

Rob Gilmour

Co-founder, RSAWeb

BY JON PIENAAR

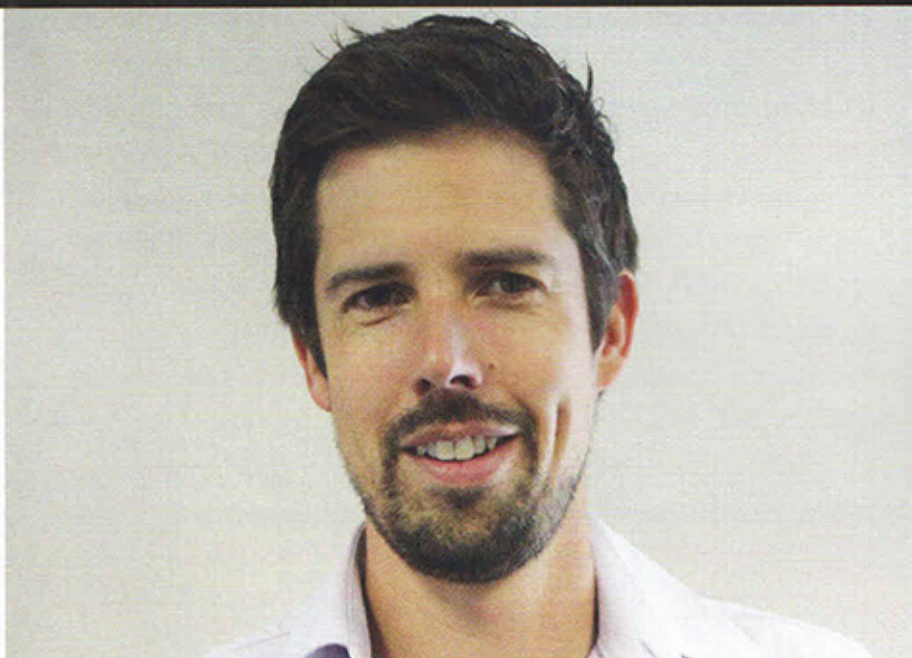
Rob Gilmour's hobby of building computers for friends was the start of a lifetime in the IT sector. "I think a lot of my success could be put down to luck and timing because I started when I had very little and I had very little risk – I was just fresh out of varsity. And that's often the best time to start because you've got no bond to pay, no kids to put through school."

Gilmour's timing was perfect – this was in the early 2000s, when dial-up internet was booming. He founded RSAWeb with Mark Slingsby, and at first they did anything to do with computing, from PC builds to network configuration. When ADSL brought the broadband wave, the company gravitated towards providing high-speed internet to companies.

"We're very solutions-focused," says Gilmour, "so we try to build a solution for a customer, and all of our solutions are bespoke". RSAWeb has developed cloud-based solutions, including SaaS (Software as a Service), and IaaS (Infrastructure as a Service) – whereby clients are able to hire a server that is billed by the hour. "We were the first to launch cloud servers and this whole cloud way of hosting in South Africa five years ago," says Gilmour.

"We're in a transitional period in SA's internet evolution, where the fibre wave is starting to hit," explains Gilmour, adding: "The average internet connection that goes into a business has increased about tenfold in the last two years. Everyone is getting more and more connected, which means that they can do a lot more. What's going to set us apart is the way that businesses are going to start doing business differently."

Gilmour says that he is passionate about moving people into new, better ways of doing things using the internet. "We provide really easy ways for companies to move sensitive data into the cloud. Whereas before, no-one would have thought of putting them in the cloud, we're provisioning



ERP [enterprise resource planning] systems, CRM [customer relationship management] systems, accounting systems – all securely online."

An exciting development in the next year will be a product that enables companies to set up a cloud server remotely, complete with exactly the software and services that it requires.

It's where Gilmour sees the business going forward. "Our business has always been very strong on the hosting side, but our revenue growth is pretty much all coming from our new cloud services."

Gilmour advises tech entrepreneurs to go out and speak to professionals in their industry. The Capetonian entrepreneur also exhorts young entrepreneurs to get started sooner rather than later, and not to waste time looking for venture funding.

"Just start small, try something. If you can get a customer to want what you're doing, there's a good chance there are more people just like that customer. Don't worry about scaling, just start. Get one customer, two customers, three customers and go from there. Don't wait." ■

“ Always be curious. Act fast and be decisive. Seek geniuses to join your journey. Delight clients and staff. Have fun. **”**