

Software firm plans to recruit IT graduates

By FREDRICK OBIURA

More than 60 students drawn from major universities across East Africa will land jobs at Techno Brain, a local software company with operations across the world in the first quarter of this year.

The company, which specialises in software development for governments, large private organisations, and non-governmental organisations last year invested Sh84 million in a research centre to increase employability of fresh graduates in software engineering.

At the opening of the centre in October, the company recruited 45 fresh graduates in IT from major East African universities to undergo specialised training in software development.

"We are impressed with the performance of our pilot students and expect to absorb them in the first quarter of this year, they are doing well in the training and by March they will be posted in our branches across the continent in building cutting edge software for our diverse clients," said Munhall Shah, marketing director at Techno Brain.

"East Africa as a region has the potential in human resource and software development, we took the pain of coming up with the development centre to help in quickly matching fresh graduates to different aspects of software development," he said.

Built at a tune of Sh84 million, Techno Brain's Development Centre targets fresh graduates from major universities in East Africa. The recruitment is conducted annually based on students' skills and products of the firm.

EMPLOYMENT

"We provide assistance and resources to the students who based on their performance are employed in various branches of our company spread across Africa to create new and innovative products and services."

"We are impressed by the performance of the centre and will recruit more at an average of 80 students going forward," he said.

The ICT Board depicting local colleges has blamed lack of specialised software developers on the education system with a recent report and universities as ill equipped in producing capable graduates to compete effectively with peers from other parts of the world.

The report, *Jubilee*, says the country is experiencing acute shortage of IT experts for a remarkable progress in the sector.

In the report, universities and colleges were found to be ill equipped to produce IT professionals competent enough to drive the industry. Consistency of curriculum was a common theme, with lack of guidelines emphasised. The watered-down value of certification and lack of market relevant courses in some educational institutions were identified as causes for shortage of IT professionals.

Apart from Techno Brain's Sh84 million-development centre located along Nairobi's Mombasa Road, the Government through the ICT Board has also launched certification programmes with international partners to spur growth in the industry.

It is working closely with Carnegie Mellon in a certification programme aimed at setting minimum qualification for developers.

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