

MEDIA RELEASE

05 APRIL 2017

Grace Chileshe Will Share Her View On The Impact Of The Internet Of Things (IoT) On Asset Management Processes In The Oil & Gas Industry At This Year's Saama Conference

Grace Chileshe (Retail Reliability Engineer Secondment and Maximo Super User at BP South Africa) has specific interest in two things: technology and asset management. Thus, when she was offered the opportunity to submit an abstract for a paper at the SAAMA conference, she did not hesitate. She is currently doing her Masters in Engineering Management at the University of Pretoria and together with her current role at BP, she has gained an immense amount of knowledge on this topic.

"I spend a lot of time researching technological advances and how it influences various aspects of the asset management arena. I believe technology plays a crucial role in driving out inefficiencies and improving productivity. There are exciting developments in this field and I will share some of the current as well as future modern technologies that can be applied to improve the asset management processes with SAAMA delegates," says Chileshe.

The dawn of the 4th industrial revolution has brought about the phenomena of the Internet of Things (IoT) – a platform that allows for the interconnectivity of equipment, people, processes and services in an effort to improve productivity.

Through the use of sensors and other technology such as drones, augmented reality and wearable devices, equipment can be tracked and monitored in real-time. The large volumes of data captured by these sensors are sent to the cloud where it can be analysed and used to make informed decisions at a much faster rate.

No doubt that the impact of the IoT on asset management will be revolutionary as it brings about exciting opportunities for managing and improving efficiencies throughout the asset lifecycle. This will lead to improved asset uptime, productivity and longevity, and ultimately, savings in both cost and time.

Considering the current tumultuous financial times and the low oil price, the oil and gas companies are looking for means to optimise their costs and still provide quality products and services that warrant customer satisfaction. This new phenomenon could be just the tool that alleviates financial constraints.

"IoT will shape the future of asset management. We need to embrace it and join forces with other industries and innovators in order to drive the growth of digitisation in our industry," adds Chileshe.

"I believe that the potential benefits of the IoT in the Oil & Gas industry are underestimated. Experience in other industries has already revealed that the benefits from applying technology are greater than expected. For example, US logistics company United Parcel

Service, introduced “track and trace” for parcels in the 1990s, aiming only to improve its customer service. However, it became clear that the greater transparency obtained through 'digitising the process' allowed for far better management of parcels, vehicles as well as its whole distribution process. In the end, the company improved efficiency across its entire scope of operations and saved hundreds of millions of dollars.

In an industry as diverse as the Oil & Gas industry, we know that the IoT does not offer a "one-size-fits-all" solution. We also know that widespread adoption of the IoT and relating ideas will take time and some will undoubtedly continue to resist change. However, results coming from the deployment of the IoT will optimistically convince O&G companies to embrace the IoT. Results include improved reliability and efficiency, optimised operations and production as well as the creation of new value and realising the transformative benefits of IoT demands commitment at the O&G companies' highest levels – it should be a boardroom concern.

"The future of the O&G industry lies within digitalisation and the effective use of data obtained from connected devices in order to optimise processes and operations, in real-time," concludes Chileshe.
