

Expression of Interest - Digital Marketplace Platform Solution

Safaricom PLC is a leading telco Enterprise Business partner and distributor of Digital and SaaS solutions, recognized for its extensive market reach, robust infrastructure, and innovative capabilities in the EA region. To enhance digital transformation offerings and better serve evolving Small and Medium Enterprise customer needs, Safaricom seeks a sophisticated Digital Marketplace to centralize and streamline access to SaaS products, enabling efficient onboarding, billing, and subscription management for businesses. By having this platform in place, Safaricom aims to simplify access and accelerate SaaS adoption. With our strong partnerships, industry-standard alignment, and customer-centric approach, Safaricom is well-positioned to drive marketplace success and scalability in the region.

Part 1: Organization Brief and Scope

1. Company Background and Experience
 - a) Describe your company's history, services, and areas of expertise, particularly in digital marketplaces and sale of SaaS products, and how many years your company has been in the business of developing and supporting digital marketplaces
 - b) Outline your experience with organizations of similar industry and scale to Safaricom PLC and provide references from at least three comparable customers globally. Include customer testimonials and case studies demonstrating solution impact.
 - c) Outline your experience in the sale of Telco/GSM products that are hosted on the digital marketplace that can be configured on the platform and accessed by customers
 - d) Share what percentage of your business is focused on marketplace platforms, SaaS products, and related digital transformation solutions
2. Industry Suitability and Customer Testimonials
 - a) Describe any industry-specific capabilities and flavors that make the solution suitable for our requirements as a Telco
 - b) Provide a list of notable customers in the EMEA region, particularly those in similar industries or of similar scale. Include case studies or testimonials showing the solution's impact on their business operations, digital transformation, scalability, and customer experience. Include analyst reports (e.g., Gartner, Forrester) that validate your platform's positioning in the market.

Part 2: Functional Requirements

This section evaluates the platform's ability to meet key business needs for onboarding, billing, subscription management, and analytics.

1. Onboarding Capabilities

Describe how your platform supports partner and customer onboarding, with features like self on-boarding, documentation uploads, compliance validation, and approval workflows.

2. Catalog and Discoverability

Outline the discoverability features, including search, categorization, open API support, and integration with recommendation systems. List any recommendation systems you have integrated with, and/or any use case with AI capability that aids discoverability of products

3. Billing and Financial Management

Describe billing and invoicing capabilities for various payment methods, revenue sharing, financial reporting, reconciliation and dispute resolution. Confirm that the platform can handle configurations for subscription-based, one-time, and usage-based pricing models.

4. Subscription and Licensing Management

Describe your platform's subscription and licensing management features, including renewals, upgrades/downgrades, and customer-managed billing.

5. Data Analytics and AI Capabilities.

Describe the platform's capabilities for data ingestion and export, and how it leverages AI/ML for insights and automation, for predictive analytics and insights. Provide documentation on AI/ML implementations and data integration capabilities.

6. Support and Issue Management

Describe self-service support options for partners and customers, escalation channels (e.g., chatbot), a centralized issue-tracking capability that customers and partners can use to report and resolve issues efficiently, as well as integrations to ticketing and frontline solutions. Include SLAs and supporting documentation on escalation paths and customer support practices.

7. Product Roadmap, Technology Strategy and Future Readiness

Provide a 3-year product roadmap, showcasing how the platform incorporates emerging technologies to keep the platform cutting-edge, such as AI/ML, to enhance capabilities. Include supporting documentation on your roadmap and technology strategy.

8. Mobility by design

Confirm whether it the platform is an intuitive, zero-training solution that runs seamlessly on mobile platforms and leading browsers. Support for regional customization and multi-language options.

9. Customizable Branding

Full support for Safaricom branding, including logos, colors, themes, and domains.

Consistent and scalable branding across web and mobile platforms (ie.) must extend to all interfaces, including customer portals, vendor dashboards, and notifications.

10. Technical Branding Support

Comprehensive guidance and support for white-label setup, integration, and maintenance. APIs and tools for seamless branding updates and troubleshooting.

Part 3: Non-Functional Requirements

This section assesses the platform's architecture, compliance, security, scalability, modularity, and operational resilience.

1. Technology and Architecture

Confirm if the solution is cloud-native and containerized. Provide supporting documentation on relevant technologies and modular design.

2. Modularity and Extensibility

Describe the modularity and extensibility of the platform, designed to accommodate business changes with minimal or no code changes.

3. API and Integration Standards

Confirm the solution's Open API-based approach and share current API documentation, including any compliance with TM Forum standards and practices.

4. Scalability, Availability, and Reliability

Describe the scalability options for high user and transaction volumes, as well as high availability features, including predictive maintenance capabilities. Include SLA documentation on uptime and performance.

5. Deployment and Agile Readiness

Confirm the platform's support for agile deployment, fast iteration, and incremental improvements. Describe standard tools (e.g., IntelliJ, Android Studio, Swift/XCode) and deployment methodologies. Include examples of agile deployment in similar organizations.

6. Security and Compliance

Describe your platform's approach to data security, PII encryption, and compliance with GDPR and other data privacy laws. Detail access control at all granularity levels, and provide security certification and compliance documentation.

7. Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCP/DR)

Outline BCP and DR capabilities, data redundancy, and recovery timelines. Provide documentation of protocols and past performance evidence.

8. Platform Training and Support

Describe your training options, client support channels, SLAs, and maintenance schedules. Include documentation on product maintenance, patches, and support services.

9. User Experience and Accessibility

Confirm if the platform is intuitive with zero-training required, optimized for mobility on leading browsers and mobile devices. Describe any accessible design features and provide UI/UX documentation.

10. Configuration and Extensibility

Confirm that the platform supports extensive configuration with minimal impact on core code. Describe your approach to updates and changes for business adaptability.

11. Standard Collaboration Tools

Describe integration with tools like JIRA, Confluence, GIT, and IDEs (IntelliJ, Visual Studio Code, etc.). Provide documentation on tool integration and version control processes.

12. Use of Open-Source Technologies

Describe any open-source technologies leveraged in the platform, including the benefits to customers and evidence of long-term support.

We trust this opportunity may interest you hence looking forward to receiving your submission as requested in the EOI document. If interested, kindly use the below link to register your organization before responding to the EOI. Note that this only applies to new suppliers and existing vendors do not have to register.

https://egjd.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/supplierPortal/faces/FndOverview?fndGlobalItemNodeId=itemNode_supplier_portal_supplier_portal

Once registered, the EOI can be accessed via the below link. Please note all communications relating the EOI will be done through the messaging tool in the portal. The Single point of Contact for the EOI is Charles and will respond to all the queries and clarifications.

<https://www.safaricom.co.ke/about/join-safaricom/our-suppliers/tenders>

Notes:

- All responses will be through the portal, email submission will not be evaluated
- If you don't hear from us two months post the EOI closure, it means your submission did not meet our minimum threshold and wasn't progressed to the RFP stage
- Commercials are not needed in this stage

All enquiries relating to this EOI, and the final responses should be addressed to; Cokumu1@Safaricom.co.ke; copy to bids@Safaricom.co.ke on or before 18th December 2024 5:00PM EAT