reduced cost of ownership and operational risk.

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