

Hector Ruiz, Ethical Leadership in Action

“Our industry’s ability to effect positive change is no longer merely a result of the powerful technology we create. We are global citizens accountable for our actions. It is time for technology to close the ever-widening digital, economic and social divides. This requires us to do things differently. “IT has proven it has a brain; now it is time to show the world it has a heart.”

Hector Ruiz, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Advanced Micro Devices, Inc.



ETHICAL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. and the 50x15 Initiative

Standing before a room full of information technology professionals, Hector Ruiz, Chairman and CEO of Advanced Micro Devices, Inc. (AMD), called upon his fellow industry leaders to become catalysts for solving the world’s most important issues.

“IT has proven it has a brain; now it is time to show the world it has a heart,” said Ruiz, delivering the opening day keynote address at the 15th World Congress on Information Technology held May 2006.

For Ruiz, profitability and social responsibility are not mutually exclusive concepts. “As the chairman and CEO of a Fortune 500 company in the information technology industry, I feel that I have two incredibly important responsibilities,” wrote Ruiz in AMD’s 2005 Corporate Responsibility Report. “The first is to do everything I can to ensure that our investors get a fair return on their investment, and the second is to do everything I can to help make the world a better place.”

In an effort to do just that, Ruiz and AMD announced the 50x15 Initiative at the 2004 World Economic Forum. Intended to equip more people with access to information, the initiative seeks to provide affordable Internet access and computing capabilities to half the world’s population by the year 2015. Ruiz and his management team provide a compelling example of Ethical Business Leadership. AMD was ranked by Business Ethics magazine No. 3 on the “100 Best Corporate Citizens 2006” list. The 50x15 Initiative has set some very lofty goals. With less than 16 percent of the world’s population currently able to access the Internet, AMD has a long way to go in the next nine years. Thankfully, they won’t be going it alone.

In the two years since announcing 50x15, AMD has partnered with many other big names in the technology field, including Microsoft and Samsung, and with governments to provide even more access to information within developing countries. AMD and its network of partners have already launched efforts in India, Brazil, China and the Caribbean and plan to start operations in Russia, Africa and Central America in the near future.

It is important to note that 50x15 is not a charity. Rather, the Initiative was created to be a self-sustainable entity, intent on not only changing the world, but also creating opportunity for those involved. “We can be socially responsible and simultaneously profitable,” said Ruiz at the 2006 World

Congress on Information Technology. “We can do well by doing good.”



A key component in the 50x15 plan has been the development of the Personal Internet Communicator (PIC). This small device, weighing just about three pounds, was designed to put information technology into the hands of first-time users in the world’s most rapidly developing areas. It costs about \$185 (U.S.). With the PIC, users can access the Internet through existing household communications and network infrastructure. Users are able to send and receive e-mail, access the Internet, view pictures and video and create documents using a word processor and spreadsheet tools.

In addition to the PIC, AMD has teamed up with technology manufacturers in different parts of the world to develop other regional-specific ways to address market needs, including solar powered computing solutions and a \$100 (U.S.) laptop computer from Negroponte's United Nations project.

“As a child growing up in Mexico, I became aware at an early age of the importance of education,” said Ruiz on the 50x15 website. “As I have learned and developed in my career, I have discovered that perhaps no force can have a greater impact on promoting education than technology.”

In July 2006, AMD announced that they had teamed up with Telmex, Mexico’s leading telecommunications provider. Under the partnership, Personal Internet Communicators will be available for purchase in Telmex shops throughout the country. Thanks to Ruiz and 50x15, more children in Mexico will have access to information than ever before. And if the organization meets its goals, millions more around the globe will benefit, as well.