

“You need people with industry experience  
who have capacity to handle complex projects”

Mr Temesi, Head of IT Crown Berger

## Success Story

**Crown Berger**  
Manufacturing: Paint

Business Info: Crown Berger, Kenya

**BLUEKEY**

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Mr Temesi, the Head of IT at paint maker Crown Berger, is responsible for ensuring that the right technology underpins the continued success of one of Kenya's market leaders.

When the current economic downturn hit, in the midst of the company's ambitious expansion plans across the region, the management looked at him help drive efficiencies within the company through the best utilization of software systems.

As the business environment becomes more challenging, managers are devising ways to survive and still grow. Many are preferring investment in Information Technology as the best way out. "My bet was for the company to buy into a solution that would provide business management information, thereby enabling us to react fast to events within the company and within our business ecosystem," Mr Temesi shared at a conference held recently in Nairobi to discuss management software in business.

The Nairobi Stock Exchange (NSE) -listed company went live with an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution, SAP Business One, in August. Mr Temesi said that over and above enabling management to make informed and timely decisions, the system, set up to accommodate Crown Berger's full manufacturing processes, also requires low maintenance.

Choosing the right implementation partner is also critical, according to Mr Temesi. "You need people with industry experience who have capacity to handle complex projects," he said. The company used Bluekey, a Nairobi based software provider and reseller of SAP Business One.

"We first agreed on an implementation blueprint, which was put down in writing and signed. Then we did a design based on the blueprint, and all our staff using the systems were trained, before we went live," said Mr Temesi. "You need comprehensive training and hand-holding to have a system like this work."



“A system implementer, should also have a strong support mechanism and encourage you to contact other sites as referral customers.”

Crown Berger, situated in East and Central African countries, has over 500 employees and eight branches, is now in a position to forge on with its expansion plans.

According to Ms Mala Bhatt, the managing director of Bluekey, for a business to operate efficiently and cut costs, a system should be in place to enhance business control.

“Business rules have to be built into the various processes. Users should not be able to break rules and any transaction that is outside of normal business rules (such as sales below a set Gross Profit) should require approval from superiors. Alerts should also be there so management is able to make timely decisions, managing by exception,” says Ms Bhatt.

At Crown Berger for instance, the management is able to check reports before leaving the office every day, and the following morning give directions to staff. “Senior managers are now running the business and thinking of other ways to grow, as opposed to following people around,” says Mr Temesi. With proper control on stock, the company has been able to release working capital of about Sh200 million, he said. The company expects return on their investment in two years.

Ms Bhatt says business software should make daily operations more efficient, saving valuable time that can be spent on strategic planning, satisfying customers, and delivering profitable growth to stakeholders. It can help keep operations under control, even as the business expands rapidly.

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