



ESOKO

Application Name(s): Mobile Alerts, Push SMS, Scout Polling Alerts

Area of Focus: Market Information Systems, Supply Chain Management

How it works: Esoko's mobile and web-based applications are all integrated into one platform. The initial feature developed on the platform was its mobile alerts, which enables parties across the value chain to exchange real-time market information, including crop prices, current demand, and the local cost of seed and fertilizer. Its Scout polling alerts allow users (e.g. large buyers) to send out SMS-based polls to track field data and activities instantly. More recently, it added Push SMS, which allows users to quickly and easily share information via bulk SMS, a feature that can be used both as part of an awareness campaign by governments or NGOs or by large buyers or sellers in search of goods. In 2010, it also began piloting an automated SMS polling in Ghana, as well as publishing two commodities indices via SMS on 12 agricultural markets in 7 markets across Ghana.

In 2011, the company has announced plans to potentially add additional applications to its platform, which will focus on things such as profiling, transport, traceability, weather, and coupons.²

Technology used: Mobile phones and web-based software

Implementer/Funder: Esoko is a private firm, although it has received funding from USAID and others. Most recently, the IFC and Soros Economic Development Fund both invested \$1.25 million of equity into the company.¹

Fees: Four different fee levels (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum) each with different levels of features and access. Prices range from \$18/year for Bronze, which targets traders, to \$8,000 for Platinum, which targets large businesses, governments, and NGOs.

Primary Markets: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Togo, Sudan

Users: Traders, researchers, businesses, exporters, farmer groups, consumer associations, NGOs, governments

Business Model: Esoko estimates that if it can sell 6,000 Bronze, 2,000 Silver, 200 Gold, and 20 Platinum subscriptions per year over 5 years that they will be profitable.

Impact: A survey conducted in November 2009 of 62 Esoko platform users, found that 100% of users claimed some benefit from it, including 20-40% income improvements. A larger impact evaluation with 80 communities is expected in 2011.

For more information visit: <http://www.esoko.com>

Sources: ¹ <http://www.soros.org/newsroom/news/sedf-farmers-ghana-20101122>

² Presentation by Mark Davies, CEO Esoko delivered at the ICT4D conference in Washington, DC in September 2010.

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