

# DIGILOGIC INSIGHTS #2: Transforming logistics with an addressing system

The DIGILOGIC team talks to SENSINAM DAGADU, entrepreneur and founder of SnooCODE, an app that has the potential to transform logistics in Africa

SnooCODE, in a nutshell, is ‘an address for everyone made easy.’

High numbers of people across the developing world do not have a ‘recognised’ address. They might, for example, live in a house with no number and on a street without a name.

While local residents obviously know exactly where they live, it is often difficult to communicate that information to a third party, including the emergency services or home delivery companies. Sending a WhatsApp location might seem to solve the issue, but as Sesinam Dagadu sums-up: ‘using WhatsApp pre-supposes a relationship with technology which not everyone has.’ Currently, Amazon does not deliver to a WhatsApp location because their customers are required to have the equivalent of something like a UK postcode or a US zip code. More importantly, as Dagadu emphasises, when people do not have a recognisable address, ‘they face other issues such as not being able to open a bank account.’

SnooCODE fills the gap. A mobile phone app, and without requiring an internet connection, SnooCODE detects a user’s whereabouts to generate a unique address code. Another advantage is that SnooCODE is designed to be user-friendly for different literacy and technology levels.

## Transforming logistics in Africa

With no ‘proper’ address, customers can face a lengthy process after placing an order for delivery. They must wait for a phone call confirming the supplier is on the way; then they have to give the driver the nearest landmark to identify their address and finally wait on the street for their delivery to arrive.

As Dagadu explains: ‘SnooCODE’s optimisation system allows suppliers to deliver parcels far more efficiently, saving customers time. With recognisable addresses, a logistics business can deliver, for example, all the required packages to within 100km of travel rather than, say, 200km. This, as Dagadu points out, has important implications for the logistics industry by helping to build cost-efficiency and productivity, while lessening the industry’s impact on the environment.

SnooCODE’s verification layer also ensures deliveries are made to the right place at the right time through its digital signature that includes location and time. The chance of any error, says Dagadu, is one in 67 trillion.

The longer-term future of the logistics industry involves more than transportation services and delivery of goods. The morning commute to work, suggests Dagadu, is a key component of a country’s logistics network. SnooCODE is working on being able to ‘match’ people who live and work in the same area to provide more opportunities to share transport or develop more efficient commuting systems, thereby saving costs in fuel and stress levels.

## Early development challenges

Dagadu recalls that because SnooCODE was a relatively new field, ‘we faced the disadvantages of being the first mover. The initial challenge was finding the best technical

talent. A new addressing system means coming up with our own rules and solutions to a particular set of problems. It's not like building a website.'

Another challenge was to manage resistance to the concept of a 'new' address system. This, Dagadu says, manifested itself in different ways. 'If you have lived your whole life without something, you do not always see the need for it. To show people how important an address is, we asked, "what is the most extreme situation in which you would need an address?" The answer is an emergency. An address code may save lives. The thought process then started to shift and expand into delivering other important logistics services.'

Dagadu also had to push back against the pre-conception that such a major project would be extremely costly. The cost of a solution, he argues, is not always in direct relation to the scale of the challenge.

### **Looking to the future**

Dagadu's longer-term ambition for SnooCODE is to play a vital 'background' role which can link and support specific policy areas. For example, if the EU were to start awarding carbon-reduction tax credits to businesses for protecting the environment, SnooCODE's drone-aligned technology can feed back what exactly is happening on any given area of land, thus helping to assess whether that business does or does not qualify for the tax credits.

SnooCode can also offer vital search and rescue support during and after natural disasters, even when the disaster location is cut off from the world because the internet is down. 'Obviously, this is a deeply distressing time for those enduring the emergency and those who are worried about loved ones,' Dagadu says. 'However, if you know someone's address code, even after a disaster, you would still be able to find them with SnooCODE.'