PRESS RELEASE

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TIA FUNDED SMME CONTINUES TO DRIVE DIGITAL IDENTITY ORCHESTRATION FOR SEAMLESS ECOMMERCE

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) an entity of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) has funded and supported Gauteng based SMME, Contactable, that has successfully developed a Digital Identity platform that can be used by companies for customer identification in e-commerce. The solution is safe, convenient, accurate, and efficient and replaces slow and tedious manual processes.

The Contactable platform is the largest Digital Identity Orchestration platform in the country. It is being used extensively across corporate South Africa by financial services, automotive, telecommunications, insurance, retail, and real estate sectors for digital onboarding, e-KYC, self-RICA, and identity proofing requirements. e-KYC refers to electronic Know Your Customer, a procedure to identify and verify a customer's identity electronically.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for both the public and private sector to fast-track and prioritise digital transformation in delivering services. The adoption of Digital Identity Orchestration by the government would ensure transparency, security and efficiency of public services that can be delivered to the citizenry. These would include services such as, health care, relief measures such as social and relief grants.

Several companies are digitising their customer onboarding process. This has become more relevant in a post-Covid world where digital customer relationships are booming. To do this, companies must undertake a complicated Digital Identity process to validate the individual's identity.

Digital Identity, as a concept, was historically driven by enterprises trying to digitise their manual processes, but there is now a shift towards consumer-based Digital Identity. There is an increasing trend towards identities that are self-managed, where the user approves access to their digital identity on a case-by-case basis. This is often referred to as Bring-Your-Own-Identity or "BYOI."

"The key to finding the balance between user experience and transaction assurance is an Orchestration Platform – a digital identity platform that can automate all your internal workflows and risk-based assurance requirements while providing a seamless customer experience" says Shaun Strydom, CEO of Contactable.

Contactable's platform is a proudly South African innovation. The platform's initial development initiative was funded through the commercialisation wing of TIA, the Information Communication and Technology (ICT). The ICT Unit supports the development and exploitation of ICT driven innovations with a broad social-economic impact. It further supports innovators and the development of technologies that will increase South Africa's competitiveness and participation in the fourth industrial revolution. The support by TIA was a key milestone and catalyst for Contactable's unique and innovative solution.

The AI-driven platform completes around 200,000 e-KYC's every month, with more than 90% completed programmatically, with no client intervention, in under 90 seconds. The platform processes 25 to 30 million digital orchestration processes per month for operations requiring biometrics, data, onboarding, workflows, identity verification, and system integrations.

"Contactable's innovation, progress, and traction in the market has surpassed our expectations and is well-positioned to be the leading Digital Identity Orchestration platform in South Africa, with greater potential to transform the African continent. With the rapid industry shifts and a converged global digital economy; the Contactable technology is ripe for exploitation in a myriad of application domains in both local and international markets.

The technology is well positioned to support efforts by the South African government towards a more responsive state, through the provision of critical public services using digital platforms. The role of TIA, in this case is that of a catalyst to driving economic development through innovations that venture into unchartered territories and have the potential to change the social landscape" says Brian Mphahlele, Executive Commercialisation at TIA.

The success of Contactable's innovation is testament to the vision of TIA to stimulate and support technological innovation to improve the quality of life for all South Africans. TIA continues to support Contactable to drive commercialisation prospects and further adoption of the platform across the public and private sector in South Africa and international markets.

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About TIA

The Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) is a public entity in South Africa that serves as the key institutional intervention to bridge the innovation chasm (gap) between research and development from higher education institutions, science councils, public entities, and private sector, and commercialisation (beneficiation). TIA was established in 2010 and has a national reach with offices in KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng. The main thrust of the mandate of TIA is funding and supporting innovative technologies that show potential to be commercialised. The organisation also has programmes that provide non-financial support to innovators and SMMEs. Lastly, TIA is a catalyst and enabler of innovation through various partnership initiatives locally, in the African continent and globally.

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