

# Embracing Impact Sourcing in the Global Business Services Sector

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, May 6, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With South Africa nominated best offshore CX delivery location in 2021 in the Ryan Strategic Advisory BPO Omnibus Survey, its Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry has been given a significant boost in terms of investment and employment potential. It also means that adopting impact sourcing and socially responsible supply chains will be given impetus as job creation surges on the back of global demand for the sector's services. According to Business Process Enabling South Africa (BPESA), the sector is primed to create around 500 000 new jobs over the next 10 years.



Clinton Cohen, CEO of iContact BPO

[iContact BPO](#), a customer service call centre serving international markets notably in North America, and [Shapiro Shaik Defries and Associates](#) (SSDA), a first party collections business, are two BPO providers within the [Alefbet](#) Holdings group that have a focused impact sourcing strategy of employing disadvantaged and disabled youth.

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*Clinton Cohen*

Clinton Cohen, CEO of iContact BPO, which was recently featured in the Impact Sourcing Champions Index in Fortune Magazine, explains that by applying impact sourcing, the GBS industry is well positioned to make a fundamental difference in the lives of disadvantaged and disabled youth who would otherwise not have access to

the formal economy. About 90% of iContact BPO employees are recruited through impact sourcing, the average age is 23, 65% are women and 10% are disabled.

“Financial constraints and limited job market access mean that earning a stable living is a daily struggle for more than half of our youth, which in turn has significant negative socio-economic repercussions. By implementing impact sourcing as a strategic focus in our business, we’re able to create opportunities for vulnerable youth who would otherwise face bleak career prospects. The GBS sector is in fact one of few industries that grew and created thousands of new jobs during the pandemic when most other businesses were downscaling,” explains Cohen.

Gareth Levinsohn, Commercial Director of collections BPO business, SSDA adds that the hybrid work models that evolved from the pandemic have opened more avenues for impact sourcing. For a disadvantaged and disabled employee, the costs and practical challenges of transport to office environments are eliminated by providing a work-from-home model, supported by the necessary IT security, tech support and connectivity they need to work productively.



Gareth Levinsohn, Commercial Director of SSDA

“We’re seeing higher levels of productivity with employees who are now able to work and earn during the time they would ordinarily have spent commuting to the call centre, which for many can take as much of four hours of their workday using public transport. The transport cost savings are also significant, not to mention eliminating the obstacles and discomfort that our disabled colleagues experience in accessing public transport that caters for their mobility needs,” adds Levinsohn.

While the initial work-from-home model was a necessity in dealing with COVID-19, hybrid working models are an opportunity to be flexible and responsive to the needs of our customers and our workforce. Currently, 60% of SSDA’s workforce has continued to work remotely, while others who prefer to work in the call centre for logistical and practical reasons can do so in a safe, socially distanced and formalised work environment that meets their needs.

By having impact sourcing as a strategic imperative across the Alefnet group, strong synergies are created between the various businesses which provides employees with a diverse range of job roles and opportunities to pursue in their career advancement.

“Our impact sourcing strategy ensures that recruits gain professional skills and transferable credentials that are applicable in diverse areas such as business development, administration, management, human resources, operations, IT support, training and so on. Today’s customer service agent could be tomorrow’s team leader, HR professional, trainer or payroll manager.

Most disadvantaged and disabled recruits have not had the benefit of career guidance or the privilege of tertiary education paths in pursuit of a specific career due to severe financial constraints. An environment like ours opens their eyes to the many diverse roles and opportunities within GBS, with an employer willing to invest in their potential. Focused learnerships and training interventions mean that they attain recognised qualifications and are well on their way to building fulfilling careers with ample growth potential,” concludes Cohen.

For the Alefbet group, its impact sourcing models exceed the matrix of what customers want and what business needs. Most of all, there is the real satisfaction that impact sourcing provides in being able to do well as a business, by doing good in the community, for the people who need the door opened the most.

For more information visit [www.icontactbpo.co.za](http://www.icontactbpo.co.za) and [www.ssda.co.za](http://www.ssda.co.za)

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