



# AFRICA QS VOICE

AFRICA ASSOCIATION OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS NEWSLETTER



IT'S A NEW DAWN AT  
AAQS, NEW LEADERSHIP,  
NEW VISIONS

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## FROM THE EDITOR

*Dear Reader,*

We have compiled articles full of light and energy in this issue, something a little different from the Covid 19 Pandemic vibes.

This issue has also included opinions and articles that have more regional representation and that are enriching to the Quantity Surveyor.

Indeed the Africa Qs Voice is for Africans by Africans, a medium for collaborations and a source of knowledge.

I therefore wish you a happy reading

**QS Jennifer, Kenya**  
Editor.

# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



It is time for growth of the AAQS.

It is a rare privilege and special honor for me to be elected unopposed as the president of this great continental body comprising of over 20,000 highly skilled professionals.

I take this election as a call to grave responsibility to serve the continent and lead the affairs of our noble profession in improving its recognition and appreciating its potentials, by the public and the national governments all over Africa.

It is also a call to finding innovations to our profession such that quantity surveying in Africa is continually abreast with global standards and trends.

I also see my election as a call to deepening and widening the roots of AAQS structure in Africa and those ensure sustainability of the QS profession in the continent.

As the new executive committee is expected to deliver sustainable benefits through our institutional

members we would covet first, the support of these institutional members through their sacrificial sowings into the common cause of the AAQS and also their assistance to positively push the AAQS affairs and activities within our nations such that both the institutional members and the AAQS can derive great marketing mileages in every country of the continent.

On this note we shall be expecting full participation from every national institutes and regions at our quarterly Executive or Council meetings.

Meetings are only meaningful and encouraging when all requisite members are present and contributing robustly to the matters being discussed and decisions being made.

Going forward our operational strategy or roadmap shall be to seek moderate growth of 50% in terms of membership enrollment, finances and in Infrastructure assets.

Our Agenda shall be just on two fronts-

- i) To promote the improved recognition, well-being and progress of AAQS
- ii) To promote QS businesses in Africa In terms of the consulting firms, the Registration Boards and the Research /Teaching Institutions.

Our immediate action plans are therefore as follows:-

1. To update our letterheads and other branded identities to reflect other National languages spoken in Africa (at least both English and French like many other continental organizations)
2. To update the AAQS website in terms of contents and to also have google translations for French and Arabic
3. To establish A Register of internationally benchmarked QS Consulting Firms owned by Africans and operating in Africa continent.
4. To undertake courtesy visits to continental / global institutions and ensure that they have and do utilize the Register of African QS Firms to undertake infrastructure projects funded by such organizations.
5. To intensify financial drive for funds acquisition for AAQS through allowance for advertisements in AAQS Platforms and activities, sponsorships, subventions from Registration Boards etc.

6. To intensify new country membership enrollment especially from French and Arabic countries. Immediate focus being on Egypt, Cote D'Ivoire, and Morocco.
7. To intensify increased Practice Membership enrollment
8. To accomplish and obtain the Observer Status with AU
9. To promote AAQS Young QS organizations interactions and free e-learning modules.
10. To promote the expansion of coverage of the E-Study Guide Packs to include subject matters such as Ethics, Marketing of Professional Practice, Practice Management, Project Scheduling, and other project management modules.

Ladies and gentlemen I will like to end this short address by assuring you all that by the grace of the Almighty God the executive team shall put in their best endeavors to the AAQS and will in addition be very open to suggestions and constructive criticisms about our performance to ensure success.

I on behalf of the elected executive members would like to thank all the members here present for the trust you have reposed in us in steering the AAQS affairs for the next three years 2020-2023.

May The Lord bless AAQS and The Africa Continent.

**Obafemi Oluwole Onashile**

*AAQS President*

## FAREWELL NOTE FROM OUTGOING PRESIDENT



On 20th October 2020 I had planned to be in Accra for the AAQS General Assembly. Earlier in the year we had started planning for a big Kenyan delegation to escort the President! It was not to be due to Covid-19 global pandemic. We held a first virtual General Assembly just like many other institutions who had to do so in this unique year.

It was efficient, it was a success, and the Gods of internet in all countries represented were with us, there were minimal disruptions. I had been a bit apprehensive before the meeting about the quality of communication. I thank the Secretariat team for meticulous organization, and delegates too for their attendance. We have now become accustomed to

virtual meetings and there is less of ..... “can you hear me?”!

I joined AAQS twelve years ago and have served in various capacities culminating into the Presidency from 2017 to this year. It has been a joy and privileged to serve this great organization. I exit with a lot of satisfaction and appreciation of the men and women we have served with over the years.

I thank the founders for their great vision and I am glad in my time we have continued to carry this vision forward. During the general assembly, I gave a brief of what we have achieved in the last three years and also highlighted the ‘works in progress’ for the next leadership team to complete. They are equal to the task and have all the confidence in them.

I was elated by the election of Qs Obafemi Onashile as the next President of our Association. We served with him earlier as Vice Presidents of our respective regions and I came to understand his potential and passion for the Quantity Surveying profession. He later served diligently as the President of NIQS and I have no doubt that he will serve equally well in AAQS with the support of the executive team.

Guided by our strategic plan, AAQS can only progress to greater heights and I wish the new leadership all the success

Best regards,

**David M. Gaitho**

*Immediate Past President*



Africa Association of  
Quantity Surveyors

**Presented during the 8th General Assembly held on 20 October 2020  
by David M Gaitho - President of the AAQS (2017 to 2020)**

**Dr Corné de Leeuw**

Posthumous

For his exemplary service to the association as the Chairp of the Service and Model Documentation Board and the Secretariat Committee (2017 to 2019)



**Prof Rob Pearl**

As the chairman of the Awards Committee, a member of the Education, Research and Training Board and the Strategy and Marketing Board (2017 to 2020)



**Jennifer Musyimi**

As the chairperson of the Newsletter and Website Committee (2017 to 2020)



**Gerhard de Leeuw**

As the Honorary Treasures and Chairperson of the Secretariat Committee (2017 to 2020)



**Larry Feinberg**

As Chairperson of Strategy and Marketing Board and member of the Secretariat Committee (2017 to 2020)



**Clarissa Walters**

For exemplary service to the Association by managing the digital transformation of the Association during the Covid-19 pandemic (2017 to 2020)



**Segun Ajanlekoko**

For his exemplary service to the association, serving as Chaiperson of the Ethics and Conduct Board, member of the Service and Model Documentation Board, member of the Strategy and Marketing Board and member of the Awards Committee (2017 to 2020)





**OBAFEMI OLUWOLE ONASHILE- NIGERIA**

**PRESIDENT**

Obafemi Oluwole Onashile an astute Nigerian professional Quantity Surveyor, is a product of the Federal Government College, Odogbolu (1975-1980) and the University of Ife, Ile-Ife (Now Obafemi Awolowo University, OAU), where he obtained his Bachelors' Degree in Quantity Surveying (between Sept. 1980 – Feb. 1986).

He had brief QS career stints in government ministries before settling deeply into private practice from 1988 till date. After twenty years of practice as a consultant Quantity Surveyor he enrolled at the University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, for a Masters in Project Management (MPM) degree 2005-2007. His niche in Project Management is Turn-Around Management of ailing or failed Capital Projects. Obafemi qualifies as a trained PPP Specialist, Mediation Specialist and as a Construction Contract Arbitrator.

**DAVID M. GAI THO  
KENYA**

Immediat Past President

**PROF ROB PEARL  
SOUTH AFRICA**

Outgoing Immediate Past President  
Chairperson of the Service and  
Model Documentation Board

**VICTOR ODONGO  
UGANDA**

Vice President  
Eastern Region

**ROSEMARGARET  
ESUBONTENG  
GHANA**

Vice President  
Western Region



**ROBERT AKANYANG  
BOTSWANA**

Vice President  
Southern Region



**ALFRED ALUVAALA  
KENYA**

Secretary General



**GERHARD DE LEEUW  
SOUTH AFRICA**

Honorary Treasurer



**ISABELLA NJERI  
WACHIRA-TOWEY  
KENYA**

Chairperson of the Education  
Research and Training Board



**SEGUN AJANLEKOKO  
NIGERIA**

Chairperson of the Ethics and  
Conduct Board



**JENNIFER MUSYIMI  
KENYA**

Chairperson of the  
Membership Board



**LARRY FEINBERG  
SOUTH AFRICA**

Chairperson of the Strategy  
and Marketing Board



**MATTHEW NGULUBE  
ZAMBIA**

Co-opted Member



**NIYI IJOGUN  
NIGERIA**

Co-opted Member



# AFRICA YOUNG ACHIEVER AWARD WINNER 2020

*Ayodele Faleye*



Following a continental-wide process amongst all AAQS National bodies Mr Ayodele Faleye was announced at the AAQS General Assembly Meeting in October 2020 as the first-ever recipient of this significant award. In an effort to promote the industry to young professionals, the AAQS recognizes the contribution Young Quantity Surveyors make to the industry and the future of the profession. This category is only open to registered professional quantity surveyors / members of AAQS Institutional Member organisations under 35 years of age

The list of requirements to be met by potential awardees is substantial. These include extraordinary achievements in their scholarly pursuits, the pursuit of post tertiary education knowledge gathering, notable contributions to sustainable (social, economic and environmental) development, involvement in community activities and recognisable social upliftment, and, most importantly, the demonstration of leadership ability and his or her contribution to building the image of their employer organization(s) and the quantity surveying profession in general

Mr Faleye, who lives in Abuja, has a BSc (Hons) (Quantity Surveying) degree, as well as having been noted for particularly excellent achievements in successfully gaining a Masters Degree in Project Management. In addition to meeting all the criteria for this award, the recipient is particularly prominent in his activities within the formal quantity surveying professional structures (most notably the NIQS

that nominated him for this award), in aggressively mobilising the furtherance of new young talent in many fields of the QS profession.

We look forward to continued involvement of this high achiever as he progresses further within his chosen career path

## A TET A TET WITH THE AFRICA YOUNG ACHIEVER AWARD 2020

### 1. What was your first reaction when you received the award?

The news came to me not really as a surprise, but as a validation of all the efforts young Quantity Surveyors in Nigeria have been making. So, when I got the news, I was happy.

### 2. How will this award impact your Career?

I believe this award will accelerate my career and give me wider platform to reach out to more young African professionals. I also believe the award is a symbol of excellence coming from the apex professional association within the continent of Africa. Thus, I would be able to leverage on the visibility of the body. Organizations that I currently serve would see this award as recognition of my industry contribution to the Quantity Surveying profession at continental level.

### 3. How would you use being the recipient of this award to influence others?

Currently, as a young leader, many people already look up to me for career guidance and leadership insight. This award will reinforce my approach and thereby make people to believe the rising opportunity in the continent of Africa. The award would help me towards reaching out to more talents across the continent, and ensure that we secure brightest minds that would be needed for the construction and property market of the future.

### 4. Tell us about a mentor who made an impact on you or set you on your present path.

In 2007, I went to Central Bank of Nigeria project site in Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria to undergo my

internship with one of the leading engineering firms in Nigeria, Reynold Construction Company, RCC. That was immediately I completed my Diploma in Quantity Surveying. I had an encounter with a notable Quantity Surveyor who inspired my perception of Quantity Surveying. QS Kola Adeyemo served as the Resident Project Manager on that multi-million dollars project. His carriage, comportment and confidence inspired all the interns within the organization.

Later on, he became the pioneer Chairman of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS) in Osun State, occupied offices at national level, and recently completed his tenure as AAQS Secretary General.

**5. If you could do one thing, leave one mark on the profession, what would it be?**

At the moment, there are many contending forces against our recognition; ranging from government regulations and policies, invasion of technology, and lack of solid public

recognition. I would want to leave a profession that, through her refined knowledge, has helped in using scarce resources towards building cities and communities across Africa. That one thing would be to make Quantity Surveyors first choice professionals when it comes to Cost and Procurement Management of all forms of built assets on behalf of leading development finance institutions across the continent.

## AFRICA GRADUATE GOLD MEDAL AWARD WINNER 2020

*Boaz Chepsergon Komen*



Following an intensive nomination process, Boaz Chepsergon Komen was recognized at the AAQS General Assembly Meeting in October 2020 as the first-ever recipient of this prestigious award. He completed a first class Honours Degree in Quantity Surveying at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in 2019.

Mr Komen has overcome the challenges of being born in humble conditions in Baringo County, and excelled in his early studies, securing admission to the

prestigious Alliance High School – he appropriately describes this as a “wonderful opportunity”, using this to gain entry to university in 2016. Throughout his university course, he consistently achieved exceptional results, far in excess of average class marks. However, in addition to academic excellence, nominees for this award are required to demonstrate personal qualities which typically include active involvement in extramural activities, significant contributions to community, a sense of social responsibility, and leadership experience, all of which promise to positively contribute to the quantity surveying profession in their future careers.

The winner impressed the selection panels with both the breadth and depth of his performance in all categories – no mean achievement for a 23 year old. The nomination submissions of the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya (IQSK) included numerous testimonials describing him as a young man of impeccable character and admirable community spirit.

Since graduation, Mr Komen has been employed as an assistant quantity surveyor by the contracting organisation Efil Enterprises Ltd. Due to travel restrictions related to the Covid 19 pandemic, the AAQS was unable to make the official award to Mr Komen personally – an event which will take place once circumstances permit.

## A TET A TET WITH THE AAQS GOLD MEDAL AWARD WINNER 2020

### Brief introduction of Boaz Chepsergon Komen

I am a young man aged 23 years. I was born on the 18th of July 1997 in Komarir Village, Sabor sub-location within the greater Kimalel location in Baringo Central District, now Baringo South sub-county in Kenya. I started my 8-4-4 curriculum journey in Sabor primary school, Baringo county from 2003 to 2010. I later joined Alliance High School from 2011 to 2014 for my secondary education. I excelled in my Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and eventually joined the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) to pursue a degree in Quantity Surveying where I graduated on 29th November 2019 with a first-class honors. In spite of being brought up in a humble background, I didn't allow this to taint my dream of excelling in all cadres of life. My motivation has been to rewrite history in my home area by inspiring the younger generations to dare dream and go all out in the pursuit of their dreams. In the words of Lupita Nyong'o, everyone's dreams are valid irrespective of their background. I come from a set up where the practice of Quantity surveying is almost always confused for Land surveying. This can be attributed to the fact that quite a few people in my locality have pursued the course. This inspires me to grow my experience in all that Quantity Surveying practice entails and to learn more in this noble profession.

#### 1. What was your first reaction when you received this award?

On 27th October 2020, I received an email at around 1559hrs EAT time from the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya (IQSK) congratulating me for emerging the overall winner of the AAQS Graduate Gold Medal Award.

I was so elated, grateful and humbled to hear of such great news. I could not believe that I was the one being recognized not only for such a noble award but being the first recipient. I must say this took God's enabling hand as I believe many submissions were made for the award and emerging the winner was really a humbling experience. Winning this award has really given me a great conviction that in whatever you do, dedicate yourself fully. I must say that I really appreciate Africa Association of Quantity Surveyors (AAQS) for this recognition. I will also appreciate the Institute of Quantity Surveyors of Kenya (IQSK) for nominating me as a Kenyan

nominee for through this, the award has come to its fruition. To the JKUAT Department of Construction Management, I must appreciate for your support during the application process. I will not also forget my friends who really assisted me in one way or the other during the application process and the class of 2019 whom we have walked the journey thus far and still on course. Last but not least is my parents and siblings who have really seen me through my academic journey. God bless!

#### 2. How will this award impact your career?

The award will really have an immense impact in my career. Firstly, the recognition has really increased the zeal I have towards quantity surveying practice. As a new entrant in this field, I believe this award will open more opportunities not only in job offers but also in furthering my studies. I believe this award will enable me to interact with other Quantity surveying professionals in Africa and beyond who will be of great importance towards my career growth.

In addition to that, this award has also given me a challenge to stretch my practice now or once registered in the future towards soaring higher and thinking in terms of global impact rather than limiting myself to my country. As the great marathoner of our time; Eliud Kipchoge said 'no human is limited' which I believe it is true in a world of limitless opportunities. I am also challenged by this award to dream bigger and focus also on other great challenges whenever an opportunity presents up. I will work harder and smarter to continually better my career not only in professional practice but also in the academia in order to contribute positively to QS practice and the industry at large.

#### 3. How would you use being the recipient of this award to influence others?

Over the past one week since the news were announced, I must say it has been a trend in almost all social media platforms. The impact this has had is that most people are curious to know what the QS practice entails. This has given me an opportunity to explain to them on the role of a QS and its importance.

Being the first recipient of this award is not only a noble recognition but also a key responsibility to uplift the standard of QS practice. I have a zeal to ensure that young quantity surveyors' network within the continent and understand

that we have a role of ensuring that the standards of QS practice are upheld not only during our time but also for posterity. We live in a technological era and the world has become a global village. Organizing a platform where the young QS' in Africa can have an opportunity to interact and share ideas on the diverse practices done in the field by various countries will not only ease the integration of ideas but also work towards ensuring the ease of one working in whatever part of the continent as time goes by. Achieving this will require collaborative work among my fellow young quantity surveyors and also the qualified professionals in the field. Through AAQS, the professional member institutions in various countries and also with the institutions offering quantity surveying, I believe this will come into its fruition. This will also give the professionals who already have experience in the field a platform to impart knowledge on us since we are the future of this profession and our yearning is to grow in the right path professionally.

**4. Tell us about a mentor who made an impact on you or set you on your present path.**

The first mentors to set and guide me on this career path of Quantity Surveying are my late dad, my mum and my siblings. After attaining an A plain in high school, my main aim was to pursue Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery. However, for some reason, I was called to pursue Bachelor of science in Financial Engineering at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology; which was 3rd choice and not medicine which was my 1st choice. This did not go well with me as I had a desire to pursue Medicine and I made up my mind to do an inter-faculty transfer to medicine once joining the university. However, a day to the admission day, that was on Sunday 30th August 2015, my father and my elder brother Solomon Komen sat me down and advised me to go and change my course to Bachelor of Quantity Surveying. This really puzzled me since I had no clue of what Quantity Surveying entailed. The first question I asked was whether Quantity Surveying was about land mutation. My late father smiled and explained to me that it entailed cost estimation of construction projects which really appealed to me despite my blurred understanding of this practice. This really changed my career trajectory as I heeded to their call and on joining the University, I did not hesitate to apply for an inter-faculty transfer to Bachelor of Quantity

Surveying and not to Medicine as I had earlier planned. The change of course was successful owing to my high cluster points. This is how I came to pursue this career and I can proudly say I do not regret joining this career field!

Secondly, my other mentors have been my lecturers in the University at the Department of Construction management who gave me clarity not only on how the practice is done but also on what exactly the practice entailed. I must say learning this field has been on gradual basis. Thirdly, other mentors have been the Quantity surveying and construction firms which have given me an opportunity outside class to mention a few Buildnett consultants, Efil Enterprises Ltd and Franco Construction. This has really enabled me to learn more outside classroom which I believe have taught me a lot and still on course. Further, my growth in the field has also been attributed to my active participation in the QS professional bodies to mention a few; IQSK and AAK where I have had an opportunity to interact with the key players in the profession which has imparted knowledge and continually grow my understanding of QS practice and the construction industry at large.

**5. If you could do one thing, leave one mark, on the profession what would it be?**

The major mark that I aspire to leave in the profession is being able to enhance research and development towards growth of the QS profession in Kenya, Africa and beyond. Through research and development, we will be in a position to highlight the problematic areas in the field and be able to suggest solutions, implement and eventually solve them.

Another key arena would be to foster collaboration within the continent not only among my fellow young quantity surveyors but also with experienced professionals in the field. Quantity surveyor can share ideas on what works best for them and work towards implementing them. Through interconnecting, I believe it would open greater doors and surely make the industry stand out in the continent.

I will strive to continuously build my capacity in the quantity surveying practice and look forward to uplifting the standards of the practice in Kenya, Africa and beyond!

# REGIONAL INSIGHTS

## 1. Feature on Vice President, Western Region

*Rosemargaret Esubonteng*



**A** AQS Member Countries currently cover the Western, Eastern and Southern Regions of Africa. The Western Region countries are Ghana and Nigeria, while the Eastern Region comprises Kenya, Tanzania, Angola, and Uganda. South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe make up the Southern Region.

The different professional Institutions for Quantity Surveying in each Member country form the AAQS. Practice Membership Category of the AAQS is open to Quantity Surveying Firms registered with and endorsed by Member Country Institutions. These firms are listed on the AAQS website.

Rosemargaret Esubonteng is the Vice President for the Western Region of AAQS. In this role, she works to promote the AAQS in the region, coordinates the work of the Institutional Representatives and supports the advancement of AAQS in the region. She is also a member of the Executive Committee and Council of AAQS and serves on the Services and Model Documentation Committee.

Her contribution to the promotion and development

of the Quantity Surveying Profession extends to other Panels, Committees and Governing Councils. Rosemargaret serves on the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Sub-Saharan Africa Market Advisory Panel.

She is the current Senior Vice President and Governing Council Member of the Ghana Institution of Surveyors (GhIS), and a Past Chair of the GhIS Quantity Surveying Division. The GhIS has three divisions – Quantity Surveying (QS), Valuation and Estate Surveying (VES), and Land Surveying (LS). The objectives of GhIS are to Promote the advancement of the Surveying Profession, provide Continuing Professional education for members, maintain a Code of Professional Ethics, promote the usefulness of the profession for public advantage, and further the National and International recognition and understanding of the profession and its three divisions.

Rosemargaret is the Principal Consultant in OshDarley Consult, a Quantity Surveying and Project Management Consulting Firm in Ghana. She has over 30 years' experience working with both Private and Public Sector Clients on different schemes including financial, educational, commercial, medical, and residential facilities.

Having dealt with Clients from varying backgrounds and sectors, and working with different groups of Consultants, Rosemargaret has developed great relationships over the years. Her diverse experience enables her to provide Clients with increased value.

She holds an MBA in Construction & Real Estate from the University of Reading UK, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (RICS) Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management and a BSc in Building Technology from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana.

Rosemargaret Esubonteng is a Resource Person for different Professional Training and Coaching Programmes.

## 2. The challenges and opportunities in marketing the QS practice in Malaysia

*Christopher Nigel Preece; International Islamic Univeristy Malaysia, Malaysia; Christopher\_preece@hotmail.com*  
*Roziha Che Haron; International Islamic Univeristy Malaysia, Malaysia; geech289@yahoo.com*  
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*Mohd Saiful Nizam Mohd Suhaimi; International Islamic Univeristy Malaysia,*



The challenges and opportunities facing quantity surveying practices is the focus of ongoing research looking at how QS firms can develop and improve their strategic marketing approaches given increasing domestic and international competition, proliferation of cost management and other services and the possible liberalisation of the profession with regard to advertising and marketing. This paper will identify whether quantity surveyors are equipped to develop their marketing and business development strategies. It will also attempt to identify what the future marketing challenges will be. Preliminary results show that quantity surveying practices that are working for increasingly private sector clients are possibly more developed in terms of their approaches to marketing than those still working predominantly for the public sector. The research is giving an insight into the organization and strategies being employed by firms. In addition, it is attempting to identify the influence of marketing on public and private client decision-making.

### **MARKETING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE FIRMS**

Young (2005), states that the professional services industry is one of the largest and most diverse sector

of modern economies. The common attribute that all the firms within it share, whether they are business to business or consumer-oriented business, is that the professional skills form the basis of what they offer to clients and the qualifications needed are generally the barrier to entry for aspiring newcomers. How each firm approaches the market and the processes it develops, however, differ according to its skill set, size, the organizational structure and the type of project it takes on.

Lim and Yap, (2003) highlighted that the professional services are constantly changing and expanding, in response to client demand and evolution of new technology. Clients are always seeking either a highly specialized or personalized service from a number of sources or a wide range of skills from a single source. The intensification of competition for Quantity Surveying services have lead to management and marketing expertise becoming as important as pure technical skill.

As stressed by Bowen and Rwelamila, (1995), further research within the marketing of professional quantity surveying services field is absolutely necessary, thus this study is carried out with the intention of focusing on the marketing of professional

services of quantity surveying consultancy practices specifically in Malaysia for there is currently a lack of empirical study carried out on this topic.

The competition in obtaining projects is rapidly increasing in the construction industry. As identified by Low and Kok (1997), the clients of the construction industry have become more discerning as well as demanding on the quality and timeliness of the services they receive due to the improvements in education, advancement in technology and the increase in affluence in society. Smyth (2000) recognized the clients service expectations of consultants to be; personal trust sought, has an understanding of the clients, has common interests, and is reactive and spontaneous. On the other hand, the clients have reported dissatisfaction with consultants on specific areas where the consultants have lack of understanding the client's needs, lack of flexibility and innovation, lack of tangibility as well as poor value for money.

Thus, the marketing strategies carried out by professional consultancies suggest to play a significant role in the client's selection of his preferred consultants in order to obtain the most appropriate and quality professional service. Ajanlekoko (2000) in Lim and Yap (2003) has suggested that there is a need for the professionals to promote themselves proactively in the relentless search for business opportunities. However, Macnamara (2003) has

stated that the construction industry has been slow to appreciate marketing as a tool to improve market shares, and sales or profitability. According to Low and Kok (1997), in today's competitive marketplace, quantity surveyors must now realize that their services, regardless of how good these are, simply do not sell automatically.

Quantity surveyors can no longer wait for clients to come by themselves. Although aware of the need to improve the way their services ought to be promoted, many quantity surveyors still do not seem to pay enough attention to marketing.

Macnamara (2003) has found out that the benefits of an organized, client-focused approach to marketing have been defined as increased profits, reduced uncertainty and the generation of new businesses. Marketing makes a critical combination in the process of finding new and sustaining old customers, as well as ultimately achieving long-term business success (Preece, Moodley and Brown, 2006). Collard (2003) further clarifies that if marketing is carefully planned and implemented it can be extremely effective and entirely accountable for its annual budget.

Therefore, marketing should be viewed as an essential ingredient in the building and maintenance of a rewarding and profitable professional quantity surveying practice.



Nevertheless, many quantity surveyors have misinterpreted what marketing is all about. Some see it as manipulative, wasteful, intrusive and unprofessional, while others will equate marketing primarily as just plain advertising and selling (Low and Kok, 1997), (Lim and Yap, 2003). This statement is supported by Collard (2003) where he states that marketing is often perceived as an intangible, non-measurable activity, primarily an overhead and any time spent on non-fee earning activity is essentially 'wasting' resources. These beliefs have made it difficult for marketing to gain acceptance outside of the conventional business world (Lim and Yap, 2003).

## QS PRACTICES IN MALAYSIA – THE MARKETING CHALLENGES

In Malaysia, the profession of Quantity Surveying is governed by professional bodies, i.e. the Board of Quantity Surveying Malaysia (BQSM) under the Quantity Surveying Act 1967 (with Amendments 2002), which administers the Quantity Surveyors professional conduct. Strict rules, associated with advertising and sales promotion (Circular No. 2/93), are imposed on members to refrain them from canvassing for business. This is because active advertising and sales promotion are often regarded as placing the professional service in an unprofessional atmosphere (Lim and Yap, 2003).

Currently, a popular way of implementing marketing is via the internet. In this age of the internet, the usage of websites to match skills and market needs should be utilized to the fullest. CSM (2000) in Lim and Yap (2003) has highlighted that Quantity Surveying firms which include completed projects in their websites will enable potential clients to match their proposed projects and needs with the firms experience. Yet, the registered Quantity Surveyors must remember and adhere to the Guidelines on the use of Home Page on the World Wide Web (Circular No. 5/98) published by BQSM in order to ensure the professional Quantity Surveyor does not contravene the provisions of Quantity Surveyors Rules 1967 (with Amendments 2004). These restrictions imposed may cause limitations to the professional Quantity Surveyor to carry out their marketing strategies or techniques.

According to the research carried out by Bowen and Rwelamila (1995) regarding marketing of professional services by quantity surveying practices in South Africa, it can be seen that prohibition of advertising and marketing by professional quantity surveyors was only until the year 1985, where any infringement of this prohibition would lead to a disciplinary

hearing and sanction by the South African Council for Quantity Surveyors.

Since then, the council has amended the regulations where advertising and marketing is permitted as long as such activities are 'professional', not self-laudatory and does not praise one practice above another. In the United Kingdom, Newcombe, Langford and Fellows (1990) in Macnamara (2003) affirmed that consultant practices have had to become more market oriented due to the lifting of codes of practice to allow competition.

In view of above, Lim and Yap, (2003) suggest that professional bodies which govern the Quantity Surveying professional bodies in Malaysia must re-evaluate their regulations on marketing activities by the members. Alternatively, the professional institution could promote and educate the public on its services on behalf of its members, so as to release its members from dependence on other professions. There is a significant lack of information on the marketing and business development strategies and techniques of quantity surveying practices in Malaysia. An important question is how strategies are being developed and whether the level of activity is increasing in response to a highly competitive market environment.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the limited empirical research so far, there is little evidence to suggest that marketing is seen as a key management function, although directors, partners or senior members of practice staff appear to have responsibility for what is considered to be marketing activity. There is no evidence so far that marketing plans have been developed as part of broader strategic planning of practices. Little effort seems to be expended on analysis of markets or competitors.

To what extent the development of new services may be affecting marketing approaches is so far unclear despite firms belief in increasing market share and obtaining new clients. Websites are seen as an important element of the marketing activities of QS practices, however the majority of the firms are still relying on the traditional company brochure to market their professional services to the industry. The notion leaves a question as to what on-line strategies are being developed to market the firms services.

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