



On the rostrum: Aki and members of his 'orchestra'

Conducting GIVN's 'beautiful music'

A CAREER in medicine beckoned Aki Debayo-Doherty when he began his studies at university in the US, but the call of another, equally demanding world proved even stronger.

That world was telecommunications, and he abandoned a medical career to immerse himself in it, spending over eight years working his way up the ladder with the Sprint Corporation in the US before joining Cable & Wireless, Inc. in 1994 as Vice President, General Business Sales.

Now, two years later, he has landed a dream job as Programme Director, GIVN (Global Intelligent Virtual Network), a new project which is one of the Group's most important forthcoming initiatives being developed out of Cable & Wireless Business Networks.

It will provide virtual private networks for major multi-national companies, giving them the facilities of a private system but grafted on to the existing public one.

So, for example, 'company' employees will be able to use a four or six-digit number to dial colleagues overseas, but the calls will be transported via the public network.

Plans for development in the future include global freephone, global callingcard, mobile integration and call centre applications.

To get it up and running, Aki has assembled a core team based at Head Office in the UK who liaise with 80 people in Business Units around the world. It is due to be launched as fully operational early next year, and the aim is to secure a ten per cent share of the global market.

Cable & Wireless will be competing with the other global super carriers AT&T Worldpartners, BT/Concert and GlobalOne, and Aki believes the service from Cable & Wireless will be superior to anything the competition will offer.

Aki says the key to the expected success of Cable & Wireless's GIVN lies in the highly-skilled, multi-lingual, ethnically diverse workforce already in place who will be responsive to local

Curriculum Vitae: Aki Debayo-Doherty

Age: 35

Born and educated in Nigeria until the age of 18.

Moved to the US.

Studied biology as pre-med at Hofstra University, New York.

Post-graduate research in biochemistry at Columbia University, New York.

1986 Joined Sprint Corporation where he worked in multiple sales and sales management, latterly Regional Sales Director, Mid-Atlantic.

1994 Joined Cable & Wireless, Inc. as Vice President, General Business Sales.

1996 Appointed to Programme Director, GIVN.

conditions and better able to deal with problems on the ground.

"We have excellent people in the charter companies in Mercury, Hongkong Telecom, Cable & Wireless, Inc., IDC, Tele2, Optus and Vebacom where we will be using existing voice capabilities, and further coverage will be provided through alliances with additional operators," he said.

"I am also very lucky to have the brightest, most talented team working with me on this difficult and complex project. We already had the depth and breadth of experience in house, and luckily the regional business units allowed me to hand pick the people I needed. This is a global effort and I am enjoying tremendous commitment from people in the Business Units."

Having moved from the US, the most competitive and deregulated telecommunications market in the world, he is keenly aware of the need to have the right people in the right jobs to make sure everything develops quickly, efficiently and effectively.

"They are the orchestra. I am just the conductor, and they are out there making beautiful music," he said.

His head office team consists of Allan Fowlie, Francis Yuen, Michael Schueppert, Phil Mehrtens, Andy Pitt-

Pladdy, Chinyelu Onwurah, Kingsley Abeynayake, Mayuri Shah, Jonathan Levy, Jo Twigg, Gary Cash, Dave Dugmore, Sarah Manning and Lydia Evans reporting to Aki and his immediate senior, Product Director John Purvis.

"With a team like that, the biggest challenge is being able to spell their names correctly!" joked Aki.

Many have moved temporarily to the UK from their homes around the world, but they are versatile and adventurous people who, like him, are relishing the new challenge.

Aki is originally from Nigeria and went to school there until the age of 18 before moving to the US. His family has a home in London and his brothers and sisters have been educated in England, so, in his words, he was always "the Yankee of the family."

Since taking the GIVN job in May, he has had the chance to travel and take a more global view of the Cable & Wireless business than he was able to when in the US.

"I had always wanted to take an even broader perspective outside the United States, so when this opportunity arose it was very exciting," he said.

"The heritage and pedigree of the Group makes us the aristocracy of the telecommunications world; we represent what everybody else is aspiring to be most like."

"We represent what others aspire to"