

**MEDIA RELEASE ISSUED BY CGF RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PTY) LTD & THE
LAPDESK COMPANY (SA) (PTY) LTD**

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SUBJECT: FOR THE SAKE OF OUR CHILDREN AND PLANET EARTH

It is generally understood that the success of a company cannot entirely depend upon one single individual, notwithstanding the fact that an ingenious idea, ultimately leading to the company's success, may originally have been 'birthed' from *only one* person. The axiom that "no man is an island to himself", truly resonates and for a company to achieve success, it requires a collective effort of a team of people who support and share a common vision. Equally, a company needs to be supported by the community in which it operates, and without the support of all the connected stakeholders, both young and old, the company is doomed to certain failure.

In this vein the world has embarked upon a united vision for good governance, where companies are increasingly expected to report on their commitment to People, the Planet and the manner in which Profit is derived. Typically called *PPP*, according to the King Code for Governance in South Africa (King III), locally based companies will be expected to report on these areas as an integral, integrated component of their business. The first leg of PPP, namely the *People* component is where many companies are beginning to focus their attention, not just locally, but indeed worldwide. And its not just about the adults that companies are concerning themselves about -- it's the children too, indeed the very people who are our future and are now being enlightened at an early age about good governance practices. Supporting these types of initiatives, is an organization such as Artech, a Japanese non-profit, non-governmental organization who is responsible for assisting children -- who represent 20% of the world's population between 10 and 19 -- to understand the impact both their and the adults' actions have upon the world's environment. The Kid's ISO 14000 programme follows on the back of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2002, where the United Nations announced plans to launch the 'Decade of Education for Sustainable Development' for 2005-2015.

Through the International Standards Organization's (ISO) 14001 programme, children are being taught to put into practice the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle which is the operating principle of the ISO 14000 standards on environmental management systems. Within this programme, children are taught to use the PDCA cycle to establish environmental baselines to conserve water, including the reduction of other negative impacts on the environment.

Acknowledging the fact that our children will inherit the damages caused through many past environmental disasters (caused by ignorant and or reckless leaders); our future generation -- found within the world's existing youth -- will need to correctively manage this situation into the future.

Fortunately Artech is not the only organization who focuses upon children and their education.

Here in South Africa, our very own and unique Lapdesk Company has also understood the critical role children play in the world, and that their future role as responsible leaders depends entirely upon their existing and future education. Currently, it is estimated that there are over 3 million children in South Africa who do not have adequate access to a classroom or a desk at their schools. Clearly, circumstances such as these will not afford these children the opportunity to make a difference into the future, not theirs and neither ours. If the basic tools such as a desk are not in place, we can forget about our children trying to take care of our future planet, in which many of us still hope to retire.

Under the patronage of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Lapdesk Company has been recognised both locally and internationally for their sterling work found amongst impoverished children and schools in mostly the underdeveloped, rural areas of South Africa. One of the crucial foundations for functional literacy attainment is an effective writing surface. To date, circa 700,000 Lapdesks have been delivered to these children through the Corporate Social Investment (CSI) funds of around forty-five companies. Clearly a lot more Lapdesks and work will be required if there is any hope to educate our children so that they have the opportunity to manage the future of our world, which is what we would expect of them as our next generation of leaders.

Based upon the critical aspects of good governance attached to this imperative, CGF Research Institute (Pty) Ltd was compelled to assist the multi-coveted, award winning company Lapdesk, by way of promoting their products through a Value-Added Reseller agreement. Too often companies will consider making a donation under the auspices of Corporate Social Investment, however in many cases such funding is diluted particularly when the common vision is not shared, or worse – the project is not sustainable.

As companies ponder the manner in which they will be expected to report on their *People* and *Planet* components next year, taking consideration also of their immediate stakeholder communities, one can't help but wonder whether companies have adequately addressed the children and youth and their immediate need for educational assistance and facilities?

The Lapdesk Company has one simple objective: to eradicate classroom desk shortages affecting over 3 million South African school children by the year 2012.

Both CGF and the Lapdesk Companies are proud members of the Proudly South African Campaign.

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