

Day One: Cisco Connect Kenya 2013

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The biannual Cisco Connect Kenya 2013 conference began yesterday, bringing together stakeholders in the ICT sector including government, non-governmental bodies, partners and the private sector.



Speakers discussed a variety of topics, including Cisco's increased focus on Africa with the software giant saying that it would continue to focus on creating the right human resource capacity, create more partnerships and be part of the continent's transformation agenda.

Cisco took the opportunity to say it will be partnering with an undisclosed Kenyan firm to enter the cloud space with the formal partnership announcement expected in 2014.

Other discussions focussed on opportunities the organisation sees in Africa and partnerships it sees with governments as Cisco exploits emerging market trends on the continent.

Cisco Networking Academy Program

The company said it is already solving the problem of lack of skills and talent, having sponsored more than 65,900 graduates through the Cisco Networking Academy Program in 44 countries across the continent.

Cisco sent a delegation including Howard Charney, senior vice president, who discussed the 'internet of everything' with 50 billion devices expected to be connected by 2050 that will enable more automation of processes at home and at work.

"Through smartphones companies have been able to connect people, we are however yet to connect things," said Charney.

Den Sullivan, another Cisco executive, discussed the impact of bring your own device (BYOD) in the workplace and how chief information officers (CIOs) can create applications that allows employees to bring in devices while ensuring the company's security is not compromised.

Emerging prominence of Wi-Fi

Cisco also discussed the emerging prominence of Wi-Fi in promoting internet access, urging service providers to switch to this mode of supplying internet that has low capital expenditure (CAPEX) compared to licences to supply internet.

Speakers at the event advised service providers to consider Wi-Fi especially in areas such as the central business district in cities, as it remains cost effective and is a new trend around the world.

Wi-Fi hotspots are expected to increase nine-fold in the next five years.

Other speakers included Fred Matiangi, the ICT cabinet secretary, and Susan Mochache, of the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK).

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