APEX BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE(ABI)

The Apex Business Intelligence role in Agriculture sector and how we work:

Agriculture is a major sector which is vital for the survival of modern man. Plants are the producers in the food chain, and without them, the life cycle would just not be possible. Agriculture is a wide field which requires the support of disciplines from other sectors for it to fully thrive. Such disciplines include Economics, Management, and technology which play an integral part in the sector. In this article, I focus on technology, and specifically we narrow down on the information and communications technology which is essential for provision of information across the agricultural value chain; right from production to marketing.

What is information technology?

Information technology   refers to the utilization of computers along with other telecommunication equipment for the storage, retrieval, transmission, and manipulation of data, among other tasks, which are aimed to improve the efficiency of different sectors. Among the sectors that utilize IT is agriculture.

How does IT play a role in the Agricultural sector?

Well, many people wonder how information technology and agriculture are related, yet they are totally different disciplines. Agriculture has been there for several centuries; on the contrary, IT is a young discipline which was discovered some decades ago. However, IT plays a big role in the agricultural sector.

Some of the roles of Information technology in the agricultural sector include:

Improved productivity.

Farmers need information on latest varieties, changing weather patterns, crop production techniques and improved agronomic practices for them to produce. Information technology plays a vital role in ensuring the farmers get access to this information, regardless of their agro ecological location. Through IT, Farmers in Africa are able to read what farmers in other areas of the globe are doing. Through this gained knowledge, the farmers improve their farming skills thus improved farming which eventually result to high yields.

Community involvement.

There are several programs which are made possible by IT applications, and community involvement in agriculture can be increased as well. When a community adopts modern methods for agriculture, the production of local goods can be increased. There are some places where people greatly benefit from the land and their resources for agriculture, and with IT, there can be improved union in local farmers which can lead to their community's overall improved production that may lead to better income for everyone involved.

Good post-Harvest practices and Value addition of farm produce.

Most farmers after good crop husbandry get a lot of crop yields after harvesting, however, few months later they incur losses due to poor storage. But this does not happen in some Parts of the globe, especially the developed countries which have good storage structures.Information technology has provided the avenue where farmers are able to see and learn about latest post-harvest handling and storage techniques used in other countries, thus they learn and also utilize them, this helps to reduce the losses of their crops.

Improved decision making by the farmer.

Through the use of information technology, It is easier to develop farm records and follow up on the daily events of the farm. This will enable the farmer to make the correct decisions when it comes to types of fertilizers' to be used, the variety of seeds to be planted, when to market his/her produce and how to employ the best farming techniques.

Improved efficiency and service delivery at the farm.

Crop data, Animal data or any other farm data can be generated and kept much easier with the use of information technology, than manual processes. Information technology has also been utilized in automated farm machines which are scheduled to carry out activities such as irrigation or spraying even in the absence of the farmer, thus it makes service delivery very effective.

Weather forecasting and climate smart farming.

The climate and weather play a vital role in farming. With the use of IT infrastructure, farmers are able to receive weather forecasts, and therefore they plan when to irrigate, or when to plant, and how much water should be used for irrigation. This plays a vital role in the agricultural production.

Remote sensing and GPS location.

This is very key in farming. The location of a farm is very important, as it dictates the varieties of seed to be used, the amount of irrigation to be used and above all the type of crop to be planted. With the use of IT, It is easier to locate a farm, even if it is miles away. This is made possible by the use of Information technology through the global positioning system (G.P.S) Which has also enabled professionals in the agricultural field to be able to classify different areas into different agro ecological zones

Conclusion.

It can therefore be concluded that information technology is an integral part of farming, thus it should be embraced fully, we need to move away from the local and traditional way of farming.IT integrated farming has the possibility to give higher yields as compared to the traditional farming we are used