

IBA looks further east

CZECH REPUBLIC RUSSIA KAZAKHSTAN BELARUS

IBA GROUP, headquartered in Prague, Czech Republic has established an office in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. In June, IBA was selected as the developer of an electronic workflow system for the state governing bodies of Kazakhstan, and it is looking at expansion into other business. IBA Group has been working in Kazakhstan since 1996, but wants more business from government and private sectors.



Russia has many local IT companies and in some cases it is a challenge to compete with them. As for Kazakhstan, it suffers from the lack of IT professionals. In the 1990s IT specialities were abolished in the country's universities and today the government is trying to correct the mistake. They have invited IT experts from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, India, and China. They also hold tenders with participation of foreign bidders as was the case with the tender for the electronic workflow system of the state governing bodies

of Kazakhstan in which IBA was the winner.”

According to Sergei Levteev (*above*), IBA Group President: “The company’s growth strategy is guided by the requirement to be closer to customers to serve them in the best possible way. As IBA is implementing several large-scale projects in Kazakhstan, the company management made a decision to invest in the opening of a new office. We also view Kazakhstan as a promising destination because all of its branches and entities, including government bodies, public organisations, and private enterprises are in need of IT solutions and IBA is ideally positioned to meet the demand”.

The second largest country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and ninth in the world, the Republic of Kazakhstan is a leading consumer of software and IT services. In 2009, the IBA exports to this country amounted to \$0.7m (€0.65m). Currently, the cooperation is being intensified on an extended scale.

Both Russia and Kazakhstan are very important for IBA because these are the two largest IT markets in the CIS, especially Russia, a spokesperson added. “Its market is enormous. But

In addition, IBA is developing an automated management system for the Kazakh Railways. The system is designed to automate business processes and support management decisions in cargo transportation. The project scope is comparable with a nationwide program intended for a global IT giant and is planned to span up to three years.

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ERP and CRM are DACH priorities

GERMANY SWITZERLAND AUSTRIA

CRM and ERP will be priority investments for companies in Germany Austria and Switzerland - a survey has shown that nearly half the companies interviewed plan to increase their spend on CRM and ERP software.

The survey – “PAC Software User Survey 2010” for the DACH region (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) talked to 240 IT decision makers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland on their investment plans for software.

According to the survey, applications for financial accounting, enterprise resource planning (ERP), human capital management (HCM) and customer relationship management (CRM) are among the most frequently used business solutions. Companies are planning to mainly invest in ERP, CRM and business intelligence (BI) solutions in the period until 2011. While smaller firms concentrate on introducing one application at a time, larger enterprises mostly intend to invest in several applications.

Companies with 500 to 1,000 employees are particularly interested in CRM solutions. More than half of them are planning to invest in this area by 2011 – either by purchasing a new CRM software, or by expanding an existing application. Another finding from the survey is that CRM applications are very common among banks and insurers. Nevertheless, more than half these organisations are planning to spend more money on CRM this or next year.

These companies were from varied sectors such as the manufacturing, banking/insurance, retail & wholesale, public/healthcare, telecoms & utilities, transport/logistics and services & media sectors.

The criteria for selecting a supplier also vary depending on company size and industry. According to the PAC survey, a software provider’s industry know-how is the most important criterion. This emphasis is strongest among companies from the telecommunications and utilities sectors. Moreover, firms with up to 500 employees attach great importance to the fact that their suppliers are able to offer an end-to-end solution.

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► OUR ANALYSIS

After a terrible couple of years, the ERP/CRM sector needs a bounce. But is the channel able to deliver the total solutions required?

Microsoft too moves to gold, silver branding

EUROPE

MICROSOFT has announced substantial changes relating to the branding, naming and logo use by its Partner Network.

The amendments, to be finalised in October, will bring the partner programme more in line with the industry standard practice of having Gold, Silver, etc levels.

The changes include the original Microsoft Partner Network name changing to Microsoft Partner, with the word “network” being removed as inappropriate.

Another of the differences includes the announced upcoming branding/naming for partners who have attained the initial level of a competency to Microsoft Partner, then “Silver” and the competency name. Previously, it was Microsoft Partner Network, then just the competency name.

The third change is the upcoming naming for partners who have reached the highest level of a competency to be Microsoft Partner, then “Gold” and the competency name. It was previously



Microsoft Partner Network, then the “Advanced” competency name.

It is also noted that a partner used to be “Certified” or “Gold Certified” at an organisation level, meaning they can be a “Microsoft Certified Partner” with X, Y, Z competencies. Now, a “Microsoft Partner” will have gold certifications and/or silver certifications, so the “gold” or “silver” branding will reside with the competencies in which the partner obtained those levels.

Those who want to can choose to earn gold competencies, silver competencies, or a combination of the two. Like before though, a partner can choose not to earn any competencies, and they are not a requirement of being a Microsoft partner, it says.

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