



BUSINESS

Peter Harrison — SUCCESS BUILDER

Peter Harrison: Simplify life, give back



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(Photo: Colovore.)

Peter Harrison, founder and chief technical officer of Colovore, a Silicon Valley-based colocation data centre, says that many people in the IT industry view data centres as a nebulous cloud concept. Still, he believes that they are more than that. Harrison insists on how efficient Colovore is in providing customer services, allowing the company to be competitive within Silicon Valley. As a result, they boast customers from the Fortune 500 world and also, at one point, had on their premises a supercomputer that was top 30 in the world.

Regarding technology, Harrison aims to simplify his life constantly and regularly sets goals aimed at finding solutions. Still, on the days when he can't, tech keeps him motivated. He believes in taking on challenges and developing innovative ways to allow himself to spend time on things

outside his primary work.

Harrison has a solid academic background. He studied engineering at The University of the West Indies (The UWI), St Augustine, in Trinidad and Tobago; management studies courses at The UWI, Mona; and more than once got scholarships to study abroad. He has also acquired a lot of experience locally and abroad due to his extensive academic studies. His diverse career includes sales and marketing, in which he gained considerable experience.

Along his journey, Harrison recalled a critical need for IT engineering personnel worldwide during the Y2K bug, especially for those familiar with relatively complete systems. As a result, he secured a green card to accept a position at a web hosting company in the United States and eventually transferred to NaviSite, a digital transformation company. He then moved from NaviSite to Netflix, where he and his team launched Netflix video on demand in the United States. Harrison ended up with stints at eBay and then Google.

Interestingly, his time at Google gave him the impetus to venture out on his own, as he had a vision for things in the industry that many others did not see at the time. Harrison and his team have been pursuing Colovore for around 11 years, and the firm is now nine years old. He is happy that the business is constantly developing and is in a strong position.

As one of the board directors of the Palisadoes Foundation, Harrison wanted to give back to the island in areas in which he and his Jamaican peers from Silicon Valley had some expertise to find ways to do so in a non-traditional way. The foundation aims to help Jamaican students learn more about collaboration on complicated software projects. He recounts that they started to create projects independently, beginning in a very ad hoc way in which students did their tasks. After two or three years, one project that stood out the most to Harrison was one they called Talawah. He disclosed that Talawah is a project tied to handling the managerial aspect of a non-profit organisation, especially a community organisation.

Harrison wants to build an intangible legacy by educating Jamaicans about the potential of the software development space and changing their perceptions of it. Though he has attained a certain level of success, he wants others always to remember that success is often the result of partially failing and that all the lows and the highs led him to where he is now.





Peter Harrison believes data centres are not a nebulous cloud concept. Photo: Colovore..



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