



People

MATTHEW NDOLO, SERVICE ENGINEER AT KHS EAST AFRICA

Swiss army knife in Kenya

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Matthew Ndolo is a real all-rounder: the service engineer is familiar with practically the entire KHS product portfolio and provides customers and colleagues with vital support.

PHOTOGRAPHY / ILLUSTRATION

Andrew Kamau

COVER PHOTO

Valuable support: service electronics engineer Matthew Ndolo is familiar with and provides support for practically the entire KHS product portfolio and trains both customers and colleagues on this.

Matthew Ndolo discovered his passion for technology early on. As a young boy he used to take his toys apart and then put them back together again. He wants to understand how things work and loves building new things or repairing things that are broken. In his home town of Nairobi, the Kenyan grew up in a competitive environment: Ndolo went to a private school that strived to turn young boys into men who are strong in body, mind and character – a defining period in his life as he likes to remember it.

Quick start with kegs

After completing his first degree in electrical engineering and electronics, Ndolo wanted to gain some practical experience. “My father worked for ↗ **Kenya Breweries**, the biggest brewery in our country. When his company invested in a new kegging line, that’s when I heard about SEN-Tech for the first time, the predecessor of KHS East Africa.” Ndolo then rang Denise Schneider-Walimohamed, the mechanical engineering company’s local managing director, and applied for a job. He was promptly hired and made a member of the installation team. “I’m thankful for this opportunity to this very day. The rest is history,” he laughs.



↑
All packed and ready to go: Ndolo travels all over Africa in his work for KHS.

Read here

how KHS is strengthening its local presence and proximity to the customer, for example with its new offices in Nairobi.

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Since joining the company in 2010, he's long become one of the most frequently requested KHS commissioning and service engineers in the whole of Africa. His great skills mean that he covers 90% of the entire KHS product portfolio. He likes working on bottle washers and stretch blow molders, process engineering systems, fillers and pasteurizers. In the dry section

his favorites are the palletizers; as an avid electronics engineer, he's developed a genuine foible for the KUKA robots in particular here. He's also extremely well versed in the seemingly endless list of automation platforms.

All-rounder

Thanks to his wealth of expertise, customers and colleagues alike consider Ndolo to be a real all-rounder. It's thus no surprise that they refer to him appreciatively as "the Swiss army knife of KHS" – a nickname he's proud of. He by no means keeps his expert knowledge to himself, however. "I want our customers to be able to get the most out of what our lines and machines can give them. This means that we have to train the operators and share what we know with them." At the moment, he's helping to set up a training hub at the newly built, state-of-the-art KHS offices in Nairobi. In addition to the East Africa business center (BC), he also supports the other four BCs in KHS' ↗ **Middle East/Africa market zone** – a sign of the close cooperation engaged in beyond the borders of the respective regions.

“I want our customers to be able to get the most out of what our machines can give them.”



Matthew Ndolo
commissioning & service engineer, KHS East Africa

Not only customers but also the younger service engineers in particular benefit from Ndolo's expertise. "I train and supervise our new recruits in tandem. This eases their way into the job and saves them having to spend lots of time studying on their own as I did." As he's very quick to learn, this worked well for him, he says.

Out of the comfort zone

Ndolo describes himself as being extremely independent. "I'm a self-starter who likes to leave his comfort zone to master bigger challenges." He has plenty of opportunity to do so in his work in Service, such as when a beverage producer's system suddenly stops and every minute counts. Or with conversions where the

control system often has to be upgraded to the most versatile solution. “For me, that’s almost like transplanting the heart of a lion into an elephant so that it can run faster,” he jokes.

Profile

MATTHEW NDOLO KIILU

After studying electronics at the University of Nairobi, 14 years ago Ndolo joined SEN-Tech, now KHS East Africa.

He’s now responsible for conversions at the business center and heads the electronics team that numbers 15 employees.

Alongside his job as a robotics, process and industrial automation engineer, the 39-year-old especially spends time on training customers and colleagues.

Child of the community

In his free time, he likes tinkering with cars, especially with engine software, for instance. He loves to spend his holidays traveling with his family – to places where his job hasn’t yet taken him. He was recently in the Maldives; the next destinations on his list are Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam. He’s also very involved in a number of local community projects. “In Africa we practice the Ubuntu philosophy of interconnectedness. This states that you’re not the child of a single person but of the community. This is why I like to offer myself as a mentor to young people so that they can profit from my knowledge and my experience.” Just like his customers and colleagues do.