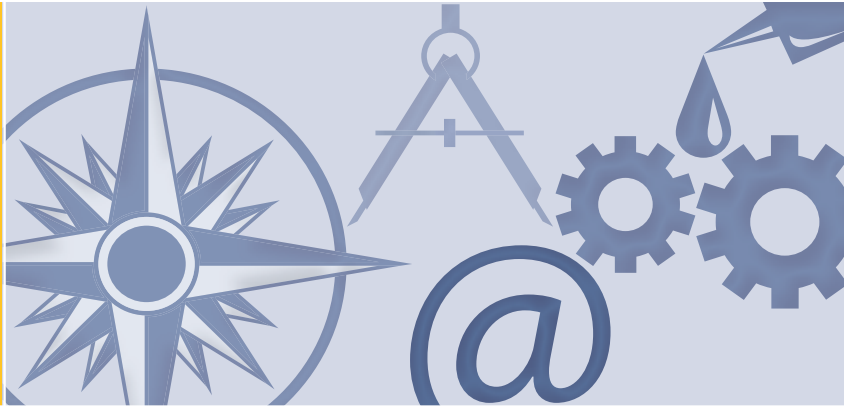


2011

The Innovatives

Good Practices



Operational Programme Innovative Economy



**INNOVATIVE
ECONOMY**
NATIONAL COHESION STRATEGY



EUROPEAN UNION
EUROPEAN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FUND



Polish entrepreneurs have fantastic ideas
and appropriate intellectual potential to put
innovative undertakings into life.

The Innovatives

GOOD PRACTICES



Warsaw 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Small and Large Projects



BOŻENA LUBLIŃSKA-KASPRZAK

The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) is the Implementing Authority for 13 Measures of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. These Measures constitute the answer to entrepreneurs' needs and an incentive for their further development.

The assistance provided by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development lets the entrepreneurs – both those who are only starting their business and those with a well-grounded position on the market – develop research and innovative activity and extend their operation both locally - by making use of the Internet or listing on the stock exchange, and internationally - by developing export potential. PARP provides support also to business environment institutions which have direct influence on the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland.

The Agency's activities bring tangible results. The funds that are distributed address our strategic objective, namely the creation of favourable conditions for sustainable development of Polish economy. From this perspective we are more of "an investor". Public money is 'invested' to accomplish one of the most important goals for Poland at the moment - development of companies. Economic development programmes are implemented primarily through supporting research and innovation activities of small and medium-sized enterprises. Other areas of our interest include regional development, exports, investment in human resources and the use of new technologies.

As for the end of June 2011, more than 68% of PARP's budget available under OP IE has already been allocated. This success could not have been possible without the support of our partners: business environment institutions, social partners, regional authorities and ministries: Ministry of Regional Development, Ministry of the Economy, Ministry of the Interior and Administration and Ministry of Science and Higher Education and – most of all – without the active participation of the enterprises themselves.

The year 2011 is particularly important for all of us, as Poland took over the Presidency in the Council of the European Union for the first time. We now have a chance to demonstrate Poland's great commitment to the issues of economic and social development of the European common market. This development would not have been possible – and in Poland particularly so – without the creativity and dynamism of small and medium-sized enterprises. With those features Polish entrepreneurs have proven, both in the previous and in the current financial perspective, to have the ability to successfully absorb EU assistance and use it to develop and modernise their companies.

This publication provides examples of numerous projects that were put into life mainly through OP IE support. Large investments where millions of zlotys have been involved are presented side-by-side with successful projects of microenterprises. The examples presented herein show how varied the forms of support offered under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy may be as well as the abundance of initiatives of entrepreneurs who actively participate in creating a truly innovative economy.

ABC

of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy

The primary objective of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy is to develop Polish economy through innovative enterprises.

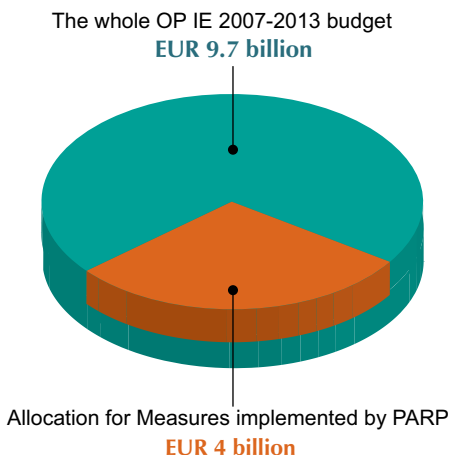
The Programme aims at improving the innovation and competitive position of Polish companies on the European market.

The Programme is financed by the European Regional Development Fund, State budget and private funds. As much as EUR 9.7 billion (15% of that amount comes from Polish public resources) of public money will be spent on OP IE in 2007-2013. Allocation from the European Regional Development Fund for the Operational Programme Innovative Economy constitutes 12.3% of all European Funds involved in the implementation of the National Cohesion Strategy for 2007-2013. The National Cohesion Strategy is a document specifying e.g. the priorities and areas within which funds may be applied. The document also describes the system for implementing Community funds in 2007-2013. 94.88% of resources allocated to the Programme (i.e. EUR 9.2 billion) will be used to carry out the initiatives that are consistent with the objectives of the renewed Lisbon Strategy (in 2010 the Strategy was replaced by the Europe 2020 strategy) to stimulate R&D activity and innovation.

The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development implements 13 Measures under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. The values presented in Table 1 below when summed up clearly show that the budget of those measures reaches as much as EUR 4 billion. The measures involve various directions of companies' and Business Environment Institutions' development and operation. The programme supports both entrepreneurs who carry out R&D work on a new solution or technology, who deploy innovative products, services or processes and who want to protect their industrial property, but also those companies which are seeking new outlets or those who apply Business-to-Business solutions. All these complement each other perfectly.

Polish entrepreneurs have fantastic ideas and appropriate intellectual potential to put innovative undertakings into life.

Budget of Measures implemented by PARP



Source: Complement to the Operational Programme
Innovative Economy 2007-2013

Table 1. Measures implemented by PARP

OP IE Measure	Budget for 2007-2013 (EUR)	Intermediate Body
1.4 „Support for goal-oriented projects”	390 352 176	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
3.1 „Initiating of innovative activity”	110 000 000	Ministry of Economy
3.3 „Creating system facilitating investing in SMEs”*	50 000 000	Ministry of Economy
4.1 „Support for implementation of results of R&D works”	390 000 000	Ministry of Economy
4.2 „Stimulation of R&D activity of enterprises and support in the scope of industrial design”	186 000 000	Ministry of Economy
4.4 „New investments of high innovative potential”	1 493 701 020	Ministry of Economy
5.1 „Support for development of supra-regional cooperative relations”	104 300 000	Ministry of Economy
5.2 „Supporting business environment institutions providing proinnovative services and its networks of supra-regional importance”	32 100 000	Ministry of Economy
5.3 „Support for innovation centres”	189 997 647	Ministry of Economy
5.4 „Intellectual property management”*	39 000 000	Ministry of Economy
6.1 „Passport to export”	121 840 000	Ministry of Economy
8.1 „Support for economic activity as regards electronic economy”	390 635 294	Ministry of the Interior and Administration
8.2 „Support for implementation of electronic business - B2B”	460 817 882	Ministry of the Interior and Administration

* These Measures are sub-divided into Sub-measures, i.e. more detailed support instruments



**RESEARCH
AND IMPLEMENT**

GOOD PRACTICES

Gas under glass

DYNAXO

The Wronki-based company: Dynaxo applies a technology which is absolutely unique in the world. Dynaxo's plates with gas generators of infrared radiation were used already in 2007 in German campers. In July 2010 a new product for single households was released on the Polish market.

The company is active in several areas. It has occupied a market niche in providing access to dynamic digital signage. The company cooperates with the largest Poland-based outdoor advertising agencies - almost 1000 monitors broadcasting advertisements through the Internet (CityInfo TV) have been placed in the Warsaw underground cars. The second sector that the company specialises in evolves around mechanical and electrical engineering, including sheet metal working. Dynaxo has so far worked with renowned producers from the house-appliance sector, e.g. with Amica, and has been developing their own product for campers and households

(i.e. third segment) since 2005. The first product of R&D works involved gas ceramic plates for campers - the "gas under glass" technology (released in 2007). Almost 100% of products were directed to the German market. Unfortunately, with the crisis in 2008, demand for tourism cars dramatically dropped. The experience showed however that works on "gas under glass" technology hit the spot and the company decided to develop it further for yet another market sector – single households.





Technology development

– Further R&D works resulted in a much better solution. We aimed at the sector of environmentally-friendly solutions for single households. Our DynaCook heating plate really generates savings – explains Paweł Nowak, CEO of Dynaxo.
– Moreover, gas is the most commonly used fuel

and our burners significantly increase efficiency. The hot air which is emitted through the ventilating DynaCook panel, contains minimal amounts of carbon oxide, ten times less than open-flame burners. Products of our research have been protected by patents for years. In the course of the project we have filed another four patent ap- ➤

Dynaxo aims at more intensive research of innovative solutions. It plans to increase the R&D investment to 5% of its revenue.



Paweł Nowak, CEO of Dynaxo Sp. z o.o.:

- European Funds are not a novelty to us. We have already participated in Phare programmes, Measure 2.3 of Sectoral Operational Programme Improvement of the Competitiveness of Enterprises, which enabled us to equip our machine park and extend the range of used technologies. Therefore, I have the opportunity to see the dynamics of change of the Agency's requirements and modus operandi. In the case of Operational Programme Innovative Economy, I am positively surprised by PARP's more flexible approach and their greater understanding for the beneficiary. We are doing something very special and innovative at the time - something that is hardly comparable with the existing market solutions. Maintaining project documentation is worthwhile, taking into account the received funding. We are happy with every additional penny we are given for the development of the company and our ideas.

> plications (i.e. new generation burner and a new steering module with safety system). At present, we have seven more innovations (all protected by international patents) related to our “gas under glass” technology. R&D works related to gas ceramic plate for single households, co-financed under the measure 1.4. OP IE, were carried out by the Wronki-based company in their own development office, in cooperation with Zakład Innowacyjno-Wdrożeniowy Elektroniki AV in Dzierżoniów and the Cracow-based Gasoline and Gas Institute. Specialists from Dzierżoniów

helped develop the steering unit for the plate. The micro-processing module controls every gas infrared radiation generator separately; moreover, user-friendly touch-control sensors with optical information “function-on” were also used. The product is safe (with 5 levels of protection) and comfortable in everyday use. The Cracow-based Gasoline and Gas Institute has also performed functional checks and certification - EC safety certificate (no CE 1450BU0011) was issued.

The share of R&D spending with respect to

Maintaining project documentation is worthwhile, taking into account the received funding.

Dynaxo's revenue is 3%. The company plans to increase investment to 5% of the revenue, which – with the forecasted turnover increase – will provide opportunities for more intensive research on innovative solutions. Since 2005, the R&D works have amounted to ca. PLN 4 million in total.

New trends in household appliances

The long experience of Dynaxo's research office and significant investments do pay off. The DynaCook X5 ceramic plate with five gas infrared radiation heating zones is cheaper in use than the standard electric ceramic plates. 99.9% of the energy necessary for the plate's operation comes from the primary, clean and environmentally friendly source, i.e. gas. The use of new burners with the system of hot air exhaust removal meets the rigorous EU requirements for gas fuelled appliances and the standards of electromagnetic compatibility. The "gas under glass" technology (burners are placed under the ceramic glass panel) leaves the kitchen spotlessly clean. With their product, the Wronki-based company sets new trends and direction for the development of the household appliances sector. DynaCook is a top-shelf product, addressed for a Client who likes a clean kitchen, cares about the costs and natural environment. Such an appliance costs on average around PLN 3.5 thousand (VAT included), bringing at the same time considerable savings related to the use, comfort and safety. – The household appliances market is dominated by giants, for whom we are no competition – adds the CEO, Pawel Nowak. – We have a niche product distributed through the Internet. We would like to encourage kitchen designers to recommend the new product,

after all they have the greatest influence on the Clients. Before we decided to go with the Internet, we have commissioned a focus analysis which showed that clients do not know much about the "gas under glass" technology but are positively surprised. We have also put up the www.dynacook.pl website where we explain the technology oriented at single households in simple terms.

The product was launched in July 2010, but the technological line is not fully equipped yet. For now, Ceramic DynaCook plates are mainly sold to Polish clients. The Board is very happy with current results, however. The 2nd stage of the project, co-funded under Measure 4.1 of OP IE, will be complete by December 2011. With adequate marketing the sales should bring several million zloty in 2012.

Project: "Development and launching of production of gas ceramic plate in the gas under glass technology (PKWiU 29.72.11-13.29)"
Company: Dynaxo Sp. z o.o., Wronki
Measure: 1.4-4.1
Project value: PLN 1.3 million
Co-financing: PLN 507.3 thousand
Implementation period: 4.10.2008 - 31.12.2011

Biofuel from Poland

EKOBENZ

The Lublin-based Ekobenz, in cooperation with chemists from the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS), applies the EU-funded innovative technology of clean fuel production from ethanol for internal combustion engines. Production of eco-fuels will be launched near Lublin as soon as all necessary certificates are issued.

The history began with the research of Professor Dobiesław Nazimek, head of the Environmental Chemistry Department at the UMCS, who worked on artificial photosynthesis for over 6 years. To put it briefly, artificial photosynthesis consists in synthesising methanol from water and carbon dioxide with the use of catalysers and deep ultraviolet radiation. This way methanol is produced. Further processing generates synthetic carbohydrates with the same properties as car petrol. – There will be no need to re-design the engines before our fuel is commonly used, as the properties will be identical to those of car petrol. It is even better than ordinary fuel – the quality is much better and the it is 100% environmentally friendly – explains professor Nazimek.

The company founders soon realised that the innovative technology would prove extremely profitable.

Patent and implementation

The scientist patented his idea and decided to seek entrepreneurs willing to launch industrial production - the method gained interest of a few Lublin-based private investors. – We have shared the conviction that professor Nazimek has made a true breakthrough in the biofuel production technology and that it may prove profitable to apply the invention in the industry – explained Dariusz Taras, co-founder and vice-president of Ekobenz Sp. z o.o. In 2006, entrepreneurs invested private funds and established a company dedicated to implementing the project. All investors had several years of experience in company management, yet it is their first initiative in the fuel sector. Considerable funds were needed - more than the stakeholders could provide – thus it was decided to apply for co-financing under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. The project pertaining to the launch of innovative production of synthetic bioethanol fuels received co-financing of more than PLN 22.2 million. It will be finalised in 2012. – The initial stage involves construction of a laboratory where first litres of fuel will be produced. Pilot



Stanisław Jabłoński, CEO of Ekobenz Sp. z o.o.:

Through the project we soon will be able to create new jobs. Before we end the research we will have hired eight specialists working under Professor Dobiesław Nazimek's supervision. They will become the future core of the refinery team consisting of several dozen specialists.

technological line with the annual capacity of more than 750 thousand litres is next in line. The produced petrol will be used in test vehicles. The testing phase should be complete next year with the obtaining quality certificates necessary to launch production of fuels and their sale. The final capacity of the refinery is to reach 31 million litres by 2015.

Competition market

The co-founders of Ekobenz are aware of the enormous competition on the market they entered, where all novelties soon become a blue sky for the sector companies. The company put great stress on the protection of intellectual

property from the very beginning. Professor Nazimek and the entrepreneurs from Lublin patented their innovative technology in autumn last year. After the national patent, they launched the procedures for obtaining patent for catalysers used in the biofuel production from ethanol in other countries. The produced fuel will not be detrimental to the engine, since neither sulphur nor nitrates are introduced to the technology. Moreover, carbon dioxide will not be emitted to the atmosphere in the production process. On the contrary, CO₂ will be used which will significantly reduce pollution.

Interest in the Lublin biofuels is significant. – We have already signed initial agreements with etha- ➤

> nol producers who will supply the basic material for biofuel production – says Dariusz Taras. The company does not fear that their product will be stay in warehouses long. On the contrary, it has already concluded contracts for fuel amounts twice exceeding the capacity of the refinery. The success will have positive impact on many sectors; local suppliers of raw material will profit, i.e. mostly small Polish agricultural distilleries most of which are in a quite difficult economic situation. In Poland there are over 180 small agricultural distilleries producing annually up to 10 million litres of ethanol. Poland, Austria and Germany are the only countries with so many such distilleries.

In other countries big distilleries prevail. Our distilleries which produce distillate both for food-stuff and industrial purposes, hoped that their situation would improve with the accession to the European Union. As increasingly strict environmental protection requirements need to be met, the demand for bio components for fuel including bio ethanol should increase. Unfortunately, outdated and energy-consuming production technologies and dynamic import of cheaper raw material, mainly from South America, turned out to be detrimental to our agricultural distilleries. They are now hoping that the production of biofuels, which should start in 2012, will improve the market in the raw materials they produce. The area of Lublin and its surroundings is the centre of white beet cultivation. Chances are that the refinery will contribute to the development of local distilleries which will



provide ethanol for fuel production.

Science and business cooperation

In fact, Poland increases energy safety while developing a new industry sector. We will become more self-sufficient and will no longer be forced to ask for access to or opening of petroleum pi-

The launch of synthetic fuels production will stimulate demand for raw material supplied by small local distilleries



peline. We will use raw materials we have in abundance and we meet even the strictest EU criteria concerning carbon dioxide emissions. The Lublin project is a positive example of efficient cooperation of science and business, which is still *rara avis* in our country. Professor Nazimek stresses the coincidence that brought establishment of Ekobenz and implementation of this ambitious project. Such initiatives would be nothing unusual, if systemic changes in science financing were implemented. The professor believes that cooperation with business would pay off for both the university and the scientist.

Project: "Innovative production of synthetic fuels from bioethanol PKWiU 24.14.1 Carbon dioxides and their by-products"
Company: Ekobenz Sp. z o.o., Lublin
Measures: 1.4-4.1
Co-financing: PLN 22.2 million
Project value: PLN 34.5 million
Implementation period: 17.03.2009 - 31.07.2012

Applied genetics

CENTRUM BADAŃ DNA (DNA RESEARCH CENTRE)

They specialise in diagnostic tests which enable identification of lyme disease (a tick-borne disease) - the Poznań-based Centrum Badań DNA looks into the future – its new genetic tests will allow to identify more than 200 genetic mutations decisive for incidence of colorectal and prostate cancer.

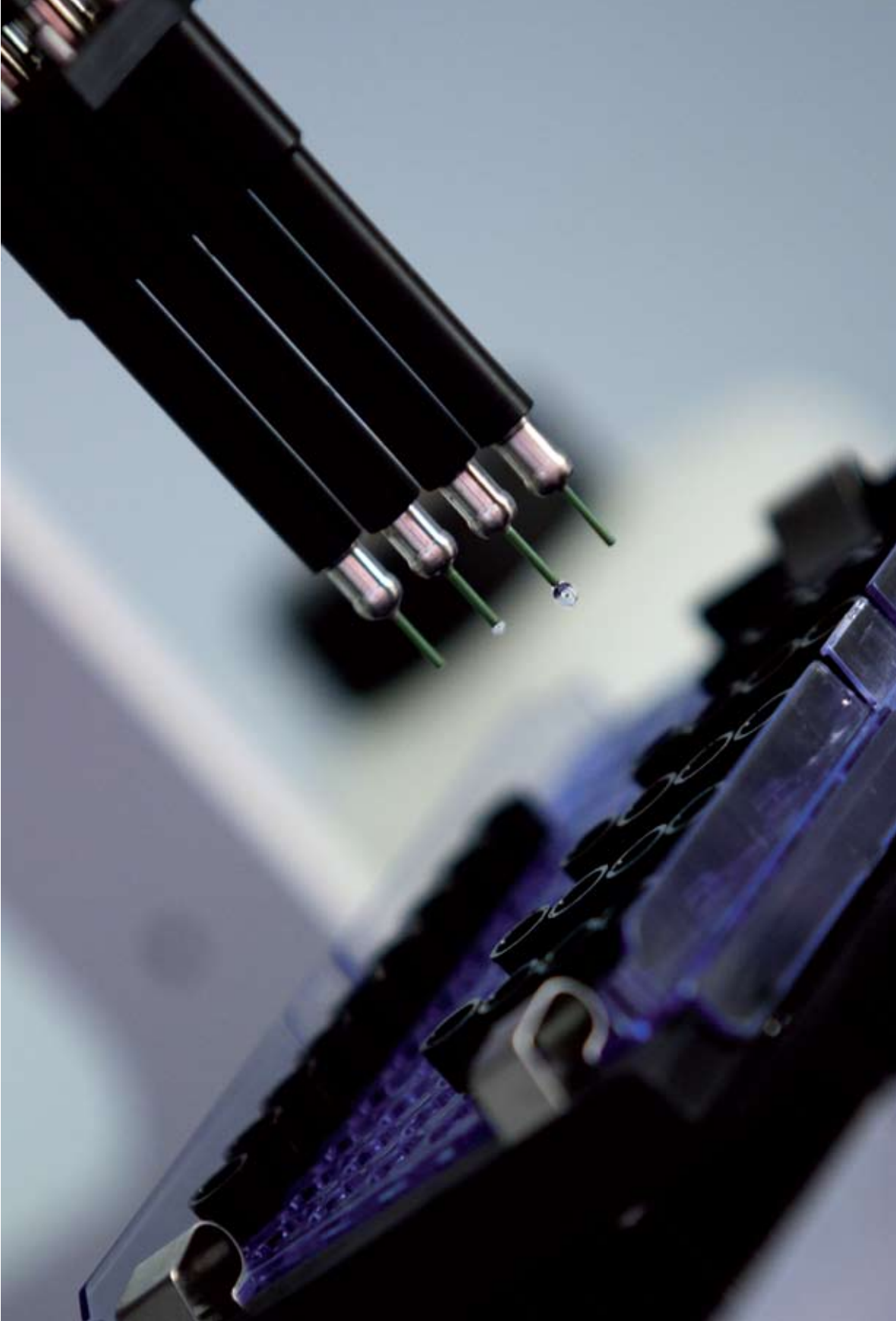
The company was created by a group of young scientists at the Poznań Science and Technology Park. The founders wish to ensure that people from all over the world profit from the newest scientific discoveries. They use knowledge and experience in their everyday practice. Hence their interest in OP IE. – We were very happy when we found out about the objectives of Measures 1.4-4.1 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. The programme guaranteed us the funds for research and implementation of results. We assumed such modus operandi at the very beginning of our activity, – comments Michał Kaszuba, deputy president of the Centrum Badań DNA, who recently switched management board functions with Jacek Wojciechowicz. A lot is happening in the company: there are plans for many projects, expanding to foreign markets and listing at the Stock Exchange.

– Innovative Economy motivated such companies as ours to develop new products and services. It was a proverbial "bull's eye". No wonder that funds under measures 1.4-4.1 are

almost exhausted – adds Jacek Wojciechowicz, company CEO and until recently the person responsible for coordination of projects financed under EU funds. As the publication was being prepared, Wojciechowski developed further projects for the final call for proposals in 2010, exclusively for Measure 1.4 OP IE, and the company was about to hire a person to lead EU-funded projects.

DNA Micro matrixes

The company is currently working on tests identifying genetic disposition of patients to two carcinomae: colorectal cancer and prostate cancer. They want to use the innovative DNA micro matrix technology. One sample is sufficient for a full screening of all known genetic defects which are a disposition to such diseases. – We cooperate with scientists from the Medical University in Poznań and Greater Poland Cancer Centre. We have just completed the research stage of the project – explains Jacek Wojciechowicz, the CEO. – The prototype of DNA micro matrix should be ready in December 2010. Then, >



- > we will start the test validation stage. Should we succeed, the product will be deployed in spring 2011. A new service will be added: promotion and marketing activities.

The Centrum Badań DNA prepares an offer for foreign clients. – In the first stage, we intend to hit European markets: Great Britain, Germany and Sweden or Norway. The USA will follow – promises Jacek Wojciechowicz. Is there no competition there? – The foreign companies often advertise their tests to identify disposition to colorectal cancer. However, these tests identify several mutations. There are still hundreds of gene mutations which are decisive for incidence of this disease. Our tests cover a very wide range - over 200 mutations.

The German Patient

To assess chances of entering foreign markets, the company took advantage of opportunities brought about by Measure 6.1 „Passport to export”. It is a continuation of previous actions. – First, we needed to prepare an export development programme – explains the director of the Centrum Badań DNA. – We obtained all quality certificates that reflected the demand on foreign markets and analysed legal and formal requirements. We made sure our laboratory can in fact export services.

Did the foreign markets analysis provide any surprising conclusions? – We were warned that entering the German market might not be easy – says Jacek Wojciechowicz. – The market consolidated there - several big laboratories perform

Innovative Economy motivated such companies as ours to develop new products and services.

Jacek Wojciechowicz, CEO of the Centrum Badań DNA:

I did not encounter any problems in the preparation of applications for co-financing under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. Research and implementation projects resulted from actual needs - they were reported by patients and doctors alike. Other projects are a natural consequence of the adopted strategy. Entering foreign markets requires analysis of opportunities and preparation of export development plan, hence our application under Measure 6.1 “Passport to export”. Sales of such innovative a service abroad requires patent protection of our solution under foreign procedures (application to 5.4.1 OP IE). The plan to join NewConnect resulted from the need to get co-financing for all our investments. To decrease emission costs, we want to use support under Sub-Measure 3.3.2 OP IE. We are determined to enter the Stock Exchange even if we do not receive support under the programme.

such analyses in Germany. The market is big, though. We will not resign of the German patient. We may compete in terms of test quality and the sort deadlines for analysing samples and providing results. Transport of samples from Berlin to our laboratory takes just a few hours. Delivery companies have a special medical service – sending samples and results is not a problem. The Centrum Badań DNA will seek local partners abroad, mostly among medical networks. Medical centres offering Polish tests will need to assure that the test results are consulted with a geneticist. The patient cannot be left without care after receiving the results. In collaboration with numerous doctors, the company develops an algorithm for treating patients who are diagnosed with a specific set of mutations which constitute a disposition to cancer. These algorithms should provide knowledge about aspects that should be taken into consideration and the



the spectra of analysed mutations. We will keep on advancing medicine – concludes Jacek Wojciechowicz.

In 2011, the company is to become a part of newly founded capital group: INNO-GE-NE S.A., the shares of which will reach the alternative NewConnect market. The capital will enable all planned investments. But the development of the laboratory is not the only investment. Company directors received co-financing under the Operational Programme Human Capital also for internships and training for scientists and doctors. This professional group needs to learn more about the new research technologies.

preventive measures to take. This is more than diagnostics – this is an action plan.

A laboratory which provides services to the world

The Centrum Badań DNA received funds from the Greater Poland Regional Operational Programme for laboratory equipment. – We want to automate laboratory processes in such a way as to allow us analysing samples from all over the world. The capacity will increase to several hundred or thousand samples per day – announces President Wojciechowicz.

The company will purchase equipment for DNA extraction, micro matrix reader and several other expensive, but necessary devices. – Nobody has ever developed such a complex genetic test that would identify hundreds of mutations. Our test will identify ca. 200 genetic defects. It is a technology whose development should widen

Project: “Development and implementation of comprehensive tests for diagnosis of genetic predispositions towards selected cancerous diseases on the basis of the DNA microarray technology”

Company: Centrum Badań DNA Sp. z o.o., Poznań
Measures: 1.4-4.1

Project value: PLN 501.7 thousand in part 1.4, PLN 753.5 thousand in part 4.1

Co-financing: PLN 596 459.50

Implementation period: Part 1.4: 1.05.2009 - 5-01 to 31.01.2011, part 4.1: 1.02.2011 - 30.09.2011

Project: “Support for export activities of the Centrum Badań DNA – an innovative biotechnology company” – I stage

Measure: 6.1

Project value: PLN 15.25 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 10 thousand

Implementation period: 1.11.2009 - 1.05.2010

Delivering results

POSTER

“The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence” is a proverb which perfectly suits the Warsaw-based Poster company. Its idea of constructing a compact delivery conveyor has entered the implementation phase; PARP covers more than half of the expenditure.

Savings are everywhere, you just need to find them. They are hidden even in seemingly perfect logistic systems. However, experience and open-mindedness is a recipe for an innovative system of delivery management at the post office and in delivery companies. POMP, i.e. vertical indexing conveyor module (Polish: Pionowy Obrotowy Moduł Przenośnika) combines small size with efficiency and infallibility. The author of the design, Ryszard Rusinowski, is also the director of Poster company based in the Warsaw district of Bielany.

Co-financing from the radio

When you enter the company offices, you'll have no doubt that the company made use of EU funds – doors are labelled with Operational Programme Innovative Economy stickers. – I have agreed to do this article as I value and appreciate cooperation with PARP. As a rule, I am quite reluctant to media contacts – the innovator lets us know as the interview begins. He admits that a radio advertisement inspired him to apply for EU-funding. He browsed the Internet a little and contacted an advisory company which helped in

filling the forms. – The company worked at the financial and accounting part, I simply hate paperwork – he adds. – Nothing ventured, nothing gained, we need to disclose some of the information about ourselves and our ideas to the PARP and Regional Financing Institutions, if we want to hope for co-financing – acknowledges director of the Poster. Rusinowski becomes animated when the conversation turns to engineering. After 20 years of constructing conveyors for the Germany-, France- or Italy-based recipients, he decided that Poles are not technologically lagging in this area. At times, they are better than the Western competition. – What we lack is capital. We also need a stimulus to reveal our talents – he explains.

Millions saved

The OP IE turned out to be one of his stimuli. The project received PLN 350.8 thousand – more than a half of total costs of development and implementation works, estimated at PLN 668.1 thousand. The project has not been completed yet (the planned completion date was June, but finally it was extended to the end of 2010), as it was affected by the crisis in delivery and logistics



Ryszard Rusinowski, the director of Poster Sp. z o.o.:

Politeness and warmth of PARP employees and their willingness to help are exceptional. I will certainly apply for EU funding again, since it makes visions come true and brings satisfaction of being able to fulfil your dream. I also assume that Managing Authorities continuously learn and improve; applying for co-financing should be getting easier and easier each year.

sectors. In September 2010, Poster was between the first phase (development works) and implementation. Director Rusinowski is nevertheless optimistic about the future and makes a list of advantages his construction will bring to the clients. - The conveyor occupies an even five times smaller surface – a much smaller logistics centre which still provides the same opportunities. With the construction costs amounting to PLN 3 thousand per square meter, there are millions of savings – the constructor praises his project. He points out at the beginning that the project is an outcome not only of his own observations, but also of discussions with three other employees of the company.

The micro size is not an obstacle for innovativeness and application for co-financing. Moreover, even in such a small company it was necessary to appoint a permanent research unit. – Thinking how to make it formal is an advantage in itself – says Rusinowski. When asked about the biggest

drawbacks and assets of EU programmes, he immediately answers – people! I was pleasantly surprised by the openness of the PARP employees and their vision of programme implementation. He also advises his potential successors to look before they leap, well assess their eligibility for project co-financing and to be patient with PARP. – Let us remember, “the other side” are people, too – concludes director of Poster.

Project: “Conducting research and implementing to production of a new innovative vertical indexing module conveyor”

Company: Poster Sp. z o.o., Warsaw

Measures: 1.4-4.1

Project value: PLN 668.1 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 350.8 thousand

Implementation period: 1.06.2009 - 30.05.2010

Innovation running in their DNA

FORM-PLAST



The Bydgoszcz-based Form-Plast company is a real war-horse when it comes to EU co-financing – for 10 years it has been successfully applying for such funding. One of its three currently implemented EU projects concerns an innovative eco-pallet, which may replace traditional, wooden pallets.

The Bydgoszcz-based company has walked a long way since 1978, when Maciej and Halina Pietraszek decided to open a small artisan shop to respond to the difficulties with supply of plastic moulds. At first, they produced mostly household appliances. Today Form-Plast is a well-recognised, both home and abroad, supplier of complex products (including TV casings or air-conditioning components) for such demanding clients, as Volvo, Delphi, Sharp or LG. Form-Plast delivers its products not only to European clients, but also to car assembly plants and producers in USA, Brazil, China, Turkey, Korea and Mexico.

An idea for development

Innovation is part of the company's DNA. – Our idea for development has remained unchanged for three decades: specialisation (plastics processing) and constant product and technology innovation. Seeking efficient solutions is a necessity, since only innovative products build

a sustainable competitive advantage – believes Maciej Pietraszek, the president and owner of Form-Plast.

An innovative eco-pallet is the youngest baby of the company. – The idea developed over the last few years, when we tried to find an optimal solution concerning transport of our products. Low quality and high price of the market offer inspired us to seek alternative products – related



Barbara Nowak, project coordinator:

Eco-pallets are the biggest investment scheme in the company's history. We take courage for ambitious initiatives from the sense of creating a completely new market - we do not design a substitute for a wooden pallet, but its successor.



Barbara Nowak, project coordinator. Environmental awareness in the company also played a role. We wanted to find the eco-counterpart of a wooden pallet as soon as possible - to save forests.

Form-Plast is certain that eco-pallets have a chance of replacing the traditional ones. Their advantage is more than environmental: – The eco-pallet is not a substitute to the wooden one, but its successor – its price is competitive and it offers much more in terms of hygiene or resistance-to-weight ratio – explains Barbara Nowak. The fact that the eco-pallets are easily kept clean is an important factor for clients from such sectors as pharmaceutical or food industry.

Ambitious plans

Form-Plast assumes that eco-pallets will become the company's leading product on the national and foreign markets and their annual sales will reach 275 thousand pieces. The offer will soon be extended with folding boxes and frames,

which will enable construction of containers to transport small items. All activities aim at making the name Form-Plast synonymous to modern, innovative, environmentally friendly transport boxes home and abroad. The project consists of two stages: research and implementation. The first, focusing on designing the eco-pallet in accordance with project objectives, has already been completed. The second, i.e. launching a serial production of pallets will be finished in 2011. This is the largest investment project of Form-Plast so far and, at the same time, one of the three implemented projects co-financed from EU funds. The company well deserves the label of a war-horse of EU-co-financing applications – it has successfully used EU funds for ten years now and spends the money on development of technical infrastructure, employee training, innovative activity and improving management system.



Project: “Designing and implementation to production of innovative and environmentally friendly Eco-Pallets for transport”
Company: Form-Plast S.A., Bydgoszcz
Measures: 1.4-4.1
Project value: Part 1.4 – PLN 1.41 million, part 4.1. – PLN 37.42 million,
Co-financing: Part 1.4 - PLN 506 thousand, part 4.1 - PLN 14.92 million,
Implementation period: January 2009 – July 2011



CAPITAL FOR INNOVATION

GOOD PRACTICES

Join the game and profit

AGENCJA ROZWOJU POMORZA (POMERANIA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY)

Those who manage the Capital Fund have to constantly monitor the situation in many business sectors, understand the essence of innovation in business and be good judges of people. With such skills and knowledge they should select the most determined and promising candidates for entrepreneurs.

Versatility and resoluteness – these are the two most important traits which condition successful development of start-ups. Versatility is a must as those who manage the fund cannot be merely “accountants” – explains Mieszko Bisewski from the Capital Fund of Agencja Rozwoju Pomorza SA.

Pre-incubation stage

Versatility should be also demonstrated by the author of the project applying for co-financing. – Unlike presidents of large companies, project providers do not have a large, professional sales department which could provide them with support. Not only do they need to come up with a new product or service, but also plan an effective sales strategy – underlines Mieszko Bisewski, head of the capital investment department in ARP SA. Resoluteness, on the other hand, is necessary when one is faced with unexpected

obstacles, because not everything can be solved with money. And obstacles are something that no start-up can avoid.

According to Mieszko Bisewski, the greatest challenge for beginning entrepreneurs is to attract customers. Therefore, the employees of ARP responsible for evaluation of submitted projects try to analyse them from the customers’ perspective. – Very often a seemingly interesting project turns out to be too weak to take a share of the market – he explains. Pre-incubation stage is extremely helpful in selecting the best projects. Although at the first glance pre-incubation may seem only unnecessary bureaucracy, it truly enables realistic assessment of the project’s prospects and minimises the risk of an error. At this stage, experts ask many difficult questions in order to prepare the future entrepreneurs for the “ruthless market reality”.

600% growth

There are five innovative companies in the Capital Fund’s portfolio right now. Pastel Games which deals with creating applications for iPhone and iPad and games based on the popular Flash technology is one of them. Providing financial

Investing in development of start-ups is a considerable challenge. We have to choose those investments which will bring substantial profits.

Mieszko Bisewski, head of the capital investment department at the Capital Fund of Agencja Rozwoju Pomorza SA:

I remember entrepreneurs who were so determined that they have almost taken a very high loan, with all their property as collateral - only to start implementing their ideas as soon as possible. At the pre-incubation stage, however, it became evident that the project would not be profitable. This way they could avoid really serious problems.



support to the company which produces games is a typical high-risk investment. If the game wins the hearts of consumers and becomes popular, the profits may be overwhelming. For instance, the value of the shares of one of the Polish listed companies operating in this sector increased by 600% over half a year (although such an increase does not have to necessarily result from the company's fundamental value). It is difficult to predict, however, which idea will be a hit with consumers and that makes the whole project a rather risky and expensive business.

Another investment of the Capital Fund is MoDe – a company producing mini photographic studios. Such product makes it easy even for a layman to take high quality shadowless photos, which is useful while presenting products on company websites or on Internet auctions. – Here, the challenge is to increase the sales. At the moment, approximately 15 such devices are sold every month but it is feasible to raise this level to 50-60 products monthly – says Mieszko

Bisewski. Five other investment projects are also being prepared. Will they manage to launch them in 2010? – We prefer to wait a few more weeks or months, but be sure that the project we invest in is a good one – explains Bisewski. The team managing the Capital Fund is convinced that investing in the development of start-ups is a considerable challenge. Our task is to choose those investments which in a few years' time will bring substantial profits. Then we will be able to sell them with a high return rate and allocate the money to investments in other innovative companies. The overall target is an ambitious one – to make the economy of Pomerania and entire Poland more innovative.

Project: "Support for innovative projects provided by Agencja Rozwoju Pomorza SA in 2008-2015"
Company: Agencja Rozwoju Pomorza SA, Gdańsk
Measure: 3.1
Project value: PLN 17.2 million
Co-financing: PLN 17.2 million
Implementation period: 1.01.2009 – 30.06.2015.



CAPITAL FOR
INNOVATION

Pearl divers

INQBE

The market is abundant with business incubators which call themselves innovative. It is no challenge to choose the projects which use modern technologies. The difficult part is to select those companies which are not only innovative but also profitable. This is the principle adopted by InQbe which has already created 13 companies and is currently the national leader among incubators.

This Olsztyn-based company implements the project "InQbe – incubator for technological and Internet projects" which has received co-financing of over PLN 20 million under Measure 3.1 "Initiating of innovative activity" of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. A substantial amount of these resources (approx. PLN 15 million) will be allocated to implementing further ideas. – And there are plenty – says Wojciech Przyłęcki, president of the company. – So



far, we have received 700 projects. We ran pre-incubation on 200 of them and 13 most promising ones were launched onto the market.

Support for novices

Most projects submitted to the incubator come from its parent company, IQ Partners SA, a venture capital fund. The management board of the fund, listed on the NewConnect market, sends to InQbe those projects that are relat-



ed to new Internet technologies and ICT. The company also finances software and hardware development projects. Currently, InQbe assists 50 enterprises which are beginners on the market.

InQbe stands out among other Polish incubators as having a large number of projects approved for incubation. The employees are working on even several dozens of ideas at a time and, thus, are able to choose those which

have the best development prospects. The author of the project who starts cooperation with an incubator will receive assistance in market analysis, identification of the company business model, drawing up business plan or preparing the budget. Moreover, InQbe offers necessary technological and office infrastructure as well as financial support up to EUR 200,000. >



**CAPITAL FOR
INNOVATION**



Wojciech Przyłęcki, president of the management board of InQbe Sp. z o.o.:

Our efforts are not focused on “inventing another wheel”. We believe that businessmen want to earn and we want to earn together with them. That is why we do not invest in projects where innovation is the only asset. We prefer to support projects which are more traditional but also more promising – such a solution will be beneficial both for us and for the entrepreneur. Modern technologies are, naturally, very necessary nowadays, but we have to remember that they should be introduced in a sensible manner. This is what we seek to do and - as the evidence shows - it works.

> Promotion

Although it may seem that the incubator’s profile should attract primarily students or graduates of computer studies, the largest group of clients includes persons who are in their thirties and have decided to start a business based on their professional experience. It turns out that such entrepreneurs are better at adjusting to the market conditions and the knowledge they

The successes of entrepreneurs who cooperated with InQbe allowed the company to make profit only from managing the shares held in the companies it has launched.

gained while working in other companies is their invaluable asset in the process of setting up their business. Therefore, InQbe has not only hung its adverts at universities, but also presented its offer to a wider group - through press and Internet. – And then it all happened naturally – says Wojciech Przyłęcki. – Our effectiveness in acquiring financing for projects has been noticed by project providers and the entrepreneurs who started their business with our help recommended us to others.

The success of InQbe is best visible when we compare it with other incubators set up at the same time – as many as 13 out of 17 capital inputs were the work of InQbe. Moreover, we should remember that before the second half of 2010 only four incubators, out of 20 operating, managed to introduce new companies onto the market.

Ideas work

One of the successful projects consisted in setting up an innovative publishing company which can publish a book for any person interested in such service. Exlibris, a company combining printing business and state-of-the-art Internet technology, has turned out to be a great idea. The publishing company quickly attracted consumers and is still developing. Another project is the Internet platform enabling exchange of computer and console games – Gametrade.pl. The portal has been operating only for a year but it has already gathered nearly 25,000 registered users and every day the number of transactions made through the portal is higher than the number of transactions in the same thematic area made via the biggest auction platform in Poland, namely Allegro. The company president admits that the core



of InQbe's operation includes relatively "traditional" projects, however, the incubator takes up also more bold projects. The best example here will be Seo Power, a company which, with the support it received, managed to create an innovative system of search engine optimisation. It is difficult to predict the response to their idea in the e-marketing environment. The authors ensure, however, that their tool is innovative even on the worldwide scale.

The successes of entrepreneurs who cooperated with InQbe allowed the company to make profit only from managing the shares held in the companies it has launched. Implementation of further projects brings profits which are unattainable for their rivals. Soon another company assisted by the incubator's employees will have its debut on the NewConnect market - this time it is Power Price, a company working on creating a modern commercial B2B platform.

Project: "InQbe – incubator for technological and Internet projects"

Company: InQbe Sp. z o.o., Olsztyn

Measure: 3.1

Project value: PLN 20.47 million

Co-financing: PLN 20.47 million

Implementation period: 10.07.2008 – 31.12.2013

For a good start

MIASTE CZKO MULTIMEDIA LNE (MULTIMEDIA CITY)

The sole idea for a business is not enough – you need some capital to start with - something that many innovative projects lack, although they could become the spark for development of Polish economy. To break this vicious circle, educational activities, among many other things, are necessary. And this is precisely the idea of authors of the project “Capital for a good start in innovation”.

The experience of many foreign companies shows that high-risk ideas but which are also quite innovative have flourished into prosperous companies with an impressive turnover. Think of Facebook, Google or YouTube. In Poland such success is difficult. The greatest obstacle is the access to investors. – After many years of market research we came to a conclusion that we should create a project that would teach entrepreneurs about alternative ways of acquiring capital – says Elwira Waszkiewicz, head of the project.

The main assumption of the project “Capital for a good start in innovation” is to enhance the opportunities of development for Polish innovative projects.

Innovators wanted

The main assumption of the project “Capital for a good start in innovation - promoting innovation in the business and scientific environment” is to enhance the development opportunities for Polish innovative projects. How is it done? By teaching, mainly entrepreneurs, how to gain the capital necessary for setting up and developing a business. The project is co-financed with the funds of the European Union under Sub-measure 3.3.1 - Measure 3.3 “Creating system facilitating investing in SMEs” of OP IE. The project leader is the Technology Park – Miasteczko Multimedialne from Nowy Sącz, while the Cluster of Multimedia and Information Systems – MultiKlaster acts as its partner.

The authors of the project want to reach the highest possible number of recipients. Their project is addressed not only to entrepreneurs, but also to students and natural persons – to everyone who has an idea for an innovative business. The project is focused on the broadly understood environment of innovators, connected with such sectors as computer sciences, >





- > new technologies, Internet, telecommunications or biotechnology.

What is its main idea then? To find promising ideas and provide experts' and mentors' analysis aiming at possible improvements. The experts supporting the project include experienced entrepreneurs or business angels searching for unconventional solutions with great potential.

Spreading the wings

The project is of educational nature, thus, a series of events has been prepared, including conferences, meetings, seminars, workshops and individual consultations during which one can receive professional assistance as regards, among others, gaining funds for setting up a business. Such events are also an opportunity for establishing contacts with potential investors. As part of the conference, numerous specialist meetings have been organised, under the title "Spread your wings – external opportunities for financing innovative enterprises."

Another interesting idea was put into life during the conference - an "Innovation Starters" competition was organised, where the best business projects are to be selected and supported. – We will choose 20 ideas which will then be provided with specialist mentoring by our best experts– says Elwira Waszkiewicz. Support takes form of individual custom-prepared consultations in such areas as: marketing and financial strategy, analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), selecting the investment strategy or drafting a business plan. "Business over coffee" is another idea for experience exchange. Here, entrepreneurs seeking external financing will meet with investors, professionals and experts from many business centres in Poland and with entrepreneurs who have already decided to use external financing for their development and want to share their

experience with others.

The project, launched in September 2009, includes implementation of 5 nationwide conferences "Spread Your Wings", 8 "Business over coffee" meetings with experts and 32 specialist seminars and workshops. Moreover, a portal KapitalNaStartwInnowacje.pl was created - a compendium of knowledge on alternative sources of financing for development of innovative business ideas. The portal offers advice in the form of videos and e-learning courses prepared by experts: investors and entrepreneurs who have managed to set up own companies based on external financing.

Project: "Capital for a good start in innovation - promoting innovation in the business and scientific environment"

Company: Miasteczko Multimedialne Sp. z o.o., Nowy Sącz

Sub-measure: 3.3.1

Project value: PLN 1.61 million

Co-financing: PLN 1.61 million

Implementation period: 1.09.2009 – 31.12.2010



Elwira Waszkiewicz, head of the project:

In many cases entrepreneurs' passion turns businesses based on risky ideas into prosperous and dynamic companies. On the other hand, this would not be possible without the investors' trust in the entrepreneurs pursuing business experiments. Young entrepreneurs may largely benefit from information and promotion activities organised under the project. Meetings with persons and entrepreneurs seeking external financing for implementation of their business ideas are attended by investors, professionals and experts as well as entrepreneurs who have already decided to choose the path of external financing of development. They will present in detail what happens behind the scenes in the investment process. Through specific examples they describe the benefits related to cooperation with a private investor, venture capital/private equity. They will also give practical tips and explain principles of drafting business plans.

Online investor

FUNDACJA OBSERWATORIUM ZARZĄDZANIA
(MANAGEMENT OBSERVATORY FOUNDATION)

The sole name of the portal – Finansuj.pl – says it all about the profile: it is a place where company owners may quickly and easily establish contact with potential investors.

Equity gap is usually the problem of small companies. Large investments are financed by banks without hesitation, but the small ones are often blocked due to serious problems with access to equity, such as lack of information or knowledge on how to reach investors and how to convince them to finance a particular idea.

Platform for company sale

The authors of Finansuj.pl from the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania were well aware of this problem and decided to connect - on the Internet - company owners with investors looking for interesting and profitable ideas. Finansuj.pl combines functions of an information and education service with a platform for exchange of contacts and knowledge. It features

modules for interactive drafting of business plans (a video guide may help entrepreneurs with the SWOT analysis or calculate the BEP for a particular investment and when the document is already drawn up, it may be made available on-line for investors) or for specifying business purposes (the users enter the tasks into the application which then reminds them about the deadline for their completion). The most important element, however, is the Mix module which is supposed to function as the community of entrepreneurs and investors. The users who are interested in investing money in a business may create their own profiles and specify the preferable investment strategy, place of investment or the expected return on investment. Moderated discussion forums are aimed to contribute to es-

Ireneusz Tomczak, president of the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania:

We would like to create a living platform for selling companies on the non-public market. We met with representatives of small and micro-companies and we are convinced that direct contact with the market is the key element. Small and micro-companies do not have resources or knowledge necessary to cooperate with professional consultants and they usually do not need them in their business. An Internet portal may be the perfect answer to their needs. We prefer users who already have their companies and seek a partner who would support their further development. Start-ups at the very early stage of development are not our main target.





The most important task of the Finansuj.pl team is to create the so-called snowball effect, namely to attract interesting contents to the portal and generate appropriate traffic on the website.

establishing and strengthening contacts between users. Here, entrepreneurs may share their problems and exchange experience.

Snowball effect

Finansuj.pl wants to be as simple as possible in providing its services to all those who want to publish information on seeking funds for business development. It's most important task is to facilitate access to equity, while the modules for drafting business plans, trainings or video guides are to support that main objective. The trainings available through the portal are extremely popular. During only two weeks, Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania received applications from 500 persons who would like to take part in the trainings in the largest Polish cities - about 60% of the assumed target.

The most important goal of the portal is to achieve such position on the market, which would assure its further operation also when the support from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy ends. And this moment will come soon, in February 2011. Ireneusz Tomczak explains that this point in time will be a huge challenge for the team. As Finansuj.pl is a niche project, the website cannot count on any considerable proceeds from on-line advertisements,

while organisation of trainings in SMEs financing is currently a very competitive market. – That is why we plan to introduce products related to developing financial services which will be provided under small fees – announces Ireneusz Tomczak, president of the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania. At the moment four persons are involved in the portal. Their main aim is to create the so-called snowball effect, namely to attract interesting contents to the portal and to generate appropriate traffic on the website. The portal is alive when the new offers from the companies seeking funds appear independently, without the help from moderators. The team must also face challenges which are typical for every Internet project: technical works, creating databases and usability testing.

Project: "Finansuj.pl"
Institution: Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania, Warsaw
Sub-measure: 3.3.1
Project value: PLN 3.82 million
Co-financing: PLN 3.82 million
Implementation period: 1.09.2009 - 28.02.2011



CAPITAL FOR
INNOVATION

Fruitful support

FUNDACJA OBSERWATORIUM ZARZĄDZANIA
(MANAGEMENT OBSERVATORY FOUNDATION)

Entrepreneurs will be better prepared to attract investors and investors will have access to the best, verified projects. These are the expected benefits of the “Owoce Biznesu” (Fruits of Business) consulting programme addressed to the SMEs sector.

This is the second project, apart from the portal Finansuj.pl, which is implemented by the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania with the resources from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. – The idea behind both projects is similar, but the target group is completely different – explains Ireneusz Tomczak, president of the foundation. Finansuj.pl is a self-operating service addressed to young small and micro-companies (there are almost 1.6 million of them in Poland) while “Owoce Biznesu” is a consulting programme addressed to small and medium-sized companies which already operate on the market and have some business history and achievements. The number of such companies is limited -Ireneusz Tomczak estimates between ten and twenty thousand.

Investors’ congress

A smaller target group requires actions which are precisely tailored to its needs. The Investment Congress is a good example of such approach. It was organised by the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania in June 2010 in Warsaw. The event was divided into two parts – for individual and institutional investors. The organisers managed to achieve not an easy thing - they gathered a large group of people of vital importance in terms of financial support for innovative compa-

nies in Poland in one place. One of the speakers was Piotr Tamowicz, representing the Initiative for Capital and Governance, who talked about venture capital funds, private equity and presented the map of seed capitals in Poland. Other speeches which proved to be interesting for potential investors were made by Piotr Ćwik, from the National Capital Fund, who answered numerous questions from the audience concerning setting up venture capital funds with the National Capital Fund’s participation and by the representative of the association of business angels. The congress was one of several events arranged for investors - Fundacja organised over 30 conferences for over 3,600 persons, addressed directly to entrepreneurs. They covered the issues of academic entrepreneurship, seed capital or private equity.

- We want to attract more liquidity, more transactions to the non-public market and we would like to see investors treating it as an equal form of investing - explains Ireneusz Tomczak.

Already over a thousand companies have decided to cooperate with the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania – it is the measure of the project’s success.

And the barriers will crumble...

The project “Owoce Biznesu” is supposed to prepare entrepreneurs for talks with professional investors. Currently, as the foundation president notices, such negotiations are hampered by the lack of financial analysis or incorrectly described business models. With the increased awareness of such problems, investors and entrepreneurs will communicate more effectively and their mutual expectations will be more adequate. Thus, with “Owoce Biznesu” entrepreneurs will be better prepared for such important steps as attracting an investor or entering the NewConnect market.

The most important benefit which individual and institutional investors may draw from participation in the project “Owoce Biznesu” is access to verified presentations of business projects and the possibility of establishing direct contact with such companies. - We save investors’ time by offering them access to most interesting concepts – says Ireneusz Tomczak. Another advantage is also the opportunity for investors to introduce themselves to entrepreneurs. The Investor Club has 300 members already, and their aim is to promote development of the non-public market.

According to the president of the Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania, the project’s most important achievement so far has been that already over a thousand companies have decided to cooperate with his foundation. The experts work with entrepreneurs on improving their ideas and visions to raise their attractiveness to investors. At the moment, it is still too early to speak of the final results, but Ireneusz Tomczak underlines that the foundation can already boast with its “first successes in this field”. Investors and entrepreneurs not always know how to find a common language. Investors criticise entrepreneurs for hastily drafted business plans and financial analyses, while entrepreneurs, on the other hand, complain about the lack of understanding of their ideas among investors. “Owoce Biznesu” is a valuable initiative which allows both



groups to understand each other better.

Project: “Fruits of Business – a good offer is the key to success”

Institution: Fundacja Obserwatorium Zarządzania, Warsaw

Sub-measure: 3.3.1

Project value: PLN 3.44 million

Co-financing: PLN 3.19 million

Implementation period: 2.01.2009 – 31.12.2010

Money from waste

ATON-HT

A Polish company dealing with waste treatment has developed a globally unique technology. It considerably reduces costs, improves efficiency of the entire process and, what is more, it can be used for eliminating many hazardous substances, including asbestos.

Ecology is in – it is a global trend and most probably one that will not fade soon. Moreover, we may even assume that the demand for environmental protection services will grow. Therefore, it is no surprise that Polish companies also want their piece of the cake in waste treatment. What is interesting, however, is that not everyone considers buying ready-made machines and technologies - some intend to manufacture and sell such equipment and technology as well. Many such companies are also planning to set up R&D laboratories - and when they do not have enough funds, they look for specific-purpose subsidies for particular purchases. The stock exchange is the place where considerable resources for comprehensive development may be acquired. ATON-HT chose to take advantage of this opportunity and applied for support under Sub-measure 3.3.2 OP IE in order to make a new issue of its shares.

Not only ATON-HT is the beneficiary of the EU aid – benefits were recorded also by companies which purchase specialist services and products.

First of all - development

– A good idea is the most important thing – says Robert Barczyk, president of the company's management board. If it is innovative – it is even better. Innovation is a must in this sector. Without it, you won't meet the extremely high environmental and technical standards. A product of low quality will not be accepted by the market and its author will lose his reputation. ATON-HT is not afraid of innovative solutions. It is the owner of a unique MTT (microwave thermal treatment) technology protected by a patent in Poland and abroad. The technology is based on thermal treatment of hazardous waste by a concentrated microwave energy beam. It enables construction of reactors where hazardous substances may be treated in very high temperatures, including asbestos fibres, medical and biological products - all without posing any threat to the environment. The company developed prototypes of many innovative devices for waste treatment. However, they all had to be scientifically verified and this required funds for setting up own R&D laboratory.

Own laboratory

The company has not applied for direct financial support for the construction of the R&D centre. With the subsidy granted by PARP it prepared

ATON-HT is the owner of a unique MTT technology based on thermal treatment of hazardous waste by a concentrated microwave energy beam.

and released a new issue of shares (D series). In total PLN 4 million was raised through the stock exchange. With such resources, the Wrocław-based company was able to build its R&D laboratory and install the equipment. The Company built five prototypes of devices using the MTT technology. The gathered resources enabled it

also to commercialise the earlier results of the R&D works in the field of microwaves and allowed to start cooperation with other enterprises. As a result, not only ATON-HT is the beneficiary of the EU aid. Also the partners who purchase specialist services and products from the company have benefitted as they thus have become more competitive on the market. And as far as the non-material aspects are concerned, we all benefit as less hazardous waste will damage the environment.

Constant search

- Our technologies and equipment are groundbreaking in many aspects when compared to those used in the world today – says Robert Barczyk, the company president. - First of all, they are less expensive and more ecological. They have also other advantages – they are energy-efficient and mobile, reduce the CO2 emissions in comparison to the conventional methods and allow for recycling old waste. Robert Barczyk hopes that further research will bring even better machines - ones which would enable not only treatment of hazardous waste but also recovery of valuable materials. If this is achieved, the president of the company intends to commercialise the results of the R&D works as quickly as possible. Even though ATON-HT has a strong position in the sector, Barczyk is aware that the competitive market requires on-going development and well thought-out market actions.



Robert Barczyk, president of the management board:

ATON-HT has successfully used domestic and EU subsidies. We have received co-financing, among others, under the 7th Framework Programme for the project “Implementing technology of selected hazardous waste treatment based on the MTT-AMIANTE method”. Our company coordinates an international consortium implementing this project. With the subsidy under OP IE we have built the R&D centre and created five prototypes of machines using the MTT technology. Moreover, we have commercialised earlier results of our R&D works.

Project: “Gaining capital for development of ATON-HT through issue of new shares”

Company: ATON-HT SA, Wrocław

Sub-measure: 3.3.2

Project value: PLN 190 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 95 thousand

Implementation period: 12.05.2009 – 30.09.2009

Profitable courage

CENTRUM KLIMA

Record-breaking sales, four times higher production capacity, dynamic growth of export – these are the effects of changes introduced in Centrum Klima three years ago by the management board as part of a long-term strategy. The company's success was possible thanks to the funds from the issue of shares and through EU assistance.

Centrum Klima is currently the leading manufacturer and distributor of ventilation and air conditioning systems in Poland and an important player on the European market within this sector. In 2007 the company, which had been developing for more than 10 years, faced a challenge. Almost 80% of its revenues came from trade of imported goods and less than 20% from the sale of the company's own products. The management board decided to change that since production is connected with mark-ups higher by several percentage points.

Injections of funds

Achievement of this objective required a consid-



erable amount of money, according to the management board's estimates – even PLN 50 million. The private issue of shares, conducted at the beginning of 2008, enabled change of the legal status and transformation – from a limited liability company into a joint-stock company. Another step was the debut of the shares - series A and B - on the NewConnect market, which resulted in additional PLN 7.8 million. At that time the management board started to think about entering the the Warsaw Stock Exchange. However, the calculations showed that implementation of such a task – hiring advisors, preparing the prospectus and completing internal actions would cost more than PLN 2 million. For a still develop-



The new production facility of Centrum Klima, constructed with the capital gained on the Warsaw Stock Exchange, will ensure four times higher production capacity.

ing company such an amount would constitute a considerable expenditure. – We decided to apply for co-financing from the EU resources and in July 2008 we submitted an application to PARP, requesting resources under Sub-measure 3.3.2 of OP IE – says Małgorzata Szerszeń-Krzywicka, financial director of Centrum Klima.

– We wrote that the aid would be allocated to advisory services connected with preparation of the IPO.

The company applied for PLN 670 thousand. It

expected to receive a quick response. And we may say it was right. – Obviously, there was some bureaucracy, which is natural in such a situation, but we always knew who we should contact with at PARP. Our e-mails were promptly answered and, what is important, we were provided with advice and propositions of solutions – the financial director adds.





Despite the crisis

> Some external problems appeared, though. According to the presented specification, Centrum Klima was to have its debut on the official market at the end of 2008. Just after a special resolution on this matter was adopted by the general meeting of shareholders, the financial crisis broke out in the USA and spread all over the world. The Warsaw Stock Exchange also witnessed the decrease in the value of shares and the debut on the planned date was too risky. Thus, the Company asked PARP for an extension of the project implementation schedule. The agreement on this matter was signed on 30 December 2008.

The works on the preparation of the prospectus were conducted independently. The Polish Financial Supervision Authority approved it in December 2008 and the company shares were accepted for the quotations of the stock exchange official market. The debut took place on 6 January 2009 and the company was the second enterprise in history which moved from

Marek Perendyk, president of the management board of Centrum Klima:

Our debut on the Warsaw Stock Exchange was a success, if we take into consideration the situation in 2009. We gained PLN 31.5 million from the public offering. The share of individual investors in the company capital increased from 6 to 39%. Almost all funds were allocated to construction of the complex in Wieruchowo, near Ożarów Mazowiecki. This way we could complete this investment in line with the schedule, which coincided with a large number of orders. Most important is – however – that the company achieved its objective.

Participation in the Operational Programme Innovative Economy and meeting the requirements for receiving the subsidy helped the company improve its internal organisation.

the NewConnect market to the official market at the Warsaw Stock Exchange.

When at the end of the 1st half of 2009 the situation on financial and capital markets started to gradually improve, the management board of Centrum Klima decided that the company should continue attracting new investors and recommenced the works on the issue of shares of a new series. The prospectus was updated and an advertising campaign was launched. The prospectus was approved at the beginning of October and at the end of the same month C series shares were issued. With the funds gained from the stock exchange, the construction of the production, warehouse and office complex in Wieruchowo near Ożarów Mazowiecki was completed in August 2010. The company then moved to the new premises. The investment project was aimed at increasing production capacity as well as the company's warehouse space and – according to the president of the company, Marek Perendyk – it was a full success. Moreover, it was completed without any significant delays in relation to the adopted schedule.

Mission accomplished

– Now, this is a completely different company. We have new development prospects – says Małgorzata Szerszeń-Krzywicka. Production facility may work in the two-shift system, which – with the new equipment – will ensure four times higher production capacity. The company has already launched new products under its own label, such as VENTAL System ventilation units. Export is growing dynamically and after 8 months it accounts for 65% of the sales of the company's own products. This means a yearly growth of 91%. The company's own products are shipped to the markets of Western Europe: to Belgium, Holland, Great Britain, Ireland. Ac-

ording to the management board, the quality of products of Centrum Klima has reached the benchmark level while they are more attractive in terms of price.

– The second quarter of 2010 had record sales' results in the company's history – states Marek Perendyk. – Coming months are expected to be equally good thanks to, among others, the large number of orders and the timely completion of the investment in Wieruchowo. Therefore, at one of the general meetings of shareholders the management board was able to report that the objective had been achieved.

– Who knows – maybe without funds from the EU we wouldn't have been in the same place right now – says Małgorzata Szerszeń-Krzywicka. – However, certainly by participating in the operational programme and by meeting the requirements for receiving a subsidy we gained much more funds than we planned to.

The director points to the fact that mainly the internal organisation of the company's operation was improved. Some processes are more "structured" as this was required for the purpose of the prospectus. – Moreover, we have learned a lot from the legal, financial and investment advisors with whom we cooperated during preparations of the issue. We still cooperate with some of them – she adds. Furthermore, the management board is more aware of certain issues now - for instance, in relation to informing about the company and the value which can be gained through greater transparency.

Project: "The Public Offering of Centrum Klima SA as the way of gaining capital for the company operation"

Company: Centrum Klima SA, Piastów

Sub-measure: 3.3.2

Project value: PLN 1.63 million

Co-financing: PLN 670 thousand

Implementation period: 29.07.2008 – 30.06.2010



Fuel-driven shares

EKOPOL GÓRNOŚLĄSKI HOLDING

Consistently, step by step – this approach works perfectly in business. The management of Ekopol Górnośląski Holding SA over a decade, gradually, prepared foundations for further stages of the company's development. The final step was the debut on the NewConnect market.

The business world is similar to the world of sports – apart from the talent and skills it is all about hard, systematic work, setting challenges and pursuing them. This is the credo which the management of Ekopol could have engraved on their business cards.



Transparency is the key

Ekopol is a dynamically developing company from Piekary Śląskie, which operates on the fuel and steel-mill market. The company sells liquid fuels (diesel oil and petrols) as well as heating oils, biofuels and metallurgical products, including trapeze-shaped galvanised and coat-



ed sheets, arc trapeze-shaped coated sheets, roofing sheets and wall panels and cassettes. It provides also services of storing diesel oils at the clients' premises, through a fuel micro-station. Entering the NewConnect market was possible as a result of the subsidy granted under Sub-measure 3.3.2 of OP IE. – It was the next

element of our development strategy which we had planned for the last two years. Four years ago, we transformed from a limited liability company into a joint-stock company. Later, we consistently stressed transparency in finances and management, which brought profits not only to our partners, but also to ourselves. >



The company from Piekary Śląskie was the first company from the fuel sector, which was listed on the NewConnect market.

Mirosław Szarawarski, vice-president of Ekopol and author of the project:

The decision to enter the NewConnect market was a great step, although, we must admit we implemented this plan in the most difficult time one could have imagined. Financial markets were collapsing and it was difficult to predict where the global crisis would lead us. We also had to come to terms with the fact that the profits would be lower than we had expected. However, despite these problems, our issue of shares was a great success, which is confirmed by their price. We started at the level of PLN 3. Today, the price of Ekopol almost doubled. We have not been really affected by the crisis in the fuel sector.

What are the benefits stemming from the debut on the NewConnect market? There are many— for example in relationships with investors and business partners. We have become a serious player on the market and many entities are interested in our services. The measure of our reliability is not only a transparent financial policy, but also our results - even in the most difficult period every year we have a minimum 20% increase in revenue. We are not a large enterprise, but we have the energy and effectiveness envied by many. We have invested in young, creative people and we have further plans and expectations. The next decade will be even better.

- > With the efficient and transparent financial policy before starting a new investment we are well familiar with our situation, we know what we can afford and what to expect – underlines Miroślaw Szarawarski, vice-president of the holding and author of the project. Our debut on the NewConnect market was a well thought-out step.

First listed

The company from Piekary Śląskie was the first company from the fuel sector, which was listed on the NewConnect market. However, its ambitious undertakings from recent months do not end here. Ekopol built a new office, extended the machine park and the warehouse capacity and is currently developing two other innovative projects. The first one is an on-line shop where it sells fuels under wholesale conditions. The other one concerns an innovative system of fuel distribution, addressed to corporate clients and comprising, among others, creation of the so-called micro-station, namely mobile fuel tanks enabling fuelling up vehicles. In practice, Ekopol supplies to companies diesel oil and provides them with constant monitoring of the fuel policy. - This way we ensure savings in corporate budgets of up to 30%. This is a consequence of more rational fuel consumption but also of the possibility of reducing the costs of warehousing – Szarawarski explains.

Fuel consumption in Poland is systematically growing, by several per cent every year, which is confirmed by the forecasts of the Polish Organisation of Oil Industry and Trade (POPiHN). Assuming that this growth will be stable also in the coming years, the management of Ekopol has grounds to expect that their business has good prospects.

Ekopol supplies the companies with diesel oil and provides them with constant monitoring of the fuel policy.

Project: "Introduction of Ekopol Górnośląski Holding SA on the NewConnect market"
Company: Ekopol Górnośląski Holding SA, Piekary Śląskie
Sub-measure: 3.3.2
Project value: PLN 270.8 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 97.5 thousand
Implementation period: 8.07.2008 – 20.02.2009

Stock Exchange Assistant

REMEDIS

Remedis SA from Poznań, operating on the debt market, with the support of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy developed a plan of its debut on the NewConnect market. The benefits are obvious. By entering the stock exchange the company has strengthened its reliability and will receive financial support from investors.

Remedis SA, the commercial successor of the company Obsługa Wierzytelności „Faktor” has been operating since 1995. The company’s specialised services include intermediation in handling debts of territorial self-government units and independent public health care institutions (SPZOZ) owed to banks, intermediation in granting credits to independent public health care institutions, acquiring debts of business entities from trustees of the bankruptcy estates and collection of liabilities from business entities. Among the entities to which the company provides or provided its services are, among others: the 108th Military Hospital with Healthcare Centre (SPZOZ) in Elk, Powiat Starosty in Jarocin, Independent Public Health Care Institution in Augustów, Powiat Starosty in Góra and the Independent Public Health Care Institution in Brzeziny.

Funds for advisors

Since April 2010, Remedis SA has been implementing the project “Advisory services preparing entrepreneurs for attracting external investors to

purchase shares”, financed under Sub-measure 3.3.2 of OP IE. With this financial support it benefitted from specialist advisory services provided by Inwest Consulting SA (licensed advisor of the NewConnect market) and the Office of the Certified Auditor – Jadwiga Krajewska. These companies provided their assistance in preparing documentation necessary for attracting external investors and introducing financial instruments to the NewConnect market.

Objective: NewConnect

– Our shareholder is a company specialising in, among others, implementing EU projects. The idea to apply for EU financing appeared in a natural manner during one of the working meetings with the representatives of our shareholder - says Marcin Wyszogrodzki, director for the public sector at Remedis SA. – We thought about the debut on the stock exchange much earlier and we intended to enter the NewConnect market regardless of the resources from the European Union. When our application was considered with a positive result by the Polish

Agency for Enterprise Development, our plans became more realistic and their implementation accelerated.

– The entire work and responsibility related to preparing and implementing the EU project was taken over by our shareholder– he adds. After we have prepared the offering and information documents, the next planned stage was the sale of shares on the NewConnect market. This market is intended for the companies which are at the early stage of establishment or very young ones with a relatively small expected market capitalisation (up to PLN 20 million). The presence on this market increases the companies' reliability with potential customers and external investors ensure considerable funds necessary for further rapid development. The total cost of the project amounted to PLN 420.9 thousand, where the EU co-financing accounted for PLN 162.5 thousand.

The company wanted to enter the NewConnect market regardless of EU support. When its application was approved by PARP, its plans became more realistic and their implementation accelerated.



Marcin Wyszogrodzki, director for the public sector at Remedis SA:

Our debut on the NewConnect market contributed to our increased reliability and transparency. Since we operate on a rather specific and highly demanding market – that is the public sector where everything has to be transparent, we want to make our procedures more compatible with the procedures of our clients, thus gaining their trust. We also hope that our status of a listed company will translate into large interest in the new issues of shares or company bonds. Moreover, we expect that our strategy related to TFI (we are one of its shareholders) will have more chances for implementation and obtaining appropriate results.

Project: “Advisory services preparing entrepreneurs for attracting external investors to purchase shares”

Company: Remedis SA, Poznań

Sub-measure: 3.3.2

Project value: PLN 420.9 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 162.5 thousand

Implementation period: 1.04.2010 – 31.10.2010

Angel network

LEWIATAN

In terms of innovation, the Polish economy is far behind most of the EU Member States. If we want to be competitive on the global market, we have to change. How? For instance, by supporting young entrepreneurs and inventors.

Popularisation of high risk funds, angel funds, seeds capital and non-refundable grants – these are the objectives of Sub-measure 3.3 “Creating system facilitating investing in SMEs” under OP IE. Among the many institutions which applied to take part in the competition, the Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan clearly stands out. Its project “Activation and increasing competence of the entities operating on the business angel market in Poland” has been well assessed by PARP in May 2008. For implementation Lewiatan received co-financing in the amount of PLN 14.62 million. It is the largest project in this competition, addressed to young companies, inventors and potential investors – says Jacek Błoński, head of Lewiatan Business Angels (LBA). We are implementing the largest project because we want to create the biggest network of business angles in Poland.

Business Angel Market

„Angles” are mainly businessmen with unquestioned professional experience and who have achieved financial success. The Lewiatan Business Angels network is made up of 70 experts, many of whom are no longer active businessmen. They are eager to get involved in implementation of new, interesting ideas. This is not only about financial support - young entrepreneurs may also count on their practical knowledge and contacts

in the sector.

– The business angel market in Poland is going to develop, following at the same time the best world patterns – says Jacek Błoński. The essence of the project is to disseminate information on such type of innovative projects financing among entrepreneurs.

These are the main objectives of the project submitted to PARP. The planned initiatives are divided into four measures, which in turn comprise of sub-measures necessary for the effective implementation of the project. These are, for instance, professional trainings for persons managing the project, study visits, seminars and workshops for authors of ideas and investors, all concerning the Business Angel Market. The trainings are conducted by the best experts in the world. The activities promoting the idea of business angels in Poland focus on publications and dissemination of the best practices, contributing to knowledge and experience exchange. – With the EU co-financing we can put all these measures into life free of charge and on a larger scale – adds the head of Lewiatan Business Angels. – Without the EU support we could not have afforded such scale of our activities.

High yield

The Lewiatan Business Angels organises meetings with potential business angels from vari-



Jacek Błoński, head of Lewiatan Business

Angels:

“Activation and increasing competence of the entities operating on the business angel market in Poland” is a project addressed to young companies and inventors, but also to potential investors. We are creating the biggest network of business angels in Poland. The business angel market in Poland is going to develop, following at the same time the best world patterns - says Jacek Błoński. The essence of the project is to disseminate information on such type of financing of innovative projects among entrepreneurs. With the EU co-financing we can put all measures into life free of charge and on a larger scale. Our assumption is to focus on organisational issues related to creation of the BA network and promoting this idea in Poland.

ous organisations and seminars encouraging to making investments. During the two years of this part of the project, almost 200 people expressed their interest in such meetings. The other element of the Lewiatan Business Angels project is education of authors of ideas. It turns out that Internet, access to specialist literature and press are not enough. During the trainings organised by Lewiatan Business Angels, young entrepreneurs learn how to make equity transactions related to shares. And in many cases they learn about the basics of business. They are presented with possibilities of commercial use

of technology, taught drafting of business plans and investor agreements, conducting negotiations, transaction monitoring and even closing the investment. – Our assumption is to focus on organisational issues related to creation of the BA network and promoting this idea in Poland – says Jacek Błoński. – However, we know that in the past two years there were several dozens of advanced meetings between business angels and the interested parties, resulting in 20 transactions with young companies.

This year’s competition organised by Lewiatan Business Angels under the project “zaczynj biz” (“start your own biz”) has brought a high yield. From among 250 ideas submitted by entrepreneurs from the entire Poland, the competition jury selected 20 which were considered the best. These include the project of launching new form of Internet advertisement (placed on photos), a car immobiliser steered with the signal from a mobile phone and production of mobile robots.

Learn from the best

Jacek Błoński points to one more consequence of EU assistance. Through those funds we have developed contacts with the European Business Angel Network, which resulted in the visits of the best professionals from Europe, who gave lectures and took part in the panels. Also the Americans came to our country – e.g. Bill Payne. – These are the people who transfer the best practices onto the Polish market and constitute the best promotion of the Business Angels network – adds Jacek Błoński. – We can count on assistance and advice from foreign companies, which in the future will, hopefully, facilitate operation of foreign Business Angels in Poland.

- Project: “Activation and increasing competence of the entities operating on the business angel market in Poland”**
- Organisation: Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan, Warsaw**
- Sub-measure: 3.3.1**
- Project value: PLN 14.84 million**
- Co-financing: PLN 14.62 million**
- Implementation period: 4.07.2008 – 31.12.2013**



Intelligent underwear for the active

ACTIVE PRO

This time around everything started in high mountains where experienced climbers needed a whole range of specialist equipment to ensure security in the most extreme conditions. As the time went by, it appeared that the technology initially designed for the use of a small group of professionals had a broader application.

One of the elements of the climbers' equipment was thermoactive underwear. Although the name sounds mysterious, today this kind of clothing is no longer worn exclusively by professional climbers. Active Pro, a company based in Dąbrowa Górnicza in the Śląskie Voivodeship, is a key and thriving manufacturer of thermoactive underwear in the Polish market. In 2010, entrepreneurs from Zagłębie developed their own premiere collection of brand new underwear which was not targeted at enthusiastic Himalayan mountaineers only. This was possible

through co-financing under the Measure 4.2 OP IE "Stimulating R&D activities of enterprises and support in the area of industrial design". Today, it may be worn by just anybody.

Always dry, always sure

At a first glance, thermoactive underwear is not much different from regular cotton underwear. A T-shirt with either short or long sleeves, shorts and long johns made by Active Pro do not seem to be a particularly sophisticated item of clothing. But let us put this underwear on. The underwear designed by the company from Dąbrowa was made using exceptional materials which ensure that moisture evaporates quicker than it is absorbed, which allows both the fabric and the skin to remain dry. It is made using two layers of fabric based on polypropylene with very low water absorption and polyamide which has exactly opposite properties. Polypropylene in the >

Thermoactive underwear formerly exclusively for climbers may now be worn by just anybody. It has its advantages even in everyday use.





The first line of underwear for climbers was created by Active Pro for Krzysztof Wielicki before his excursion to K2. After successful tests, a transition from professional climbing to leisure was required.

- > internal part prevents moisture from accessing skin and, instead, the moisture transpires to the external layer, where it immediately evaporates. Additionally, silver ions contained in the fabric prevent bacterial growth naturally caused by perspiration. Unpleasant odours are therefore eliminated. The underwear was designed using such technologies as: RibbingDry (pressure-free ribbing supported by a special weave which adapts evenly to the body) and Air Channel (a system of air channels preventing the fabric from sticking to the body and enhancing air circulation).
 - The underwear helps the skin breathe. It was designed in a way to reflect the human “body map”. Another improvement that we have introduced was to remove seams and as a result there are no skin irritations even in the most difficult conditions. Traditional labels that irritated the skin are absent. The fabric is strong and resistant to damage – explains Marcin Kopeć, co-owner of Active Pro and project originator.

For climbers, bikers and hunters

The EU grant that the company received enabled it to launch the production of new generation underwear. To do this, it was necessary to buy modern equipment unheard of in the Polish market. The production line requires almost laboratory-like technical conditions. The management of Active Pro also knew that even the most technologically advanced clothes should look good - which is why they outsourced designing their underwear to stylists from the Academy of Fine Arts in Łódź. After several months, the first autumn-winter collection of Body Dry, the brand created by Active Pro, was ready. Naturally, their first buyers were climbing and high-mountain

excursion amateurs. But the underwear quickly became popular with motorcyclists. The third group of most eager buyers of Body Dry are hunters. And it also started attracting all the people seeking comfort in sports and leisure activities. In our country, Active Pro became one of very few key manufacturers in this industry. – In Poland there is still little awareness of thermoactive underwear, the reasons for wearing it and its efficiency. This is why we are planning a strong marketing campaign to convince our compatriots that it is a good idea to wear it even in situations which have nothing to do with extreme sports – announces Marcin Kopeć. – Czechs and Slovaks have quickly appreciated our products and they now buy about 70% of our products. We want to expand to foreign markets soon; especially to the East, for example to Russia or Ukraine.

Project: “Development and implementation of utility models and a thermoactive underwear design line”

Company: Active Pro Sp. z o.o., Dąbrowa Górnicza;

Measure: 4.2

Project value: PLN 1.02 million;

Co-financing: PLN 574.3 thousand;

Period of completion: 1.11.2009 - 31.05.2010



Marcin Kopeć, company co-owner, project originator:

During my own mountain excursions, when I was climbing Himalayas or Caucasus Mountains I learned that modern underwear which ensures ideal comfort for the body is in many cases a must. The first line of underwear for climbers was created by Active Pro for Krzysztof Wielicki before his excursion to K2. It proved very successful and because we had an opportunity to test it in such extreme conditions, we got the idea of a transition from professional climbing to leisure. We had the experience and a concept and these were still early days for the thermoactive underwear market in Poland. It was the perfect timing for us. As we expected, it was not just the climbers who started to appreciate the benefits of new generation underwear. It is actually useful in each, even everyday situation. It may be worn under casual clothes or a suit. The skin must breathe not only when we are doing sports.

The grant we received became an opportunity to realise our concept and dreams. We knew how to do it but it was a costly investment. Our clients confirm that it was a good decision.

Bottle of benefits

TECHPLAST

Composite containers instead of steel bottles. They are more modern, durable and much lighter. Techplast, a company based in Wieprz in the Śląskie Voivodeship, wants us to see a revolution in the market of products used in fire safety services and gastronomy.

There is a world of difference between steel bottles and composite bottles. The former are three times heavier as well as less convenient, not to mention their proneness to corrosion. The latter are more secure and their production is not as energy-consuming so it puts less of a burden on the environment. With the help of engineers from Techplast, what in common use terms is still a future vision will evolve into routine. All this was possible with co-financing under the Measure 4.2 OP IE “Stimulating R&D activities of enterprises and support in the area of industrial design”.

>



Just ask a fire fighter
what he would think
if he could carry
equipment on his back
that would be three
times lighter than before



Adam Saferna, co-owner of Techplast Sp. z o.o., project originator and initiator:

The idea of manufacturing composite bottles came up when I was on a holiday in Tunisia where I held talks with local entrepreneurs about setting up a mineral water plant. It was then that an idea sprang to my mind: why not try and use PET for other purposes than manufacturing beverage bottles? It was largely underrated in Poland. Following a series of difficult tests, research activities and enhanced prototypes, we developed an original product that might revolutionise our market, still dominated by steel bottles whose use is limited and which are not really safe. You may hold me fully responsible for saying that we are creating something unparalleled by products available to date.



> **Composite revolution**

The production of 21st century bottles resembles the technology that we are mainly familiar with through science fiction movies. The semi-finished product made from PET is carefully wrapped with fibreglass or carbon fibre. EU funding will enable the company to buy ultra-modern machines and open a pioneer production line as well as acquire the necessary know-how. What about the application of modern materials? It's really extensive. Composite containers may be used as an element of a fire safety system in a building. Composite water mist extinguisher (that could prove useful when extinguishing electronic equipment as the water mist quickly cuts off air supply for the fire) is more reliable than a steel extinguisher where the corroding interior may lead to nozzle clogging. What about using oxygen bottles in healthcare,

mountain rescue services or fire safety services? Just ask a fire fighter what he would think if he could carry equipment on his back that would be three times lighter than before. What about gastronomy? To pour beer off a barrel in a pub or restaurant a CO2 bottle is a must.

– A bottle made of plastics is not only lighter but also more convenient to use. There is also one more important aspect to it, namely: taste - stresses Józefa Saferna, CEO of TechPlast.

– Everyone has had a doubtfully enjoyable opportunity to taste beer whose aroma was far from ideal. This may have been caused by a corroding interior of the steel bottle. In a composite bottle, this is impossible.

An investment worth making

Despite their obvious advantages and benefits, replacing steel bottles with composite ones will



take some time. We need to convince people that this is the right investment and even more so because this upgrade will involve additional costs. Techplast is planning a large-scale marketing campaign to convince potential buyers that this investment is reasonable. The company's management hopes that composite bottle will soon be in common use throughout the country. Techplast also intends to develop a sales network for its products in Europe.

Józefa Saferna, CEO of Techplast Sp. z o.o.:

While observing the situation in foreign markets, we noticed the increasing popularity of a new-generation and interesting alternative to steel bottles which in many respects was more technically advanced. This phenomenon was rather marginal at the time. However, we saw a potential and with an EU grant we decided to try to take full advantage of it. There are numerous advantages that speak for composite bottles. All we need to do is to emphasise them and show how broad their use might be. We are a young company, but the opportunity that has arisen may not happen again.

Project: "Development and implementation of innovative composite bottles based on carbon fibre"

Company: Techplast Sp. z o.o., Wieprz

Measure: 4.2

Project value: PLN 1.16 million;

Co-financing: PLN 656.8 thousand;

Period of completion: 1.03.2009 - 31.12.2009



GOOD PRACTICES

„Fly-eye” for print

GRAFIX

There is a technological race of arms in the printing industry. The sector is extremely brutal on companies that do not keep up with novelties. With funds obtained from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy, Grafix Printing Centre from Gdańsk purchased an innovative device, which allowed its turnover to skyrocket.

In our line of business the best companies must have the latest equipment – said Rafał Rausz, president and owner of Grafix Printing Centre. Printing technologies are developing so quickly that a 2-3 years old device is outdated and does not allow for the implementation of the latest solutions. Competition never sleeps and offers more modern and better products to customers. Investments are therefore necessary.



10 thousand dpi

Grafix, like many Polish companies faced the problem of their funding. The method was to make use of Measure 4.4 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. It is not the first time that the company reached for EU grants. - Through grants we can buy equipment that we normally could not afford. This makes our offer exceptional, we develop production and employ new people all the time - says Rafał Rausz.



Through assistance from OP IE, Grafix uses the latest generation CtP system (pre-press-preparation) by Kodak, which premiered during the trade fair in Düsseldorf in 2008. It allows output on plates for offset printing with a resolution of 10 thousand dpi. It's over twice more than can be obtained by other devices of the best brands.

This high resolution allows for printing of materials using the recent „fly-eye” technology. This >

EU grants enable the purchase of technologies that most printing companies could otherwise not afford.

> is a printing technology on a special film composed of microlenses. Basically, such printing allows for three-dimensional effects, similar to the holographic printing, although the principle is slightly different – explains Rafał Rausz. – This is an innovative method. Suffice it to say that the film intended for this type of printing is produced only by two companies in the world. you can print simply everything with this technology, inter alia, CD covers or posters. This way our offer became truly competitive – says Rausz.

Rates going up

Obtaining a grant of PLN 5.8 million was not easy. – One and a half year passed between the moment we decided to apply for a grant and the launch of the device – says Rausz. The preparation of the project and the application took nearly three months. The costs associated with obtaining the necessary expertise and opinions which confirmed that the planned investment will actually implement innovation and that it is sensible from the economic point of view, were substantial. It was also necessary to obtain a promise from the bank, which would give credit for the project. – Coordination of those procedures was difficult and sometimes it didn't turn out

The system, bought by Grafix with the use of the funds, can output image on a plate for offset printing in the highest possible resolution.

quite as we wanted. And we are not newcomers as regards the applications for EU support. But it was worth it in the end – says Rafał Rausz. Although the global crisis was not entirely without impact on the printing industry, the investment resulted in sales growth and expansion of clients portfolio. – Last year was a bit worse, but everything suggests that we will meet the target indicator values – estimates the owner of Grafix Printing Centre.

Project: "Implementation of the innovative technology of printing on a fly-eye lens-raster film"
Company: Grafix – Centrum Poligrafii Rafał Rausz, Gdańsk
Measure: 4.4
Project value: PLN 11.83 million
Co-financing: PLN 5.82 million
Implementation period: 1.01.2009 – 30.09.2009



Rafał Rausz, owner of Grafix Printing Centre:

With each innovation we have to win the customers' trust. We already have a renowned brand and our customers have become accustomed to the fact that from time to time we offer an innovative solution. This facilitated the process. Market response was positive. We created new jobs, now we hire new people and it's probably the best evidence of development.

Innovative gates

INTERSPORT POLSKA

The company which distributes sports products earmarked funds from EU to a large logistic and technological undertaking. It also undertook the mutually beneficial cooperation with an R&D centre.

Opening of new sports showrooms by Intersport led to logistic problems. The company rented several warehouses near and within Kraków metropole. Management of such obsolete park proved to be difficult and costly. Moreover, it did not correspond to the rapid development that has taken place in the company in the last 3-4 years. Therefore, there were plans to build a logistics centre, which would replace all existing locations and storage areas. We applied for Measure 4.4 of the OP IE, which supports new investments with high potential for innovation. Our project was closely related to the field of logistics – says Piotr Mierzwa, deputy director of the company's development.

Intersport Poland is one of the forerunners in the application of logistics based on radio labelling of products.

The need for change

Sports industry is complicated in a sense that it involves very diverse products. This follows from the nature of individual goods - from ping-pong balls to heavy exercise equipment, which, unfortunately, causes problems in transport, storage and management. To create an appropriate infrastructure that would keep up with changes, the company decided to build a new generation logistics centre. The idea, at least in theory, seemed to be a simple solution. Even more so, because the company had already an adequate land for this, situated on the border of Cholerzyn and Balice. Several years ago, the company, back then under a different name and different legal nature, had contact with the European funds. Although the projects were small, with a value of several or several dozen thousand zloty, they have given invaluable experience. It paid off during the development of the large project "Implementation of an innovative EPC/RFID technology in the New Generation Logistics Centre", valued at about PLN 20 million. The company obtained financing amounting to approximately 50% of the cost. >





Piotr Mierzwa, deputy director of development in Intersport Poland SA, project coordinator:

During the project the attitude of the people from PARP and RFI was very positive. Nobody put a spoke in our wheel. On the contrary, we received a lot of help in the form of reliable information, as the information is the key to success. In addition, co-operation with external R&D institutions turned out all right, especially with the Institute of Logistics and Warehousing. It was a new and enriching experience for us. Had we not received a grant, we would probably not have chosen to contact a research and development institution. This could bring interesting collaboration in the future.

> **Read-out over distance**

EPC/RFID technology is a new system for identifying and monitoring logistics and distribution processes. It is based on identification techniques that use Electronic Product Codes (EPC), which provide an alternative to the commonly used and obsolete barcodes. In addition to building a modern building, the project covered the installation of the necessary infrastructure inside, including specialised software. The logistic centre is equipped with two RFID gates that read data from containers filled with specific batches of goods. In the case of standard containers that leave the warehouse and are shipped to stores, the gates read a specific EPC number at a distance. This way we know how many batches of goods are in the container without checking it with additional device, such as a scanner.

The company also implemented a program to support the goods economy. It consists in checking stocks in all stores each day by the computer system. For example, if the quantity of a particular product is below a minimum value, the system automatically selects the needed goods from the storage. During the night the data is processed and in the morning the containers already wait for shipment. And all this is possible thanks to the software and special machines that can work all day.

Inter-season

Using the RFID technology, the company decided to launch a unique service - Inter-season. In sports stores, goods e.g. winter products, are often sent back to warehouses after the season

Applying is not only seeking ways to acquire funds. It is the launch of processes beneficial for the company and its environment.

Several years ago, the company had contact with the European funds. The experience gained has proved invaluable when applying for the OP IE.

is over, only to be sent to stores again. Stores, as we know, have limited storage space. A modern warehouse gives access to off-season products throughout the year, because products are stored in containers that can easily be “recalled”. This also means that customers can, for example through a web portal, at any time order these products, which are hard to find in a given season in stores.

Inter-season is not the only benefit of this technology. It also allows for the employment of older people, which fits perfectly with the objective of equal opportunities. The company also established a closer collaboration with an R&D centre. Institute of Logistics and Warehousing helped it to develop a solution for one of the gates. The method used (special absorbers) has been notified to the Patent Office of the Republic of Poland as along with the organisation technique associated with the Inter-season service. Implementation of the project ended in September 2009. It was accomplished thanks to the funding. – We were able to finance an expensive investment, which we could not afford, if it were not for the European funds. Without these funds, the scale of the project would not have been so large; surely we would not have RFID gates today – admits Piotr Mierzwa.

The company realised that applying for funds does not only mean seeking ways to obtain European funds, but it is also a process by which a company, at no extra cost, can do much good. This might involve paying more attention to environmental issues, to discrimination of the disabled or collaboration with experts’ centres.



Project: “Implementation of an innovative EPC/RFID technology in the New Generation Logistics Centre”

Company: Intersport Polska SA, Kraków

Measure: 4.4

Project value: PLN 21.51 million

Co-financing: PLN 8.8 million

Implementation period: 11.06.2008 - 20.03.2009

Cardboard giant

KARTON PAK

European funds will allow Karton PAK to introduce innovative cardboard packaging products to the market. The company offered a unique construction of a display designed for automatic packaging of food products.

Manufacturer of cardboard packaging from Nowa Sól is growing into a strong player in the market. There is also considerable competition in the sector and without innovations a company can lose its strong position. Karton PAK received funds from Measure 4.4 of the OP IE for the implementation of product innovation. – Thanks to EU co-financing, our company has gained access to latest technology. In our view, not only have we caught up with the competition, mostly supported by foreign capital, but in some respects we are now ahead of it – says Konstanty Narejko, board member and financial director of Karton PAK SA.

Innovation introduced by Karton PAK allowed the production of environmentally safe packaging with offset printing for the food industry.

4 steps to success

The whole project was divided into four activities. First, the company sought a six colour offset machine in B0 format and a punching machine in B0 format. They ordered the machines and paid the deposit. Then, the first stage of construction works associated with redevelopment and expansion of the production hall was completed. The incurred costs related to the acquisition of the B0 format punching machine, telecommunications equipment, R&D equipment - equipment for testing and measuring the stiffness and creasing and software. The third step was the purchase of a six colour offset machine. Fourth action (when we visited the company it was still in progress) consisted in the completion of construction work in the production hall and the purchase of additional equipment, IT hardware and software. – Formal requirements of the project were strict, but at the same time precisely identified – says Konstanty Narejko.

Pioneer implementation

– The opportunity to do something new and innovative that no one before us did, brings great satisfaction. Now we can produce environmen-



Konstanty Narejko, member of the board, chief financial officer of Karton PAK SA

Our company largely managed to prepare and execute the project on its own. We prepared and drafted business plan assumptions ourselves. It were practically two people who worked on the project: myself and the president. We were helped by selected specialists in the company. We had previously used the EU funds, but those were for smaller-scale projects.

And because the project was so enormous and we needed preliminary verification of our actions, we decided that we would use third-party assistance. It helped us to structure our ideas, plan our actions. It also protected us from the errors in documentation and business plan, which would be important in assessing the overall project. However, I believe that the use of third-party services is not necessary. You need to focus on the entire project, select a leader who will lead the project. And to work overtime for two or three months.

tally safe and ecological cardboard packaging – concludes Konstanty Narejko. The project contributed to enhancing the competitiveness of the company and product innovation has given it a position of a pioneer in the production of safe cardboard packaging with offset printing for the food industry. Karton PAK directs 75-80% of the production to the domestic market. The result – an increase in packagings’ sale on foreign markets.

Project: “Implementation of product innovation in cardboard packaging”
Company: Zakład Produkcji Opakowań Karton PAK SA, Nowa Sól
Measure: 4.4
Project value: PLN 22.58 million
Co-financing: PLN 12.5 million
Implementation period: 10.11.2009 - 31.12.2010

Straightening out the tracks

KARYA

The Karya company bought a special device - one of the world's first rail-road vehicles for re-profiling of rails by milling. The company estimates that the investment could as much as raise the company's revenues by over thirty per cent. The environment will also benefit. Innovative technology eliminates sparking, reduces noise and dust.

Profiling of rails is a necessity. Treatment is required for both the used tracks and the new tracks. Before trains get on the tracks, the rails have to be carefully aligned to ensure a smooth ride. However, this is a service for which the demand is limited by the level of railway network development in Poland. Specialised equipment as that purchased by the company Karya may be here for two, three years at most, otherwise it would not be put in use.

Seek and you shall find

From the perspective of a company operating in the market for repair and maintenance of railway tracks it is, after all, a very interesting niche. Karya's management had been thinking about developing such service for a few years. In the first place they did not debate how to finance the plans, but looked for a new, greener technology. – We contacted various research institutions in the country. There was even a project of such device, but the problem was to construct it as a mobile device, moving along the tracks – says Grzegorz Michalik, senior vice-president of Karya, responsible for the project. It ultimately failed and the

company decided to follow a different path. They checked patent solutions registered abroad. The search brought Linsinger, an Austrian company, which patented such a mobile device and was in the process of producing the first vehicle.

Millions, but not for free

Next step was to find money for the project. As the company has received EU funds before (patent searches were financed by the EU) and the technology that it intended to obtain was brand new, the natural step was to apply for a grant under the Measure 4.4 of the OP IE "New investments of high innovative potential". A consulting company was hired to assist Karya in writing the application. It worked the second time. The total project cost will amount to PLN 29.5 million, with funding from OP IE of nearly PLN 15.9 million. It's a very solid financial push for the company, which last year recorded revenue of PLN 24 million. It looks inviting, but Grzegorz Michalik draws attention to the hindering effect of changes in euro exchange rate: – We paid for the device purchased abroad in euros. The money that companies receive from the EU funds are pri-



marily denominated in euro. But once received by a particular beneficiary, they are converted to Polish zloty. In our case - unfavourable exchange rate caused by adverse trend in the currency market. This meant that the money from the grant instead of covering 70% of the price, covered only half of the price of technology we purchased. We did not withdraw from the investment, although it cost us a lot more than initially expected.

Delivery for Christmas

The benefits were worth the effort. The company will implement the latest technology, services will be provided by the rail-road vehicle, which is an integrated two-module unit. It fulfils two functions: transport (moving on the roads) and utility (re-profiling rails). This is possible thanks to the car tractor unit coupled with a re-profiling unit. Production of such unit takes two years - when we prepared the publication, the device was expected in Poland in December 2010. The Company expects that the acquisition of technology will bring tangible benefits - the estimated increase in revenue is expected at the level of 15 to 35 per cent.

Grzegorz Michalik, vice-president of Karya:

Searching for new products results from efforts to diversify risks. We have been operating in the railway industry since the beginning of the company. We knew that there is a market niche. There was only one company on the Polish market which previously provided such services. At the same time it was known that demand for this service will increase in Europe. Wherever the speed on the railroad tracks is above 160 km/h, there is a need for re-profiling of rails. In Germany, the tracks where the trains run with such velocities are re-profiled every year. It is better to prevent damage than to repair it later.

Project: "Purchase of equipment in order to introduce new innovative services by the company Karya"

Company: Karya Sp. z o.o., Lublin

Measure: 4.4

Project value: PLN 29.5 million

Co-financing: PLN 15.9 million

Implementation period: 10.07.2008 - 31.12.2010

Attractive and durable

INTEMO

Economic changes that have occurred in Poland in recent years meant that companies gained access to new markets, but also faced the necessity of adjusting their products to fit customers' growing requirements. The product has to be durable and aesthetic.

Intemo processes plastics using injection moulding since 1996 and manufactures metal parts. Benefiting from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy, the company decided to buy a new production line for plastic processing, based on a completely new technology, called RHCM. – Basically, the idea is that the elements made of polymers are combined at very high temperatures and rapidly cooled – explains Marek Chmarzyński, president of the company. – The result is that they merge. No visible point of connection is undoubtedly an aesthetic asset, but most importantly, it is no longer the weak point of the produced item.

Forecasts for the crisis

With this technology Intemo expanded its range of light fixtures, lampshades and transport pallets and thus gained new customers, also abroad. – For a layman, a perceptible difference is mainly aesthetic. The elements made using the RHCM technology can satisfy the most demanding customer. But for an expert it is simply a new quality. And it is appreciated - Chmarzyński stresses. Intemo sought a grant for the purchase of the line at the end of 2008. The global economy was facing a crisis back then. It also affected the plastic processing industry. – We asked ourselves if we

actually want to invest in this technology and whether we did not overestimate its capacity – says the president of the company. – In addition, the challenge was to develop realistic estimates of new investment's effects. We managed to do that as well, though.

Trail blazing

The grant from the OP IE for the production line was the first grant for which Intemo applied effectively. Previous application for EU support obtained too little points to qualify for funding. But the preparations also paid off. – We have learned from our mistakes. This time we knew what to avoid and our efforts were successful – says Marek Chmarzyński. Now that the trail has already been blazed, the company will seek further grants. – It is not the only pro-development action of the company. We cooperate with the employment office and organise internships – say company executives. – We try to use opportunities opening up before us to a maximum. With the launch of new production Intemo increased employment. Currently, the company employs 136 people.

There is no doubt that the implementation of the project under the OP IE was a good decision. We



Implementation of the project under the OP IE was a good decision - we have new products, new contracts and we enter new markets.

have new products, new contracts and we enter new markets. Without innovative technology that we now have, it would not be possible – they emphasise in Intemo.

Customers without borders

Company supplies its products to customers in Poland and abroad, but the difference slowly blurs. For although a direct business partner is in Poland, the target customer who gets the item as part of the finished product is abroad. – For example, items for prams are sold to a company located 50 km from us – says Marek Chmarzyński. But complete prams go to Germany, the Benelux countries and many others. Similarly, in the household appliances industry – companies registered in Poland assemble the equipment intended for foreign markets. Such situations occur more and more frequently.



Project: "Intemo product diversification through the introduction of new products"

Company: Intemo SA, Piotrków Kujawski

Measure: 4.4

Project value: PLN 9.63 million

Co-financing: PLN 5.07 million

Implementation period: 5.01.2009 - 04.07.2009



GOOD PRACTICES

Innovations and healthy food

WROCLAWSKI PARK TECHNOLOGICZNY (WROCLAW TECHNOLOGY PARK)

The NUTRIBIOMED cluster managed to initiate cooperation between 35 entities from 10 different industries, ranging from the food, pharmaceutical and veterinary industries to waste management. They have jointly undertaken R&D work using a new production line.

The project was initiated by Professor Tadeusz Trziszka, PhD Eng. from Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences. While working on a production technology for new-generation eggs, enriched with bioactive substances and methods of extracting them and later transforming these into dietary supplements, he realised that the strengths and skills of different entities that might have a common goal should be combined. In 2007, a consortium agreement was signed between institutions from the research and business environment sector and entrepreneurs. In 2008, the consortium prepared a joint project on the development of cooperative relations and submitted a co-financing application under Measure 5.1 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy.

The relations within the cluster will facilitate the transfer of technology from science to the industry.

Area of cooperation

The project started in January 2009. Its goal was to develop cooperative relations and transfer the technologies into the commercial market, supported by joint marketing. On its inception in 2007, the cluster already worked on comprehensive solutions for biotechnological problems, including those pertaining to environmental protection. It is on this field of expertise that the relation members focus their activities - project activities provided for maximum use of raw materials and by-products created in the development of new products.

The consortium members assigned project coordination to the Wrocławski Park Technologiczny as it was most experienced in managing large projects. – The aim of the cluster is to implement innovative products of plant (mainly cereals) and animal origin (eggs) – said Joanna Kuřdo, PhD Eng., project manager and employee of Wrocław Technology Park. – We are, for instance, about to implement non-waste technologies for the use of chicken and quail eggs. With their shells, we >



Through joint actions, it is easier and cheaper to showcase your products at fairs and run an information campaign.

- > can produce a therapeutic agent for osteoporosis. Egg yolk contains phospholipids advantageous to humans. The ready products may take the form of tablets, capsules or food additives. Previously, professor Trziszka developed a natural agent used for food preservation based on a bioactive substance from chicken eggs, as well as a calcium preparations used in osteoporosis prevention. The list of possibilities is endless.

A line of many possibilities

The cluster is now launching a line to produce dietary supplements. Equipment worth of PLN 11 million was installed on the surface of 450



Joanna Kułdo, MD, PhD and biotechnologist, project manager:

On its own, project accounting is not a particularly complex task. I use a generator of applications for payments, developed by PARP. Systematic work and attention to detail is enough. The public procurement law brought most difficulties for us during the project. These procedures took up several months of project work. But the most encouraging thing is that all the results will be achieved and that we will finalise the project in February 2011. And the cluster is starting to live on its own.



m2 of the Wrocław Technology Park. Professor Tadeusz Trziszka claims that these are the most innovative solutions in the world. The system is modular, with the option of running several technology paths, ranging from the production of calcium-rich dietary biosupplements to highly efficient lecithin extraction. This integrated production line will be launched in January 2011. It turned out to be so technologically advanced that it was difficult to find a contractor who would undertake to run it. – The line will be used by cluster members as a tool for pilot production and for transfers of technology – added Joanna Kudło. – Two training sessions which still need to be held concern e.g.: work logistics and the operation of a production line for producing dietary supplements. Members of the cluster also include producers of cereals, feed and hen breeders. In order to obtain dietary supplements and biocomponents for the manufacture of cosmetics and pharmaceutical agents, they must supply the raw material of appropriate quality.

Cluster brand

Joint production of innovative products is an axis around which the cluster operates. The second important common area is the brand of the NUTRIBIOMED cluster. – We would like to put our logo not only on products developed through collaboration within the cluster – said the project manager. As a biotechnologist, Joanna Kudło has no trouble with the initial assessment of proposals. It is easier for her to predict potential complications during new implementation efforts. – In the longer perspective, we intend to launch a laboratory for food testing. We focus primarily on high quality - we want our brand

to be synonymous with quality. Another asset of the cooperative relation is the joint marketing activity. Together it is much easier and cheaper to showcase your products at fairs and run an information campaign.

Although in the benchmarking study conducted in 2010 by Deloitte for PARP, the NUTRIBIOMED cluster was classified as a relation with little experience, it already began to be recognised among food producers. They saw potential in the network and would like to entrust it with research activities to investigate innovative products (e.g. pasta containing omega 3 acids). The cluster members' enthusiasm is obvious. Launching innovative products to the market is becoming a reality. The first product with the cluster's logo has a chance to hit the market as early as in 2011.

The cluster will facilitate the transfer of technology from science to the industry. Wrocławski Park Technologiczny uses the services of an experienced patent attorney who can help in intellectual property management.

Project: "Development of cooperative relations within the NUTRIBIOMED Cluster aimed at commercialisation of innovative solutions"

Company: Wrocławski Park Technologiczny SA

Measure: 5.1.

Project value: PLN 13.14 million

Co-financing: PLN 10.83 million

Implementation period: 1.01.2009 - 28.02.2011



Protected tanks

ELPIGAZ

Each company investing in R&D work should protect its industrial property as it increases security and financial opportunities. A strategy consistently adopted by Elpigaz, a company from Gdańsk is the best example of how this works.

Elpigaz, manufacturer of car gas tanks and LPG installations, has already applied twice for support for the protection of an industrial solution under an international procedure. In 2007, the company completed a project (with EU co-financing) related to launching the production of innovative LPG tanks “compatible with multi-valves without a relief-valve”. Today, Elpigaz Sp. z o.o. exports its products to Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, UK, Norway, the Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Australia and China. It is now establishing new business contacts and negotiating with partners from other EU countries as well as Korea, India and Belarus. It adopted a business model for export of its own innovative and already patented products, which required the company to extend the protection to more countries.

Protection of your industrial property increases business security and financial success opportunities.

A patent for business

Inventions that can be commercialised are a cash cow. – We are doing a lot of R&D work and it would be a shame if someone else used our findings free of charge. We are entering new markets and thus we want to protect our interests there. We need a guarantee of a return on investment in research. The opportunity to receive funding under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy enabled us to choose more countries (than initially planned) where we will protect our technologies – said Grzegorz Jarzyński, CEO of Elpigaz. – With protection we will be more confident in launching our products to foreign markets and making our documentation available. If someone wishes to use our technological concepts we will grant a license. The invention which was filed for protection under the project is “a pressure tank, in particular of the four-bottom type”, for volatile gases, liquefied gases and liquids, used in car vehicles, machines, stationary or mobile devices. With the use of a central connector, pressure container allows for increasing the capacity by 3% compared to a typical con- >





We may start cornering foreign markets with our product without any fears that our property is abused.

> struction with external fittings. The first project under Sub-measure 5.4.1 of OP IE was submitted by the company for a call for proposals in 2008 and they received PLN 50 thousand of funding.

Chinese requirements

- We have already filed patent applications in Europe and we know the procedures. We are surprised by the requirements for applications submitted in India or China, where the requirements are original. It is a new experience for us – says the president of Elpigaz. – In order to receive protection you need to wait between about ten to several dozen months. As part of the first project, Elpigaz filed a patent application covering Europe in the following countries: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Island, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Monaco, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Sweden, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkey and in the country phase of the PCT in the following countries: Australia, China, Russia, India, Southern Korea, Belarus and Ukraine. In January 2010

the project was completed and the company settled accounts. During a call for proposals in February 2010, the company submitted another co-financing application to cover the cost of filing a patent protection application for a new invention - "pressure tank, in particular of the three-bottom type". – We received funding to the amount of PLN 255.5 thousand – Grzegorz Jarzyński is pleased. – We may start cornering foreign markets with our product without any fears that our property is abused.

Project: "Submission of an application under the PCT international procedure pertaining to the innovation: pressure tank, in particular of a four-bottom type, in order to be receive industrial property protection"
Company: Elpigaz Sp. z o.o., Gdańsk
Sub-measure: 5.4.1
Project value: PLN 92.1 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 56.3 thousand
Implementation period: 6.10.2008 - 31.01.2010



Grzegorz Jarzyński, CEO of Elpigaz Sp. z o.o.:

I encourage everyone who invests in R&D work to protect their industrial property. Such forward-looking thinking increases security and financial opportunities. Protection of one's solutions should be an element of growth strategy for companies. An opportunity to receive some support encourages us to plan carefully. Naturally, implementation of an EU-funded project means a slightly heavier workload: additional documentation, control procedures such as: money transfers. We are however assisted by a consulting company and a law firm.

A junior electrician at school

SILTRONICS

An inventor from Łódź developed an innovative learning aid which has no equivalent in the world - with this aid, each student may learn about electronics using their intuition and imagination.

Polish schools receive offers related to learning aids from abroad, which may at times be interesting but has one basic drawback: such aids are very expensive. This is why an idea by an entrepreneur from Łódź is invaluable; he developed a learning tool for children and young people, which has beaten all foreign offers in terms of innovation and price. The project was co-financed under the OP IE Sub-measure 5.4.1.

Our future: El-Go

Paweł Owczarek has been working in the electronics sector for 20 years. He is well familiar with the industry, its products and services. He knows very well that his company must be very flexible to assure success. During his search for new business opportunities, he got interested in electric circuit construction kits, which was

something that he remembered very well from school. He ran careful market research and, to his surprise, it turned out that the offer is scant and the products are mainly from China and low-quality. He discovered that the kits still use unreliable butt joints which are rigid (in the puzzle configuration) or a tangle of little wires difficult to make out. Such solutions were known 40 years ago.

When he gathered all the data, he decided to design his own kit. From the very beginning his assumption was that he is not just looking to build something better and cheaper than what is available. With his solution he wanted to make the knowledge of electronics accessible to everyone, as it is omnipresent. He also wanted it to become part of the natural environment. – What I am trying to prove is that modern electronics can be learnt using your intuition as is the case of learning how to use a computer – said Paweł Owczarek. He also decided that his invention would be way ahead of its time, by at least as many years as the present solutions have been used for. – In El-Go I have used a new, internationally unheard of idea for electric connections that self-activate when two elements come next to one another and which are held together

Paweł Owczarek's solution attracted the attention of Polish universities. This motivated him to design the kits as learning tools.



Paweł Owczarek, owner of Siltronics:

I would never make the decision to fund a PCT application on my own as the cost is high and the result highly uncertain. The whole procedure that the funding covered was a challenge which required me to learn a technology that was new to me at the time as well as the bureaucratic principles. The time required to overcome formalities, especially for small single-handedly run companies like mine, distracts you from tasks in hand. No co-financing programme that I am familiar with is designed for such companies. The Measure 5.4: "Intellectual property management" is among the easiest to implement. The experience gained is worth the effort as long as we have an idea for a patent to be filed. I learned the patent application procedures, which helped me feel more confident in this area. Now I know how and when protection of your ideas is worth the effort.

with magnetic forces – he explained. I decided to protect this innovative solution under the international patent application PCT procedure (Patent Cooperation Treaty). This is how El-Go, a new electric circuit construction kit, was born.

Electronics for everyone

Fathers and grandfathers were originally supposed to be the target audience for the electric circuit construction kits. In particular those who wanted to get their children and grandchildren interested in technology and show the kids that there is more to the world than computers. During the 12th Education Fair in Łódź the kit received two awards in the "best learning tool" category and Owczarek's solution attracted the attention of Polish universities.

El-Go was eventually designed as a learning aid for different profile primary school, lower secondary and high school students: for all those who study physics and technology. The kit may be used as a classroom learning aid or extra-curricular - for more advanced students. The kit

comprises boards with connection diagrams and elements to construct electric circuits. In a matter of several dozen seconds you may construct a light sensitive switch or a stairs switch which may switch the light on in the staircase for some period of time. Students will - on their own - be able to build a sound generator modulated by light levels or a photocell alarm system. – The only limit for the number of possible electronic circuits is a child's imagination – concluded Paweł Owczarek.

Project: "Protection against cheap copying of your products - fun and entertainment electronic kits "
Company: Siltronics Paweł Owczarek, Łódź
Sub-measure: 5.4.1
Project value: PLN 24 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 15.3 thousand
Implementation period: 1.08.2008 - 28.02.2010



PASSPORT TO EXPORT

GOOD PRACTICES



Export cosmetics

SZWEDO GROUP

The list of inventions that have revolutionised the life of women would certainly include contraceptive pill or dishwasher. Will the list soon have to be supplemented with a new device for permanent make-up produced by Szwedo Group from Prudnik?

All women know that in the morning hustle every minute is precious. The most time-consuming in the morning is a perfect make-up that stays perfect the whole day long. Szwedo Group from Prudnik in the Opolskie Voivodeship offers a revolutionary product. Permanent make-up not only assures comfort most women could not imagine before, but also helps to remove or conceal imperfections. Every woman could feel attractive.

From Prudnik into the world

The company is a pioneer in Poland in permanent make-up devices and wins the competition with imported products. The product is not only highly rated in Poland but also gradually conquers other markets – such as Germany, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Through EU subsidy under Measure 6.1 of OP IE, the products

of Szwedo Group will also be presented in the world's largest event in the cosmetics industry – Cosmoprof in Italy. During five days, at 90,000 m² of exhibition area, the global leaders advertise their products – more than 150,000 people will have the chance to see the products they offer.

Szwedo Group hopes that European women will quickly appreciate the technology conceived, designed and created by the company. All the more that this branch of cosmetics market and plastic surgery develops very dynamically.

– We have developed the most advanced and effective device that assures a long-term effect – stresses Elżbieta Poźniak, the co-owner of the company. – You can correct the lip line, enhance, enlarge and fill it with any colour. Permanent make-up may also be used to correct eyebrows and eye lines; you can also make a biotattoo. >

The Italian Cosmoprof fair might open the door to female customers in the entire Europe for the company from Prudnik.



> **Satisfaction free of charge**

The technology designed by the experts from Szwedo Group has already been submitted to the patent office. On that occasion, the company from Prudnik could patent the satisfaction given to the women by the inconspicuous pen-resembling device created by the company.

This device punctures the skin with special needles up to 420 times per second. Unlike traditional methods, this procedure takes less time, is less painful, causes decreased swelling and skin irritation. It is only a matter of time when not only women from Central Europe, but also from Italy, Spain or France will become convinced of the effectiveness of new permanent make-up methods.

Marzena Nosidlak, company manager, project co-provider:

Women somehow have to get on in the world where the cult of the ever-beautiful and ever-young prevails. We are trying to help them catch up with the world that is speeding away. In the contemporary world, the fair sex lives a fast and intense life; women want to preserve their beauty and they would like to have an impeccable make-up the whole day long, during supper and in the swimming pool. It is a natural need and a challenge at the same time that we are trying to cope with. Our permanent make-up device can improve many natural or acquired defects in the looks. For women after health complications or recovering from accidents, the appearance could be an enormous mental burden. In their situation, a procedure removing the defects or other shortcomings in the looks is of utmost importance.



1st stage

Project: "Development of export activity in the field of permanent make-up devices"

Company: Szwedo Group Sp. C. Leszek Szwedo, Elżbieta Poźniak, Prudnik

Measure: 6.1

Project value: PLN 15.25 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 10 thousand

Implementation period: 1.10.2009 – 31.12.2009

2nd stage (EDP implementation) in the project duration



Elżbieta Poźniak, co-owner of Szwedo Group:

We are the leader on the Polish market and the only manufacturer of permanent make-up devices in Poland. In our marketing strategy it is also very important to be open to foreign markets which develop even faster - we have a large contribution to it as well. We have a product, we have confidence in it and we are proud of it. Our experience lets us believe that our flagship model is equally popular in other countries. So far, we have advertised our product at the largest branch events in Poland. Now we are counting on participation in the Cosmoprof fair. We might be able to reach foreign markets.



Geometry of export

PRECYZJA-TECHNIK

It was by accident that Precyzja-Technik from Bydgoszcz improved planning of its expansion onto foreign markets. The company can promote itself well and for that it has received co-financing from the EU. Encouraged to make use of OP IE, the company has also applied for funding of dedicated research and implementation of new technology.

The company which was founded in 1995 (previously under the name “Spółdzielnia Precyzja”) has a well-established position on the Polish market of measurement instruments for technical car inspections. The company was determined to expand its export. Under Operational Programme Innovative Economy (Measure 6.1 “Passport to export”), Precyzja-Technik Sp. z o.o. has obtained money for marketing and sales in the entire Europe, from Moscow, through Belarus, Germany, former Yugoslavian Republics, to Italy. The company also wants to create a sales network in the countries of Middle East and Northern Africa.

Co-financing by accident

– We have learned of Measure “Passport to export” by chance. A company came to us and offered assistance in the preparation of such an application. The costs were small while the potential profits enormous – we did not hesitate long – says Sławomir Kocznur, project coordinator for the company from Bydgoszcz. – When our application was accepted, we became fully involved in the process of acquiring funds. Together with an external company, we prepared an Export Development Plan for our products

that has been accepted. The only problem at this stage was the time limit, namely September 2009. It is the period directly following the holiday season and the time when we concentrate on fair-related operations. We submitted the application virtually at the last minute – he recalls.

The development of the Export Development Plan cost the company PLN 7,000. The co-financing amounted to PLN 5,600. The contract for the second stage – implementation of the Export Development Plan – has been signed in March 2010. At that time, Precyzja-Technik was one of three first companies in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship and one of 30 nation-wide to be awarded co-financing for that purpose.

Money and experience

Implementation of the export plan was planned to proceed from April 2010 to June 2011. The company has deployed PLN 125,000 for that purpose. The same amount was received under co-financing. The money from that subsidy has made it possible for the company from Bydgoszcz to plan participation in three fair events: in Zagreb, Frankfurt am Main and Bologna. In addition, marketing materials have been pub-



Precyzja-Technik obtained money for marketing and sales in the entire Europe.

lished in English and Russian.

– The acquisition of EU support entailed considerable workload. With that application we were learning how to apply for EU money. The main problem we faced consisted in proper formulation of the timetable of measures – says Sławomir Kocznur. – For example, one of the fairs was held in the period that was not covered by the original export plan. Hence, we had to draw up an annex to the agreement, so that EU support covered some costs of our participation in this fair, but a year later. The experience paid off. The company became active in the efforts to obtain EU assistance. In July 2010 the company signed an agreement with PARP on co-financing of research and development of modern technologies under Measures 1.4-4.1 of OP IE. The investment cost amounted to PLN 1 million, half of which will come from the European Union funds. The money from co-financing will be used to design and implement an innovative instrument used to measure the geometry of wheels and axes.

Sławomir Kocznur, vice-president for development in Precyzja-Technik:

When our application was accepted, we got fully involved in the implementation of the project. Together with an external company we prepared an Export Development Plan for our products, which has also been accepted. EU support helped us to operate on the quite specific Belarusian market. Additionally, the analysis conducted by a consulting company indicates that our products will also sell well in Southern Europe. Therefore we decided to take part in fairs held in this region. Drawing up the application and implementation thereof paid off - we not only obtained co-financing, but also gained experience, which has paid dividend in subsequent months.

1st stage

Project: "Application for co-financing of Export Development Plan under the 1st stage of Measure 6.1 Passport to export, Polish economy on the international market, OP IE"

Company: Precyzja-Technik Sp. z o.o., Bydgoszcz

Measure: 6.1

Project value: PLN 12.5 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 10 thousand

Implementation period: 1.04.2009 – 30.09.2009

2nd stage

Project: "Implementation of EDP of Precyzja-Technik Sp. z o.o."

Project value: PLN 250 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 125 thousand

Implementation period: 1.01.2010 – 30.06.2010

From Rawa to China

HAGMED

The market of disposable medical products has good prospects – the demand is growing as the population ages. To remain competitive, an enterprise needs to go global. The funds from the European Union enabled the company from Rawa Mazowiecka to compete for contracts in China or India.

The Hagmed Plastics Factory from Rawa Mazowiecka is a manufacturer of disposable medical equipment. Substantial part of the company's offer comprises high-technology products and specialist heart diagnosis and stimulation electrodes. The owners, Kazimierz Tomaszewski and Roman Zajac, realise that they have to look for their chances abroad.

– Export is an integral part of the company's business from the beginning of its operation – says Zbigniew Przerwa, exports expert. Hagmed has been participating in the largest branch fairs as an exhibitor. This is effective and encourages to take on further challenges.

– This way the concept of extending sales by four new large markets emerged: China, India, France and Canada – adds Zbigniew Przerwa.

Market research

Knowing from their experience to succeed in export you need a good strategy, the company's management board decided to be well prepared. Detailed analyses of new markets were necessary: volume of demand, main domestic manufacturers, foreign suppliers and a certification system. Also specific information, e.g. whether reprocessing of medical equipment – that is reuse (or multiple use) of dispos-

able products – takes place and, if so, to what extent. It is clear that it is advocated in Poland as well since it allows for millions of savings on the national scale. The management board was also interested in the method of obtaining certificates on these markets. All Hagmed products have the CE quality mark – respected in the entire EU. The company also has the so-called ISO-7 clean-room production procedures in place. However, many countries required their domestic approvals and special certificates, in particular for the so-called third group medical products, i.e. those with the highest quality and risk requirements. Unfortunately, Hagmed was not able to obtain this information from the publicly available databases.

Methodology

– Therefore, we decided we needed to operate methodically – says Zbigniew Przerwa. – We had to hire a consulting company. This cost, just like the expenses for other export-enhancing measures, could be partially covered by European Funds. Application for co-financing for the project entitled "Elaboration of Export Development Plan for Hagmed as a chance for company's development" has been approved and the company signed an agreement with PARP

in mid-July 2009. Project implementation has been split into two stages; the funds under the first one amounting to PLN 10 thousand have been earmarked by the company for acquiring counselling services related to the preparation of export plan (total cost – PLN 12.5 thousand). It has been completed in line with the timetable - in December 2009. The counselling company from Toruń has recommended in the conclusion to the analysis that Hagmed should increase activity on the new international specialist fair and regional exhibitions. – Although we have participated in the fair, new ideas emerged in the course of negotiations with the counsellor's representatives, which additionally met our expectations – says an export specialist from Hagmed.

First contacts established

The company has skilfully used the counsellors' assistance and the European Funds. This year, it has already established contacts with three French companies and with one of those companies there is a chance of real cooperation. It will be based on the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) rules. OEM contracts are constituted by custom-tailored services, i.e. production for the needs specified by the client. However, Hagmed owners know that without large investments in promotion, which need to be supported by additional expenditure, it is not possible to enter these markets – especially for a relatively small manufacturer. This way, the company assures an open door to promotion since the products on the French market will have a label: "Made in ZTS Hagmed for...". The calendar of subsequent promotion measures is tight. At the end of September 2010 a delegation was sent to Canada and then to the international medical fair in Düsseldorf. However, Hagmed wants to concentrate mainly on export to China. It has some experience with Chinese contractors (the company imports some parts from China). The counsellor suggested that a local partner for export could be sought that will be able to pro-

Zbigniew Przerwa, exports expert:

If we manage to sign at least one contract with a partner from China or India, the company will have a chance of significantly increasing its export and production. The management board has brought rich experience from the participation in Measure 6.1 of OP IE. We certainly know more about EU assistance mechanisms and funds acquisition procedures and hence also more about measures based on Western management standards. We learn from our mistakes - Hagmed has applied for EU funds before. It has submitted a project of production technology for specialist heart examination electrode, which was unique on the national scale. The project was approved by PARP, but unfortunately mistakes were committed during its implementation. The project failed, but we have learned the lesson and gained one more valuable experience.

vide help in entering the market. This way it will be easier to overcome administrative barriers, to register the company and the products and to have them certified. As of December 2010, the company's representatives were going to participate in the Medifest fair in New Delhi, one of the largest healthcare events in Asia. – EU assistance has proven very useful and we will certainly use it again – stresses Kazimierz Tomaszewski, co-owner of the company. – Without it, we would not be able to afford offering our products on such promising markets of both Asian countries. And even if we could, our presentations would be modest and barely noticeable.

1st stage

Project: "Elaboration of Export Development Plan for Hagmed as a chance for company's development"

Company: Zakład Tworzyw Sztucznych Hagmed – Zajęc i Tomaszewski Sp. j., Rawa Mazowiecka

Measure: 6.1

Project value: PLN 12.5 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 10 thousand

Implementation period: 30.06.2009 – 31.12.2009

2nd stage

Project: "Implementation of Export Development Plan for Hagmed as a chance for company's development"

Project value: PLN 400 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 200 thousand

Implementation period: 1.03.2010 – 31.12.2011



GOOD PRACTICES

Fault remotely detected

GAMP

GaMP, a company from Zielona Góra, specialises in providing unique ITC solutions to enterprises. Grants obtained from EU funds help the company finance further innovations - the most recent idea is to create an original application for monitoring devices responsible e.g. for the operation of production lines in large enterprises.

GaMP's adventure with EU funds began last year, when the company obtained co-financing under Measure 8.2. GaMP needs only 20 employees to provide comprehensive IT outsourcing services to 30 clients. Through modern technology and automation of individual processes, a team of technicians supervises the continuity of work in partner enterprises - responding to any faults reported by representatives of the companies that are serviced by GaMP. To ensure a seamless repair or recovery after a breakdown, programmers from Zielona Góra created an application allowing for passive monitoring.

Monitoring centre

– We need people only to inform us that something is not working, we – as a company that supports production lines – are primarily interested in finding out what caused the malfunction or stoppage – explains Piotr Gawara, president of GaMP. – That is why we have designed a tool to provide us with the data on the condition of our client's system. Any irregularities are immediately picked up by the person who is on call at the monitoring centre. The service engineer is sent to remove the problem knowing exactly what caused it and having all the necessary tools and spare parts. >

GaMP needs only 20 employees to provide comprehensive IT outsourcing services to 30 clients.



> The original application designed by GaMP's employees has been deployed by two contractors listed in the application for co-financing. The first of them is a leader in the production of insulation materials. GaMP programmers integrated the system in a way as to enable passive on-site monitoring of network active devices and up-to-date tracing of their status online. The second company where the innovative application has been implemented is a dealer of brands such as Mercedes-Benz, Chrysler or Jeep. In this case, GaMP staff is informed of any anomalies occurring in the partner company through error notifications generated by the application.

Virtualization

The project "Future of virtualisation: B2B services implemented in the GaMP DATA CENTER" is another undertaking supported under Measure 8.2. In April 2010 the team of programmers from Zielona Góra started works on an innovative tool. The PLN 700 thousand of co-financing from the European Union assured that the appli-

cation was developed quick as a flash. The human element is often unreliable and eliminating it from diagnostics will allow companies to save time and money, and the team of programmers from GaMP - to extend the offer. The project is a continuation of another project "Outsourcing of B2B applications based on the data processing centre DATA CENTER" - also co-financed by the EU. Continuation of the works which were started last year will allow GaMP to offer as many as six B2B systems. Extension of the GaMP's offer is possible as new IT equipment where the software will be installed was purchased, capable of providing new B2B services. B2B systems created by the programmers will be targeted primarily at large companies with production lines. Although they represent only 20% of all clients, they generate nearly 80% of profits of the company from Zielona Góra. GaMP, gaining experience of maintaining the largest companies, has blossomed into a leader among companies offering B2B systems. Development of the company, stimulated by European funds, caused automation of further processes and improvement of business relationship between the company and its contractors.



Project: „Future of virtualisation: B2B services implemented in the GaMP DATA CENTER”

Company: GaMP Sp. z o.o., Zielona Góra

Measure: 8.2

Project value: PLN 999.1 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 699.4 thousand

Implementation period: 01.03. 2010 – 31.12.2010



Piotr Gawara, president of GaMP Sp. z o.o.:

Funds from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy allowed us to continue the project that obtained co-financing last year. We will apply for a subsidy also in the next competition – we are now at the stage of completing the required documentation. This year, through European funds, we managed to broaden the portfolio of B2B services and we want to follow this path. We are working on expanding our system and we hope to automate other areas of our business in the near future. I can say that we plan to introduce inter alia a modern model of electronic exchange of documents with our partners.

Profitable hobby

ISOLUTIONS

Is there still big money to be made on virtual reality?

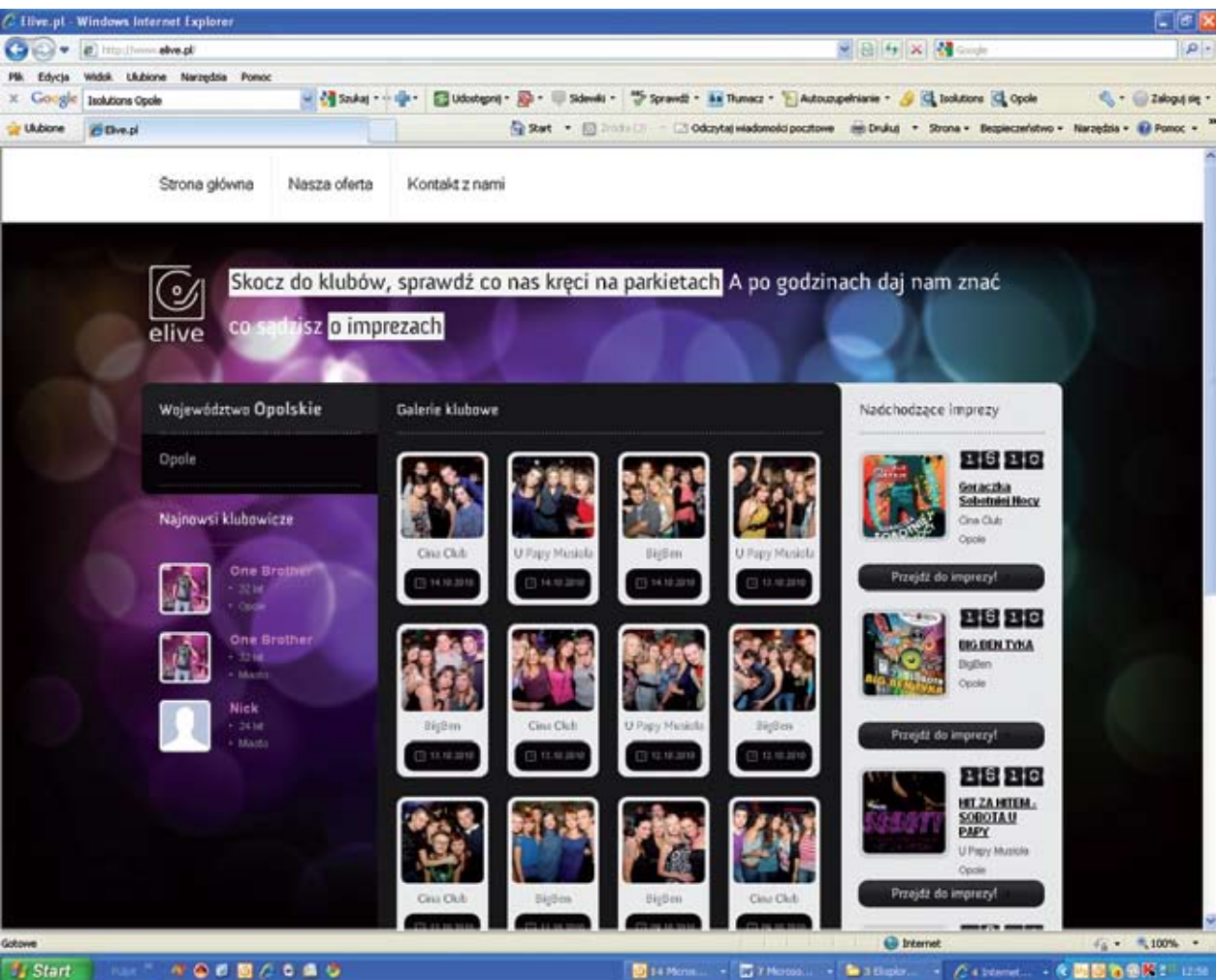
Two entrepreneurs from Opole think so - they focused their business on a market niche, and developed an innovative tool that will revolutionise the so-called community vortals.

Large social networking sites are slowly landing on the scrap heap - despite creating industry areas within, they are unable to offer sophisticated communication tools. It turns out that a significant proportion of users prefer to operate in an intimate circle, not in a large group that, except for a few or at most a few dozen people, they do not feel any bonds with. Two entrepreneurs noticed this regularity. They have deployed a project of an Internet vortal handling hobbies and interests. The project could be developed through co-financing from Measure 8.1 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy.

Exclusiveness for a good price

Before making the first step towards obtaining co-financing, Krzysztof Jaciw and Paweł Szewczyk conducted a thorough analysis of the market and trends in Internet services, including the phenomenon of moving interpersonal relations to the Internet. They examined, among others, the mechanism of formation and operation of communities around specific interests or hobbies. For this purpose they analysed places where potential users of their vortal spent their free time. It turned out that the largest group included customers of pubs, discos and restaurants. Further analyses aimed at discovering the Internet capacity of entities running facilities of this type. Then, they found out that most clubs, discos and restaurants cannot afford to run their own separate community vortals and they rather gather their supporters and persons identifying with their facility only on Nasza Klasa, through

At Elive.pl every club, pub, disco or restaurant can create its own community vortals profiled as it wishes.



Internet users prefer intimate circles rather than large groups that they do not feel any bonds with. Creators of Elive.pl noticed this regularity.

adding them to friends to their profiles. The collected data confirmed their assumptions and revealed great market potential of the idea. They decided to prepare an Elive.pl project that would allow every club, pub, disco or restaurant to create their own community vortal with the profile adjusted specifically to their needs. – The monthly fee is minimal and amounts to only PLN 800 gross – says Paweł Szewczyk, co-owner and

creator of Elive. – This is not a financial barrier for most facilities operating in the industry.

Starting with Opole

What will the benefits for clubs and users be? First of all the iSolutions, the operator of Elive, provides each entity with an Internet community vortal with the domain of the club with the extension of Elive.pl. The e-service interface is >



Paweł Szewczyk, founder and co-owner of Elive.pl:

This is our first project supported by European Union funds. We have plans, ambitions and knowledge and the EU money will help us achieve business success. The receipt of co-financing distinguishes our project from other ideas. On the other hand, the very application procedure and requirements it can cool any enthusiasm. Nevertheless, we managed to get through this phase. Elive is our success and we believe that the fact that we obtained funds from the OP IE underlines our expertise and presents our company as a reliable partner.


We are constantly working on our project. We are learning new things all the time, develop our skills to meet our objectives in the best possible way. We undertake this effort because we want to make Elive a nationwide web portal uniting fans of different places. This is where you would be able to arrange a party with your friends, book a table, get a free ticket and after the event - watch and comment on photographs.

> modelled on the appearance of a particular club. The subscription price includes the possibility of updating any information about the clubs by themselves – starting with events, concerts, exhibitions, through modifying the offer, finishing with placing multimedia presentations. Unregistered users can have access to public photo galleries, calendars and lists of events showing the number of people who took part. Registered users can enjoy full access to photos, videos and other files. Moreover, they can book a table online or dedicate a song to a selected person, their or another group. From the users' point of view a particularly attractive option is setting up own profiles that can be shared with friends. This way you can build more intimate social groups within a specific vortal. Users may communicate on-line using several communication tools such as chat, sending invitations, adding and commenting on photo galleries.

– Transparency of the vortal allows persons with even a very slight command of Internet to use its features and modules efficiently, which prevents IT exclusion – says Krzysztof Jaciw, founder and co-owner of Elive.pl.

As emphasised by both entrepreneurs, given the niche nature of the vortal, it cannot be im-

plemented at the national scale from the very beginning. Therefore, they started their activity in Opole, where their company has its main office. Even before the project was launched, it experienced huge feedback from clubs, restaurants and discos in the city as well as from users. Good reception of the idea encourages further development - there are plans to extend the project to other hobby groups.



Project: "Creation of an Internet vortal ELIVE associating communities of individual clubs, restaurants and discotheques"

Company: iSolutions Krzysztof Jaciw, Paweł Szewczyk Sp. j., Opole

Measure: 8.1

Project value: PLN 532.3 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 391.3 thousand

Implementation period: 1.08.2009 – 28.02.2011

Parents' essentials

EWA ŚWIERŻEWSKA QLTURKA.PL

What to read to the youngest? Which novelty is worth giving to preschoolers, what kind of music would be best for them, what exhibition could they see? The qulturka.pl portal helps find answers to these and other questions - it is the first Polish Internet opinion-forming media in the field of culture and art for children.

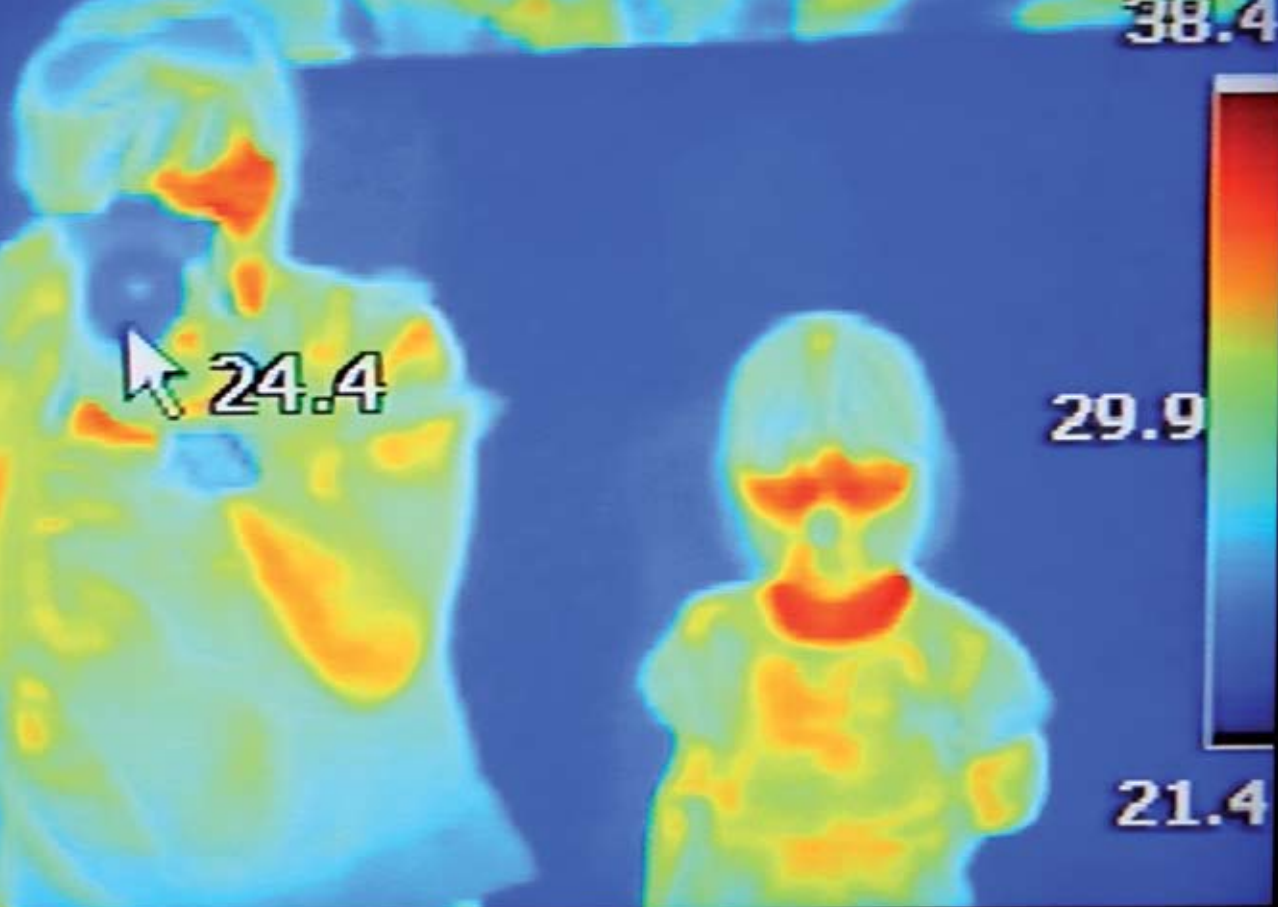
The website has been launched in December 2008 and already offers readers more than 7,500 articles, reviews of books and records, descriptions of plays or art exhibitions as well as ideas for games for children. Ewa Świerżewska, editor-in-chief and founder of Qlturka, acknowledges that such an extensive form of the portal was possible largely because of EU co-financing from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy. The subsidy she was granted in 2008 under Measure 8.1 amounted to PLN 265 thousand.

Imbided with mother's and grandmother's milk

The portal is the realisation of her life passion. The idea was conceived about three years ago. - For many years I have been preoccupied with reviewing and translation of books for children. At some point I came to the conclusion that it

is high time to address the culture for children in a more comprehensive way. While books are widely disseminated, music and art, for example - only to a small extent. I decided to create a portal - she recalls.

Ewa Świerżewska jokes that her love for literature has been imbided with the milk of her mother and grandmother. - I had lived in the circle of children literature since my youngest years - she says. Her grandmother, Ludmiła Marjańska, a writer, poet, president of the Polish Writers' Association in 1993-96, wrote several books for children. Her mother - Maria Marjańska-Czernik, for many years edited magazines for children such as "Miś", "Płomyczek", "Płomyk", headed the "Book for Children" foundation issuing a bimonthly magazine about books for children and the youth - entitled "Gulliver", she was president of the Association of Friends of Books for Young People, Polish Section of IBBY.



Ewa Świerżewska herself cooperated, among others, with monthlies such as “Twoje Dziecko”, “Cudowne Lata w Szkole”, the magazine “Kiki-mora”; she still writes reviews for the magazine for women entitled “Bluszcz”, the monthly “Dziecko” and for www.przecinekikropka.pl. What is more, she translated about 20 books, including several for children. A few years ago together with her husband, Łukasz Świerżewski, she drew the image of the website on several sheets of paper: they designed the details, considered the subject area. – We started to think how to breathe life into it, how to finance it. At first we thought that we could do it with our own money but we quickly realised that if we wanted to create a truly professional and unique portal I had been dreaming of, these funds would not be enough – says Ewa Świerżewska.

Qlturka offers its readers more than 7,500 articles, reviews of books and records, descriptions of plays or art exhibition as well as ideas for games for children.

Guinea pig

In 2008, at the information point of the Regional Financing Institution she learnt that the call for proposals for Measure 8.1 of the OP IE was starting. She submitted an application. – It was not easy. It was the first call for proposals so I was a guinea pig – she laughs recalling her struggles with the application generator.

She began on 1 October 2008 that, according to the plans, was the first day of the project imple- >

The portal has become a desired patron of new publications. Its logo is sought by the biggest publishers.



> mentation. – I had to act according to the plan provided in the application. That moment was a start of a very intense period of my life. It was filled with continuous, 24-hour work – she says. But due to perseverance and determination as early as on 6 December 2008, after less than two months, the portal was deployed. What did the EU funds give her? They provided resources for, among others, covering costs of graphic design and mechanism of the portal at the first stage of implementation. These works were performed by an external IT company. The impetus of the undertaking, the possibility of promoting it on a large scale are the results of EU co-financing. The content is provided by Ewa Świerżewska herself and her small team.

Small team, large portal

The website provides parents for example with reviews of books, records, exhibits, theatre performances, films, interviews with authors of children books. There is the “Cultural Playground” dedicated to the youngest children. It is a virtual box of entertainment for children which ensures that children going there will use their time in the best possible way. The smallest children can become familiar with works of renowned poets and writers, know the most outstanding works of art, entertainment is ensured by games, colour-

Ewa Świerżewska, editor-in-chief and creator of Qlturka:

From the very beginning we had to act in accordance with the plan we provided in the application. For example, prior to any order, it was necessary to collect offers, everything should be documented carefully. Procedures of Measure 8.1 are a great school and huge test for small companies. Settlement of the project is complicated, requires diligence and discipline. Anyone who decides to use EU funds should be aware that this decision forces them to perform an entire set of extra activities that are never carried out by a normally functioning micro-enterprise which employs one or two persons. You have to make scrupulous settlements with the financing institution. This project has given me the strength and made me believe that when the idea is good, its implementation, despite enormous challenges and short-term difficulties, is possible and can be a success.

ing, virtual jigsaws, puzzles. The strict requirements that Ewa Świerżewska herself established in the application motivated her to fight for the best possible results of the portal's audience ratings.

– The aim was 80 thousand so-called “unique users”. We managed to exceed this number within the intended time – she says. Already in June 2010 Qlturka could boast of 430 thousand page views per month, 120 thousand users and the newsletter associated with the portal reaches as much as 12 thousand subscribers every week. It is hard to believe that the entire editing staff of the portal consists of the owner and an editor she employs.

Her husband gave her spiritual support at every stage: he helped prepare the application and supports conceptually. – We cooperate with external authors, who from time to time prepare for us texts on request. What is more, we order short stories and novels written in sections by professional writers and illustrators specifically for Qlturka. Only recently another permanent contributor to the website joined us – says the editor-in-chief of Qlturka. The real support is a group of volunteers. – There are bloggers, mothers on parental leaves among them.

They are more interested in writing, being active rather than in author's fees, so what they often expect for their work are books, tickets for current events that we obtain in connection with media patronage. For some of them it is sufficient that they can be present on Qlturka since writing is their passion and an internal necessity. There are really great talents that I admire among our authors – says Świerżewska.

Business with mission

Although the portal will celebrate only the second birthday in December, it has already gained recognition, not only among readers. It gets many good reviews, compliments, it also received a prize – honourable mention in the competition for the best website about books - Paper Screen 2009. It became a desired patron

of new publications, whose logo is sought by the biggest publishers.

- The informative function is very important, but from the beginning I have aimed at making the site offer more than just information. I wanted to make it the first opinion leading medium in the area of culture for children and I hope that it actually is – says the editor-in-chief of Qlturka. The portal is only the first step in the construction of a promotion and publishing agency operating in the culture for children. – We have very ambitious plans, involving not only activities on the Internet. At the moment we are preparing to offer the users of our portal the possibility of buying some culture-related products for children through our portal. Having us as an intermediary, our readers could benefit from significant discounts and promotions –she says. We plan also social activities designed to promote participation in culture by the youngest children from different backgrounds. A huge role in our activity, apart from business which is obviously very important, is our mission.

Qlturka is the first step in the construction of a promotion and publishing agency operating in the culture for children.

Project: “Educational and community portal Qlturka.pl, the first phase of the construction of promotion and publishing agency operating in the area of culture for children”

Company: Ewa Świerżewska Qlturka.pl

Measure 8.1

Project value: PLN 361.2 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 265.4 thousand

Implementation period: 1.10.2008 – 30.06.2010

Subsidy for weight

LBL GROUP

According to TNS OBOP research, almost half of Poles are overweight and 16% are obese. At the same time there is one dietician per 12 thousand people. These data have inspired Adam Stadnicki, co-owner of LBL Group from Lublin, to create a portal that offers an e-dietician service.

Through the grant from Measure 8.1 of the OP IE this idea gave rise to *slimon.pl* – the most modern service covering dietetics in Poland. The idea was born a few years ago, shortly after Adam Stadnicki and Paweł Brzyski opened in 2007 an online shop called *Mega Market Odchudzania* (Mega Store of Weight Loss). Today, it is the leading e-shop in Poland with products needed to lose weight, offering inter alia dietetic foods, food supplements for persons trying to lose weight, fitness equipment and cosmetics.

More than a guide

Even then they knew that *slimon.pl* is to be more than just an ordinary guide. They decided to create a modern, comprehensive Internet tool to help persons needing assistance get access to professional knowledge and specialists. – Creation of such a website would cost hundreds of thousands dollars, require involvement of

several specialists to develop it and fill in with specialised content. When we started our operation, such costs exceeded our capabilities – says Adam Stadnicki.

Operational Programme Innovative Economy was a great opportunity. In 2009, they submitted an application for a subsidy under Measure 8.1 and obtained co-financing for their project in the amount of more than PLN 300 thousand, i.e. nearly 85% of project value. Preparations to start the website began in June 2009. EU funds allowed them, among others, to employ specialist companies that professionally developed the graphics and the content of the site. – We assumed from the beginning that we had to rely on a high quality – Adam Stadnicki recalls. They invited Grzegorz Kowaluk to develop the substantive content of this site. He is the creator of an innovative programme of obesity prevention in schools and of a known method of Individual System of Training and Nutrition (ISTO), the author of several books on fighting obesity. At present, he is the chief dietician of *slimon.pl*.

Viewers pay for the service of individual dietician care. A monthly subscription can be purchased for PLN 59, which is cheaper than a visit to a specialist in a clinic.

Cheaper than the clinic

After nearly a year, *slimon.pl* was launched in May 2010. The one-of-the-kind website was created. The pages provide you with the latest knowledge about nutrition, ready to use diets

and allow to exchange experiences with other people struggling with overweight. You can also buy diets adjusted to you individually by professionals. – Slimon.pl ensures contact with a professional dietician. If e-mail contact is not sufficient for someone, there is a possibility of a telephone call – says Monika Skomorowska, slimon.pl manager, responsible for marketing. The owners treat the website as something more than business – for them it is a social mission. Therefore they put emphasis on the social networking feature. – Everybody can create a profile and participate in discussions on the forum or keep a diary of weight loss which can motivate others to act - says Adam Stadnicki. And he adds: – The community is very important. We can find support from people who have similar problems, gain valuable knowledge and start virtual friendships regardless of our place of residence. The portal ensures anonymity for everyone. EU funds provided a safe start for the portal, but it will have to make money in the future. Therefore, the service of individual dietician care not free. A monthly subscription can be purchased for PLN 59. It was calculated to make it cheaper than a visit to a dietician in a clinic. As a part of the service, clients can also obtain advice, determine their diets, adjust them to their liking. They are also provided with ongoing supervision by a specialist dietician who monitors the progress and motivates to act – says Monika Skomorowska.

Keeping our finger on the pulse

The popularity of the portal has been growing every month. – In October, there were nearly five thousand permanent members registered. After the first month of activity we reached between 200 and 300 daily hits. Currently there are 500-600 – says Adam Stadnicki. The company employs three persons, but some services are outsourced. The IT-side of the portal is managed by Ibero. The substantive content is provided by a dietetics clinic – ISTO. Both companies participated in the preparatory works. Formally, the



Adam Stadnicki, co-owner of LBL Group:

Creation of the portal would cost hundreds of thousands of zloty, require employing several specialists to develop it and fill with content. When we were starting our activity, these costs exceeded our capacity. EU co-financing allowed us to develop our company. Without the grant it would be difficult for us to implement the portal in its current, expanded form.

project has already been completed (when we talked with the owners, they were waiting for the final settlement). This does not mean that they want to rest on their laurels. – An Internet portal ceases to exist if it stands still. We have to keep our finger on the pulse to be constantly two steps ahead of others – says Adam Stadnicki.

Project: “Creation of an e-dietician service - automated service of selecting an individual nutrition diet”

Company: LBL Group Sp. j. P. Brzyski, A. Stadnicki
Measure 8.1

Project value: PLN 353 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 300.05 thousand

Implementation period: 1.06.2009 – 30.04.2010

Bunch of ideas

EUROFLORIST POLSKA

We order a bouquet at ten o'clock and at twelve the addressee receives it in a remote corner of Poland. A person in Paris or Rome would wait for the flowers no longer than two days - you just need to pick up the phone or click through a website. But that is not all. Euro Florist, a company from Poznań, will soon overtake the European competition.



EuroFlorist allows you to send flowers to a specific address in any place in Poland and abroad. A potential customer can order a floral gift, taking into consideration the price, occasion and even composition category. The company cooperates with 700 florists in Poland who in fact prepare the bouquets. The number of orders increasing each year caused that the system of traditional communication started to fail. There were errors in address data, which entailed a cascade of complications. In order to improve

the performance, a decision was made to transfer from the traditional model of communication to the Internet.

Net casting

When a chance for obtaining funds for this purpose appeared in 2008 under Measure 8.2 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy, a decision was made to use it. A project of extending the existing B2B system with new module was created to facilitate cooperation of



EuroFlorist with partner florists. The project was completed in February 2010. The basic idea was to improve the key business processes - operations performed by the employees manually were transferred to an intelligent system that not only takes orders but also automatically directs them to the florist chosen optimally in terms of the destination address. The project was prepared by an external company. – We knew what we wanted from the beginning – says Andrzej Świdorski, country manager of EuroFlo-

rist Poland. – We were heavily involved in all works related to the preparation of the application. The entire team worked on the project. Every member of the group of several persons employed at the company was responsible for a particular item, every person was an important element of the undertaking. The most difficult task, according to Andrzej Świdorski, was to convince business partners, i.e. florists, to take part in the project. The assumption was that the project would network 700 florists. In October >



Even the first months showed that the optimisation of the key business processes between EuroFlorist and its partners have given measurable effects.

- > 2010 as many as 200 florists benefited fully from all functions of the B2B system, the remaining ones – partially. – It is a process, it takes time. There are places where we have to overcome mental barriers, elsewhere we encounter technical problems – adds Andrzej Świdorski.

New quality

Changes introduced by EuroFlorist were beneficial for all. An Internet system of selling flowers helped the company gain a new quality, not only between customers and the company but also between the company and a trading partner. Everyone has benefited. Employees now have the time to be creative and focus on new services. Managing the warehouse and document flow has become easier. Florists benefitted from time savings as the system allows them to carry out a wider number of orders. Simultaneously, the maintenance costs have decreased. The human errors resulting in unnecessary complaints have been eliminated. The dynamics of action increased. Extended Internet communications provided florists with a wide access to all resources of the system. The problems with the flow of information relating to orders are gone, florists can now use maps to help the courier reach the indicated address. It is possible to view history of transactions and settlements. Also the customers have benefited from the changes. Not only can they order a specific bouquet from anywhere through the Internet, but also have a guarantee that the ordered product will in fact be delivered. The service in Poland can be performed in real time, i.e. for remote cities it is about 2 hours and in Europe – 2 days. The service is, however, often performed even on the same day.

To be continued...

After the project, it turned out that it was a hit and it can be even better. More business processes can be carried out through the Internet. Thus a decision has been made to extend the system with further modules – Now we are introducing e-invoices thereby saving time and money. Then we will implement SMS confirmation of the service – says Andrzej Świdorski. – This means that at the moment of delivering the bouquet by the courier, the client will receive a message on his or her mobile phone. Many clients want to know about this fact immediately. We used to receive many queries on the phone and could not always answer them precisely. Now this will be handled automatically. Even the first months showed that the optimisation of the key business processes between EuroFlorist and its partners has given measurable effects. Order completion time shortened by 40% and unit costs decreased by 18%. The percentage of complaints dropped by 22% and the costs associated with generating and transmission of settlement documents resulted in savings of another 18%.

Project: “Extension of the existing B2B system with new modules facilitating cooperation of EuroFlorist with partner florists”

Company: EuroFlorist Sp. z o.o., Poznań

Measure: 8.2

Project value: PLN 584.5 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 332.7 thousand

Implementation period: 1.04.2010 – 31.03.2011



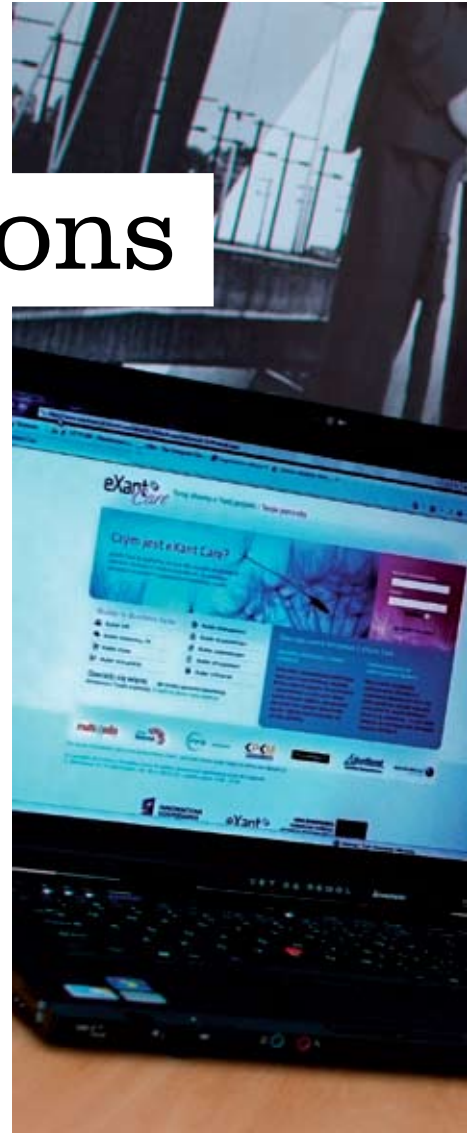
Andrzej Świderski, country manager of EuroFlorist Poland:

Introduction of the B2B system has completely changed our company. We are now oriented towards both our business partners and customers. All our activities are focused on meeting their needs and facilitating mutual relationships. When implementing the project, it was essential to prepare a precise plan. We defined in detail the place where we wanted to be in a year and consistently worked to achieve this goal.

Communications leader

EXANT SOFTWARE POLSKA

Efficient information exchange system saves time and labour. eXant Software Poland is the leader in implementing advanced solutions to support information flow in large and medium-sized enterprises.



Front office, since this is the name of this approach, opens you to all participants in the business processes that take place in the enterprises. Modern solutions are required by companies that have already benefited from the possibilities of improving the management system (back office). Such package of innovative solutions helps entrepreneurs achieve fast return on investment. The software, which is the flagship product of the enterprise, is iBuilder. Companies that have used this offer may expect many facilitations.

Common platform

The idea for the Project under Measure 8.2 of the OP IE was a result of a brainstorming session. We learned from the media that it is possible to obtain co-financing for our idea and we decided to use it – explains Jakub Kwaśnik, president of the company's board. The enterprise relied on independence and prepared an application for the competition using its own resources. - Cooperation with the Greater Poland Agency for Enterprise Development (Wielkopolska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości) proved to be very >



Jakub Kwaśnik, president of the board of eXant:

We learned from the media, that it is possible to co-finance our idea and decided to use this opportunity. In order to carry out a project of this type, you need to be financially secured, use the advance. It is also worth adjusting the subsidy do one's own capabilities. What are the benefits from the project? The platform allows us to engage in dialogue with clients. It also allows clients to interact with each other and exchange information about products, services and additional functions. Because of it sale has increased since the clients have access to a common platform, find out what projects are undertaken by others. They also want to benefit from e-learning.

> helpful the - emphasises the president of the board. The enthusiasm for work did not disappear under a pile of documents. – It is essential to have a positive attitude – says Jakub Kwaśnik. The biggest problem for eXant was to plan the schedule and transfer between various stages of implementation of the undertaking. The head of the company draws also attention to the long time of waiting for approval of applications and payments. – To carry out a project of this type, you need to be financially secured, use the advance. It is also worth adjusting the subsidy to one's own capabilities – he advises new beneficiaries.

The idea was not divorced from reality and had a clearly defined business purpose. EXant Care platform makes it possible to minimise work by using self-service. Employees can manage their own projects and use electronic exchange of documents and necessary data: submit leave request or settle delegations, clients can check the status of their project on their own, give their comments and read project documentation. – So far, we have sent e-mails, now we have a common platform, to which everyone has access – explains Jakub Kwaśnik. – Everyone logging in the morning can see what tasks are waiting for him and what documents have already been exchanged.

Success in five steps

The project will include five stages of the system implementation. The first step was to plan and conduct necessary studies. As a result, specialised reports were created. They evaluated the current business process of the company. In the second step technical and substantive preparations were launched to create a B2B platform. Equipment was purchased, new jobs were established. The third stage is the project manager's job, which supervised works on development of

the new system. The next step was to create a multi-module platform, ready to handle projects and relationships between clients. The last step was implementation of the system and training persons who would take up its operation. The prepared product was immediately noticed and appreciated by clients of eXant which are well-known companies from various industries: sale networks, companies connected with production, communications, telecommunication or publishing.

„We share our knowledge”

This is a flagship phrase of eXant. The company treats its clients as partners and gives them the opportunity to actively participate in product development. It has not been long since the completion of the project, but as soon as today you can see benefits in communication between clients. Exchange of experience and opinions caused an increase in sale. The project allows employees to save time thus improving efficiency of their work. – Before, our staff had lost time on unnecessary communication – emphasises Jakub Kwaśnik. The company calculated that between PLN 15 and 25 thousand is saved every month due to implementation of the system. The team of eXant works more efficiently and can perform more projects at the same time.

eXant has been in Poland for over six years. It has had many successes and contracts with for example Multimedia Poland, DGA, Media Expert, Komunalne Przedsiębiorstwo Komunikacji Miejskiej in Białystok or Kulczyk Tradex. – We focus primarily on the Polish market, but we offer international standards – underlines president Jakub Kwaśnik. The project that was implemented in eXant with the use of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy opened new opportunities, since there was no similar solution in the world, as the head of the company



highlights. Implementation of such a large undertaking helped to improve the company's image, enhance customer confidence. – This and next year we are focusing on spreading the partner channel in Poland and enter new markets with our improved product – adds the head of the company. Will they benefit from further EU subsidies? Even today they are thinking about "Passport to export" (Measure 6.1 of the OP IE) and opportunities offered by Greater Poland Regional Operational Programme.

Implementation of the project contributed to improving the image of eXant, increase customer confidence and therefore to company's competitiveness.

Project: "Creation of a B2B cooperation platform concerning management of IT projects"
Company: eXant Software Polska Sp. z o.o., Poznań
Measure: 8.2
Project value: PLN 624.1 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 292.6 thousand
Implementation period: 1.12.2008 – 30.04.2010

Online kitchen design

DE ART KUCHNIEONLINE.PL

The website www.kuchnieonline.pl allows you to design, make a valuation and buy comprehensive kitchen equipment - furniture and domestic appliances. In 2009, the project won the competition for the most innovative B2B technology organised by the PARP under the auspices of the Minister of the Interior and Administration.

De Art Leszek Ratus (now: De Art kuchnieonline.pl) began its operation in 1995 as a local producer of kitchen furniture. It extended the offer later and included furniture of other manufacturers. It became the Polish partner of ALNO AG, a German kitchen furniture company. The idea to sell furniture not only in the reality but also through the Internet was born in the summer of 2008, during a car travel from Puławy, where the company headquarters are located, to Warsaw, where the enterprise has two showrooms of kitchen furniture.

Holiday boom

The inspiration came from the fact that more and more sale solutions on the market used the Internet. For trading companies selling custom-designed and made-to-measure furniture on the Internet was not easy. There were no ready patterns on which they could rely – they needed to be developed.

The problem included not only designing an appropriate tool, but also getting money for it. The company decided to apply for a subsidy from the European funds. In September 2008, a competition was announced for projects under Measure 8.2 of the OP IE. In October, the company submitted an application, which was positively evaluated and they could start creating the website in February 2009.





Its opening took, however, some time. Although an initial version appeared on the Internet already in autumn 2009, it required more work as a pioneering project. The website achieved its final shape only in June 2010 and although holidays are not the best time for developing activity of this type, after only three months the company signed about 20 agreements with partners who intended to use the website to the design kitchens for their clients. Sale through this channel represents 30% of company revenue. And everything indicates that the proportion of online sale in relation to the traditional one is about to reverse in one year.

Half cheaper

Benefits of the website are obvious. The company can significantly lower its operating costs.

Also some personnel costs will be eliminated. Unfortunately, there are also problems connected with the use of the EU subsidy. For example, the rigors concerning changes in the project bind company management's hands and prevent modernisation. This makes the creators afraid that the website which is nowadays innovative will become obsolete within a year. How does it work? To make a purchase, you must sign up for the website. While everyone can do it, this is not an ordinary shop. Kuchnieonline.pl were indented primarily for interior designers, design agencies, developers and ordinary Mr Smith. The furniture is custom-made and the company's offer is accessible 24 hours a day. Recipients of the service can design a kitchen interior for themselves or their clients at any >



Leszek Pawel Ratus, president of the board of De Art kuchnieonline.pl Sp. z o.o., CEO:

Kuchnieonline.pl is the first iPolish design and shopping website for the B2B technology. The uniqueness of the solution lies in the possibility of simultaneous design and visualisation of a kitchen interior in 3D and purchasing furniture together with household appliances with the possibility of ordering assembly services. This idea was inspired by observing the constantly changing market and the need to adjust to customer needs. Kuchnieonline.pl provides a possibility of easier access to business partners and clients, regardless of their location, use of new techniques of sale with applying more and more IT tools. This is also a possibility to reduce prices of furniture by limiting costs of traditional showrooms.

> time, from any computer with Internet access. Because of the formula of a design and purchase website the custom-made furniture can be even a half cheaper than for the purchase through traditional channel for sale.

The project consists of an online system enabling to order products and services via Internet and an online application that facilitates completing elements and forces compliance of links between them. The design of the system eliminates any errors. The intranet module contains information helping to assembly the products. Orders are passed directly to the system of company management which ensures their direct processing. The system generates orders to suppliers and sends them via e-mail.

Sales network

To ensure that everything works like clockwork, architects, design companies or developers who would like to participate in the project are needed. Kuchnieonline.pl is a tool, which largely facilitates their work and creates new opportunities – without leaving their desks they can see various kitchen appliances, check whether individual elements fit together and be updated on how much each option costs.

The ambition of Art De kuchnieonline.pl is to gather selected kitchen companies through acquiring partners in every Polish city and create a professional sales network. The website should provide a greater number of clients, which will translate into increased profitability of its trading partners.

The ambition of De Art kuchnieonline.pl is to attract partners in every Polish city and create a professional sale network.

Recipients of the service can design a kitchen interior for themselves or their clients at any time, from any computer with Internet access.



Another field on which the company intends to focus is the extension of the product range. The website is universal. After signing the cooperation agreement it can also be used by other furniture manufacturers who could be interested in this idea to increase their sales.

Project: "Implementation of a B2B platform integrated with the management system at De Art Leszek Ratus"

Company: De Art kuchnieonline.pl Sp. z o.o., Puławy

Measure: 8.2

Project value: PLN 263.9 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 151.4 thousand

Completion date: 1.12.2008 – 1.09.2010

Registered e-letter

BRAINSOFT

A disadvantage of sending an e-mail is that the recipient has no obligation to confirm reading it. This may go down in history when an innovative product of BrainSoft Sp. z o.o. becomes widespread. The company offers a service assuming that opening an e-mail will be treated as receiving a registered letter.

Wanting to use their scientific experience in practice, lecturers from universities in Zielona Góra started business activity. They obtained co-financing under Measure 8.1 of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy and invested their time and money in developing an innovative service which will change habits of email users.

For small and large

The overall objective of the project is to create and offer a service of providing persons, institutions and economic entities which exchange information via electronic mail, with the

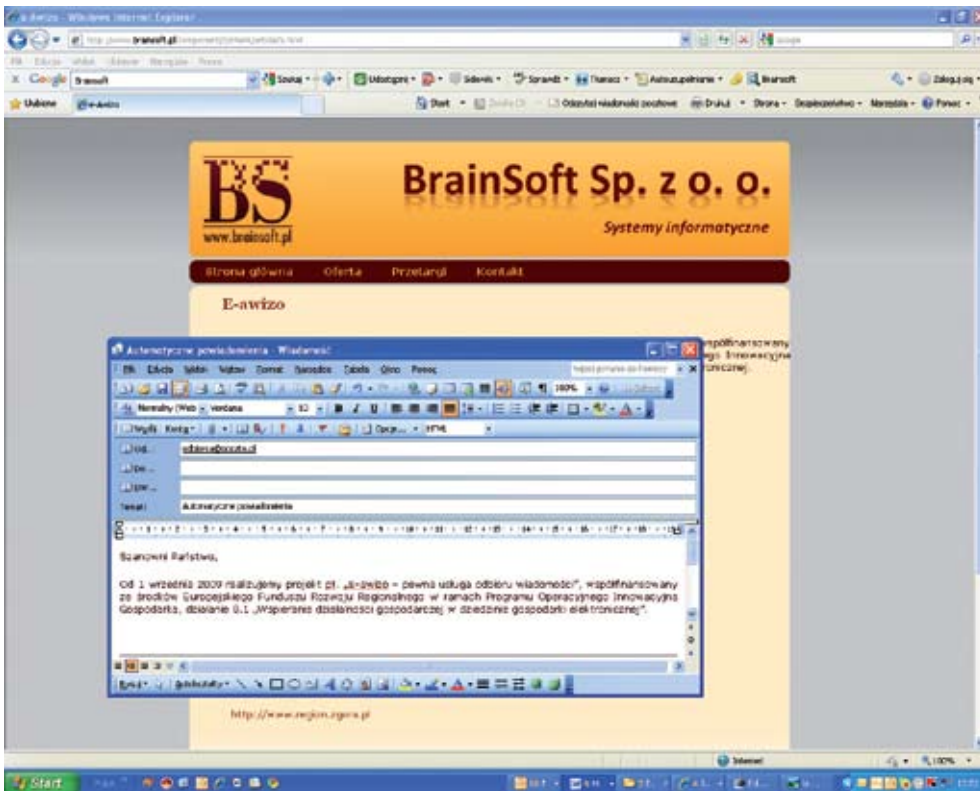
knowledge that a message was delivered and received. During the process of receiving messages the time of its receipt will be registered, so that a person or company sending a message will be given the opportunity to execute the deadline for replying to the information. – Analysing the market, we noticed that there is no offer concerning the service of receiving an e-mail. We decided that with the use of EU funds we can prepare a product which would fill this gap – says Marek Jackiewicz, president of the board of BrainSoft Sp. z o.o.

The implemented project is targeted at a wide

Marek Jackiewicz, president of the board of BrainSoft Sp. z o.o.:

Before we started our company, we were lecturers at a university. We were preoccupied with cryptography. We decided to take our scientific experience to the sphere of business. Since I had had the opportunity to prepare and carry out projects funded by the European Union before, we could combine our experience and prepare the project ourselves, both in terms of the substantive and formal side. Our service is to rely on treating sending an e-mail and opening it as receiving a registered letter. This is an innovation which would have been difficult to create without EU funds. This is the first project implemented with the use of the EU funds for our young company. We took the opportunity and it paid off.





group. – The product will be modernised and we hope that it will support development of e-administration in public administration in the future. Due to the support from the EU, the appropriate version of our product can also be aimed at individual clients and entrepreneurs – adds president Jackiewicz.

E-notice

The first stage included designing the system generating information about the time of sending and receiving a message taking into consideration its content. At the same time computers, servers and software enabling to trace the execution of applications implementing the e-service were purchased. After preparing the software and running the website, the second phase of the project will be carried out – a campaign to promote the project and its effects of e-notice service.

This e-service will enable the parties involved in the exchange of electronic information to receive a return receipt for each sent message. The

sender of the e-mail will get information about receiving the message by the recipient and the exact time. This will allow completion of many issues that had not often been handled on time before.

Introduction of the e-notice service can have educational value for the emerging information society. Surely it will improve the communication between business partners and contribute to increase the security of information.

Project: "E-notice – safe service of message receipt"
Company: BrainSoft Sp. z o.o., Zielona Góra
Measure: 8.1
Project value: PLN 867.6 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 737.5 thousand
Implementation period: 1.09.2009 – 31.03.2011

Made-to-measure system

HURTIMEX

Hurtimex has been creating children fashion for 20 years. Initially it used top European brands, but soon started to design its own collections, which are now sold under the names of Tup Tup and HOOP. Innovative projects co-financed by the EU help the company ride the crest of a wave.

The company operates on the basis of a network of franchise bonds, it also delivers goods to several hundred receivers – mainly multi-brand stores. Moreover, it owns several outlet shops. The company and its interests are also represented by business agents. The organisation scheme developed in this way is a real challenge for any enterprise. You have to control many orders and payments, ensure timely contracts and establish new contacts.

Keeping up with the changes

Since the first years of its existence, the company has been powered by innovation. The decision to start the own design activity by the company was a breakthrough. Apart from the best quality products and modern design the company focused on efficient management. The first innovation of Hurtimex was introduction of a new method of goods distribution based on customer orders made half a year in advance divided into two collections: spring-summer and autumn-winter. In order to improve operation and introduce further modernisations, the company decided to use an EU subsidy under the

Operational Programme Innovative Economy. – The decision to implement the project under the OP IE was simple – says vice-president of Hurtimex, Jarosław Kopeć. – The company is constantly expanding and modernising the management system and it is known that one of the basic elements of development is the quick flow of information within the own distribution network.

Innovation often arises from the need to keep up with changes in the market. That was the case of Hurtimex. – We knew that we needed to develop, the environment required that from us – admits Jarosław Kopeć.

Trained on subsidies

The project was implemented by people from the company, particularly from the IT team that developed necessary analyses and prepared specifications. Employees did not complain about unclear EU provisions or extensive documentation, although, as they emphasised, they had to turn for help to a consulting company in a critical moment. Hurtimex is an experienced company, it has already implemented

two projects financed from EU funds. The first one (participation in international fairs) received a subsidy from the Regional Operational Programme of the Łódzkie Voivodeship 2007-2013, the second (expanding activity to foreign markets) under Measure 6.1 "Passport to export" of the OP IE.

– The company focuses on expanding abroad. We are glad that due to EU subsidies it is easier for us to implement our objectives – says Jarosław Kopeć. With so much experience in the implementation of projects co-financed from operational programmes, the project of the B2B electronic business ran smoothly.

Generating savings

An innovative system implemented by Hurtimex brought a new quality of handling contractors. Processing of contracts does not require direct involvement of staff since most of the process is automatic. This will allow to limit the number of persons employed in the sales department. With a significant increase in the number of contractors, only two new persons necessary for website maintenance were employed. This innovation generated more savings in the enterprise, despite the growing network of partners. – Now

The Business to Business system has simplified operation of the entire enterprise. Circulation of documents and information is easier and more transparent.

I cannot imagine my work without it – admits Łukasz Zięba, head of the IT department.

The Business to Business system has simplified the company's operation. Circulation of documents and information is easier and more transparent. Through the application modules the employees have access to specific functions that are ascribed in accordance with their duties and authority. The application has extensive reporting functionalities which make it possible to monitor transactions and easily detect errors and omissions. An ordinary Internet user does not have access to the Hurtimex platform. By using an encrypted tunnel in the system, only cooperating companies and employees can log in. A special programme is required that allows you to log in to the system. This guarantees the users full security of the flow of information.

Full steam ahead!

Implementation of the project was a breakthrough for Hurtimex but, according to the employees, the company managed the innovation well. Today, everyone is happy because the benefits are evident. – We are constantly improving in dealing with problems, the system has no secrets before us – says Łukasz Zięba with pride. Even today the vice-president Jarosław Kopeć plans expansion to new branches abroad and implementation of new projects: – We have just submitted another application for an EU subsidy.

Łukasz Zięba, coordinator of the IT department, Hurtimex SA:

Implementation of the system was very laborious. Launching the project happened to be most difficult, many complications and problems were encountered at the moment of transition to work in the system. Employees had to deal with many mistakes, both connected with production and caused by human errors. All of them resulted from the project nature which was characteristic for implementation of IT systems. Today, we are constantly improving in dealing with problems, the system has no secrets before us. Application of the Business to Business system resulted in the expansion of the network of partners with whom the company cooperates. These are both wholesalers and retail shops operating on a franchise basis.

Project: "Introduction of organisational innovation through implementation of B2B system at Hurtimex SA and its partners"

Company: Hurtimex SA, Łódź

Measure: 8.2

Project value: PLN 587.6 thousand

Co-financing: PLN 276.46 thousand

Implementation period: 1.11.2009 – 31.12.2009

Movement on platform

BIURO PLUS LEWANDOWSKI

Ofix.pl is an Internet platform that helps companies plan purchase of office products reasonably. The website, co-financed under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy, allows clients to manage transactions faster and cheaper.

Ofix.pl is owned by Biuro Plus Lewandowski. This company is the market leader in the field of professional office supplies and logistics solutions for enterprises in two voivodeships: Wielkopolskie and Pomorskie. It is also a shareholder of Biuro Plus Spółka Akcyjna which has several branches in the entire country. The company specialises in handling corporations with scattered structure and numerous branches across the country.

Cutting costs

What can ofix.pl do? First of all, it ensures the possibility of buying through the Internet. Even such a small element may reduce costs of transport associated with making orders. The system also allows you to add products to the cart as

needs arise, without having to create lists and notes and finalise the order when the list of needed supplies is complete. The cart is saved even after you log out. Cost report? Nothing simpler. Just click on the appropriate module on the ofix.pl and it appears on the screen. Using the old technology such a report would require several labour hours of a person preparing the proper entries. The reports allow also for the analysis of needs and detailed forecasting. This also helps to cut costs: the biggest expenses are associated with placing orders on short notice. Using the ofix.pl helps to avoid such situation and buy supplies in a timely manner, which of course means cheaper.

The scale effect is evident. A properly large number of clients and orders, combined with efficient logistics centre, allows to lower costs of delivering products to the customer.

Ofix.pl is an innovative tool that allows you to reduce the time spent on the organisation of the office to minimum while maintaining control over purchases.

Way to success

At the time of launching the project, Biuro Plus Lewandowski handled 1,500 clients. The cost of designing, producing and launching the transaction platform with products offered by the company amounted to PLN 798,000, the



EU subsidy was PLN 345,000. – The European Union promotes modern technologies – says Dominik Lewandowski, owner. – And what is more, it appreciates the fact that these most modern ones are commonly applied. Things that have recently been invented for the purpose of space exploration are today in widespread use in commerce, production of food or clothing. Hence the idea to apply for EU funds for adjusting the latest technologies to the industry in which we operate. With co-financing from OP IE, ofix.pl has responded to the needs expressed by business partners of Biuro Plus Lewandowski. It is an innovative tool which allows you to reduce the time spent on office organisation to the very minimum while maintaining control over spending. According to the company data, the platform has already been used by almost three thousand Polish enterprises, which means that the number of clients has doubled. – The goal has been achieved in 200%. There is great movement on the platform and everything indicates that there will be more satisfied users – says Monika Węclawiak, project coordinator.

Almost three thousand Polish companies use the ofix.pl platform

Shopping lists

Because of the ofix.pl system, trading partners of Biuro Plus Lewandowski can easily access the history of their orders and products they bought most often. This enables them to quickly reopen the whole set of orders or only selected items. Business partners can easily create ready shopping lists, add several products or a full package to the cart with one click of the mouse. All this can be done by a single employee without leaving the desk. After completing the cart, the system itself suggests products which might be needed but which are still not included in the order. These are popular functionalities which however do not work properly in many on-line shops the way the users – In particular entrepreneurs – would prefer.



> **Our client is our originator**

Business partners of Biuro Plus Lewandowski participated in creating the ofix.pl system from the very beginning. They told us what they needed, tested the paths and processes of the platform and provided their comments. Adjusting solutions to actual clients' needs, evidenced by surveys and interviews, is the advantage of the transaction system of ofix.pl, especially when compared to competitive systems in the industry of professional office supplies. Possibilities to expand the ofix.pl transaction platform are endless. Thanks to contacts with companies ordering through the platform, every day new ideas are provided by business partners of Biuro Plus Lewandowski. - It is essential for us that the system evolved along with the changing needs of its users, while preserving freedom of work and intuitive functionalities. It were the trading partners who indicated the functionalities that should be included in the online system – in a system they would like to use every day – says Monika Węcławiak.

Clients took parts in the tests of the system and later – as the system was launched – they suggested which solutions need to be improved or extended. Although the project has been completed, it still evolves every day.



Dominik Lewandowski, owner of Biuro Plus Lewandowski:

The EU promotes modern technologies. And so do we - we want to develop ofix.pl by engaging those people in the process without whom it would not make sense - the users. Online shopping is now an everyday reality and this is the solution that our clients expected. Some clients came to us right away, others needed more time to try ofix.pl out and change their habits. I believe that both current and new partners will soon refuse to place orders any other way.

Project: "Building a transaction platform to handle partners of Biuro Plus Lewandowski Sp. j."
Company: Biuro Plus Lewandowski Sp. j., Suchy Las
Measure: 8.2
Project value: PLN 798.01 thousand
Co-financing: PLN 333.45 thousand
Implementation period: 05.01.2009 – 28.02.2010

Sources:

- Descriptions of projects and respective articles were based on interviews with representatives of the companies and organisations.
- Operational Programme Innovative Economy, 2007-2013, Warsaw, 1 October 2007
- "Detailed description of priorities of the Innovative Economy Operational Programme, 2007-2013", Warsaw, 2 September 2010
- Website of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development and the Innovation Portal

PARP



The **Polish Agency for Enterprise Development** (PARP) is a government agency subordinate to the minister competent for the economy. It was established under the Act of 9 November 2000. The Agency's task is to manage State Budget and European Union funds earmarked to support enterprise and innovation and development of human resources.

The purpose of the activity carried out by the Agency, which marked its 10th anniversary in 2010, is to implement economic development programmes supporting the innovative and research activity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), regional development, growth of exports, development of human resources and use of latest technology.

In the financial perspective covering the years 2007-2013 the Agency is responsible for implementing activities under three operational programmes: **Innovative Economy, Human Capital and Development of Eastern Poland.**

One of the Agency's priorities is to promote innovative attitudes and encourage entrepreneurs to apply state-of-the-art technology in their companies. To this end the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development runs an internet portal devoted to innovation: www.pi.gov.pl, and organizes annual competitions of the **Polish Product of the Future**. Representatives of SMEs may participate in cyclic meetings of the **Innovative Enterprises' Club**. The aim of the educational portal, **PARP Academy** (www.akademiarparp.gov.pl), is to promote access to business knowledge among micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the form of e-learning. PARP supports the development of business through its www.web.gov.pl site. The Agency has a centre of the Enterprise Europe Network which provides entrepreneurs with information on the European Union's law and the principles of conducting business activity in the Common Market.

PARP has initiated the creation of regional networks of SME support centres, i.e., the **National SME Service Network, National Innovation Network, and Consulting Centres**. These institutions provide information, consultancy, training and financial services, either free of charge or at preferential rates. **Regional Financing Institutions** (RFIs) are the Agency's regional partners, cooperating in the area of implementing selected measures.

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