

# OnTrack

CATALYST

## Taking on the big gun

Cape-Town based start-up provides first-class solution for global online retail giant. By Monique Verduyn



### 1 Local capabilities

When Amazon opened a customer service centre in Cape Town to support its websites in the US and Germany, contact centre whizzes and founders of 1Stream, Jed Hewson and Bruce von Maltitz were given an opportunity to showcase the technological capability of South African service providers.

### 2 Amazon's demands

"We heard that Amazon needed an Internet connection and telephony services immediately so that the contact centre could get up and running," says Hewson. "This was in October 2010 and the urgency arose because Amazon's busiest period is December. With its focus on customer service, the company needed to have the call centre operational for Christmas."

### 3 The value of a track record

Hewson and Von Maltitz got involved in the project through technology partner Full Circle, which brought 1Stream on board to provide a hosted call centre solution based on its track record in delivering pay-per-use, secure and reliable access to world-class technology. With the cloud, 1Stream could quickly provide a solution that scaled up to three hundred call centre operators.

### 4 Meeting business needs

Hewson and Von Maltitz started 1Stream in 2008 as the recession came into full swing, with the goal to meet the needs of SMEs and offer a more rounded approach that is a solution driven rather than just IT.

### World-class SA tech

Meeting Amazon's demands was a matter of pride for Hewson. "There was a lot of concern in Seattle and we had to prove we had the infrastructure. All Amazon's systems are driven by web services and the speed at which browsers refresh determines how fast agents can resolve issues. Poor quality was not an option. It was critical for us – and for how people view South Africa – that we put in place a solution that worked."