

## **Internships Help Power Otel's Growth**

Independent telecoms firm Otel Communications is on track to eventually employ at least 75% of its current crop of interns sourced from the country's leading tertiary institutions.

Earlier this year, Otel's interns embarked on a 12-month high-performance programme within the voice and data provider's Operations, Support, Technical, Marketing and Developer departments.

"Our carrier-grade VoIP services now extend over 250 000 km of fibre. We need the right people to take us well over the quarter million kilometre mark and we believe our internship programme will connect us with the best available development talent," said Rad Jankovic, CEO of Otel Communications.

Otel also hopes that building a business powered by extraordinary young people will help make a contribution towards solving the significant challenge of youth unemployment which currently stands at around 60%.

Otel's ability to deliver VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services on top of fibre links at rates 65% cheaper than traditional fixed-line voice prices has seen it experience tremendous growth since SA's telecoms market was liberalised more than a decade ago.

Over last year's festive season alone, Otel clients were consuming voice and data broadband connectivity to such an extent that the firm quadrupled its capacity and continues to invest in network expansion.

On top of all of its impressive growth, is the fact that the wider VoIP market is experiencing unparalleled uptake. According to Juniper Research, a staggering one billion people - out of a total global population of 7.5 billion - will be using VoIP to communicate with each other by the end of 2017.

"We plan to recruit additional interns in 2018 and the current plan is to guide our existing interns in the best possible way so they experience maximum positive exposure to the working world. Our goal is to one day be named as one of South Africa's best employers and we always have that objective in mind," says Mr Jankovic. The company is working closely with MICT SETA on the further development of its internship programme.

Currently, interns have a direct manager mentor that helps them plot a growth plan. "Otel didn't get where it is today without a solid plan and we encourage our interns to similarly commit their bright futures to paper so they have tangible goals to work towards," Mr Jankovic says.

Otel began its corporate life more than a decade ago as an alternative telecoms provider specialising in VoIP. Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is a communications solution where voice travels across the same network and in the same way as data.

"Businesses under pressure to make those sales calls using affordable, yet crystal clear and multifunctional voice services can do no better than our hosted and on-site

voice services. Our internship programme is integral to maintaining this edge,” concludes Mr Jankovic.