

If they want help from us, vice versa we require help from them too, and it works very well, but I also bear in mind that we are privileged in that we are accepted in these tapu areas, so therefore respect and consideration is something I always apply — even when the going is pretty tough (which it has been sometimes) I karakia and ask for guidance so my emotions would not get the better of me.

There are times when I have been asked to make a verbal report on a defendant whom I know well, I have addressed the Judge and presented my report slowly and clearly and the Judge has accepted it. And also times when I have been approached by the Police to assist in a matter which I have done and it has been appreciated to the point the Police Prosecutor calls on me to discuss a certain case and asks my opinion on the type of sentence I think should be given to a defendant.

It is in these areas that we have been able to help, which is very important. We have been allowed to visit a defendant before he/she appears in the witness box. If that person is held in custody we have been allowed to see defendants if they are held in custody in Mount Crawford. What I am really saying is that people in the court area are now recognising us for our worth and our ability in helping our own people.

But do not be misguided, there is still a steady flow of our people through the courts, young and old, Maori, Island and even our Pakeha people for various charges ranging from the common old fighting — to burglaries, car conversion, thefts — and rather alarming rape and murder. Drug related charges will be around for a while yet. So there are a series of things going on, we have our humorous moments at times in Court, our upsetting times, in all the good and the bad. Sure there are times when I would love to chuck it all in and say "what the heck, let them go", but you know, it eats away inside of me. I get up in the morning and I am off to Court again — I did go through a bad spell through March, so I just left for my Papa-Kainga for a month. I came home feeling good.

There is still plenty to do in that area, I like it. In my work and the way I do it I consider myself pretty good — I like people — I like a challenge and that is what it is everyday — a new challenge.

I will close with a very famous Maori saying my Kuia Taukiri Thomason always says:

Ma Te Huru Huru
Ka rere te Manu

My own interpretation of this saying is:

It is because of the people support
This big bird is able to fly.



Alan Eriwata, Managing Director of Computer Management Systems Auckland.

Computer specialist

Alan Eriwata was raised by his Grandparents Eddie & Winnie Eriwata of Fitzroy New Plymouth and attended New Plymouth Boys High School "I left at 15 with no qualifications or anything to even state I had been to a school."

He now heads a Computer Company that is about to teach people a revolutionary way to program Micro-computers, a computer language that is taking Japan by storm. The parent company SORD COMPUTERS of Japan whose computers Alan's company specialises in has been placed as the number 1 super growth company in Japan out of 600,000 surveyed. Courses for this revolutionary computer language have already begun. "I would like to see a few Maori businessmen come along and learn the modern way to do business".

Alan left school and joined the Royal New Zealand Navy firstly as a boy seaman and then Radio Operator, after leaving the Navy he worked for the Dept of Civil Aviation as a Communications Officer at the Control tower New Plymouth Airport then the Sydney International Airport. While in Sydney he spent some time working for a large communication company which was linked to computers and Earth Satellite stations around the world, "this was my first taste of computers and I loved it".

On returning to New Zealand Alan obtained a position as a trainee computer operator in Invercargill (beating 10 other University Entrance holders in a computer aptitude test).

After 3 years, by then Operations Manager, he left to travel overseas, firstly Australia — Singapore — Malaysia — Thailand — India — Kenya — Tanzania — Zambia — Malawi — Botswana — Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) — South Africa — Swaziland — Mozambique, mostly overland taking about a year and a half, a fascinating experience. Alan then settled in Zimbabwe working for a company as a computer programmer. Spent a bit of time in the computer section of the Rhodesian Airforce during the course of the war.

After a few years there Alan returned to New Zealand and worked for a New Plymouth software house as a consultant. After approximately 8 months he decided to set up a company of his own in the more viable but competitive area of Auckland where he now has an office right in the busiest part of the City.

Alan would like to get more Maori youth into the industry but as he says "without money I can't do a lot, maybe some businessman will help finance a course for training young Maori's who have the aptitude. Why should most of our people be subjected to mainly manual tasks or menial administrative duties, why not computers, if I can do it that means so can many others".

Alan sees an extremely bright future for the computer industry "95% of all companies in NZ have not touched any form of computerisation therefore within a few years the demand will be extremely great, that is what I set the company up for and am anticipating".