

# Powering up Africa with technology

Technology and the impact it will inevitably have on the sector is at the forefront of all the conversations in the African utilities space, bringing constructive solutions to challenges around generation, T&D, metering, clean energy, finance, reliability, water supply and energy efficiency.



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“One of the key aspects that is currently highly notable in this space is how microgeneration can become a mechanism to solve the plight of the deficit of electricity in various countries on the continent. However, the challenge here is that this technique will become an issue for electrical grids, as it causes volatility and inconsistency in electrical supplies.

## Eliminating errors

“Solutions such as the internet of things (IoT) are here to establish how this variability happens, to predict glitches within the system as well as to solve issues that could potentially affect the supply of electricity,” says Frank Rizzo, technology lead, KPMG in South Africa.

“Further to this, the use of blockchain technology can also reinvent the utilities sector on the continent, by offering cost effective, and reliable smart grid management systems to keep up with the increased demand for energy by consumers.”

In addition, considering the evolution of the technological era, Rizzo believes that artificial intelligence (AI) as well as

blockchain, will have an impact within the utilities space. “Adding to the conversation on IoT, robotics, under the theme of disruptive technology, is a science that many organisations need to start embracing.

“Although we fear that robotics will replace human labour, we need to understand that when robots are trained to operate in a humanistic fashion – they cannot make human errors and this will solve many issues within the utilities sector as well as a variety of others in the future.”

## **Alternative financing models**

“Embracing IoT, the arrival of bitcoin, and the increasing interest in adopting blockchain solutions, means companies would need to be open for more alternative financial opportunities that were possible previously. In doing so, the power and utilities sector will see a paradigm shift in its operations as there will be a new way of financing this sector.

It is evident that these new technologies are eradicating the traditional ways of running various sectors where the change is not only evident in the financial sector, but in utilities too,” says Nevellan Moodley, senior manager at KPMG in South Africa.

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