

Q&A Session with Saheed Lasisi



Editorial Crew with Mr. Saheed Lasisi (2nd from Right)

Q- We will like to meet you sir ?

Saheed Lasisi, Deputy Manager/Head, Information Technology Unit.

Q-Briefly tell us what gave birth to Project Aquila ?

Aquila is a strategy initiative of management born of the Board's vision.

Management had in 2007 under the new leadership of Mrs. Adefunke Sharon Kasali reviewed the Board's operations vis-à-vis her mandate and came to the conclusion that the manual mode of operations is not only ineffective but also inefficient.

Since, the realization, management has led and implemented several initiatives to automate the Board's business and administrative processes. The IT Unit aligned to the Board's new vision and developed, deployed and implemented solutions including Depot Operations Software (DOS) and Verification, Scheduling and Reporting Software (VSR) and implemented Remita e-payment Platform. The above IT initiatives moved the Board from a manual state to a semi-automated state delivering better value and improving efficiency.

However, realizing the vision of a fraud proof claim and collection management process were not met by the above semi-automation. There were noted gaps and leadership did not relent in asking IT to close the gaps by provid-

ing a fully automated system for the Business Operations of the Board.

It is out of the realization of this management vision that Aquila was born. Aquila is fully transparent system that evidences proof of delivery of petroleum products from one depot to another using Radio Frequency Identification Technology (RFID). It covers not only the depot operations but also automates all administrative processes and workflows for claims management up to e-payment.

Q- How viable is this project in relation to the PEF(M)B ?

Aquila is a most viable and prudent solution for the Board and her stakeholders. It uses a technology that is unobtrusive, cheap and acceptable

to all stakeholders. The main cost in Aquila is the cost of Network provision and management, which unavoidably is still a significant cost in Nigeria, due to our level of infrastructure development for the Nation. Other stakeholders can leverage on this infrastructure to improve their businesses. In particular our stakeholders that will benefit from the portals of information that Aquila brought to bear.

Q- What are your challenges ?

The major challenge in implementing Aquila is Network Infrastructure which is at some cost to the Board. Acceptance by stakeholders was also a challenge, in particular, by the petroleum industry players.

Q- What are your expectations concerning its introduction in the down stream., share your experiences in the implementation of the project ?

Management was however able to overcome the challenges by determination, communication and commitment to project Aquila.

Our expectation for Aquila include efficient processing of marketers claims, transparent operations processes, reduction of fraud and provision of a robust network as well as information pool that will benefit government and stakeholders in the petroleum industry. ■