

16 - JUNE 2007

CROSSOVER

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE HUB OF EUROPE



FOCUS ON

More than beer and chocolates...

Analisis : Detective work in the lab

STAR-APIC : Mapping out a complex world

EVS : Making live TV more exciting !



Wallonia's exports surging ahead

According to the latest figures available, the results for the year 2006 are likely to have reached a remarkable new level in terms of exports and foreign investment.

The latest statistics from the National Bank covering the first three quarters of 2006 show that the region's exports reached 29.4 billion euro. This is a record because foreign sales of Walloon products over a nine-month period had never come close to the 30 billion euro mark. Compared with the same reference period in 2005, this is an increase of 15.2%, following a 15.7% increase recorded for the whole year 2005. In benchmarking terms, this situation puts Wallonia's results ahead of the EU-15 (+11.5%) and a basket of countries or regions consisting of Flanders (+5.4%), France (+9.6%), Germany (+12.7%) and the Netherlands (+13.7%). This is in line with a 10-year trend (1996-2006), during which Walloon exports grew by an average of 10%, compared to just 7.1% for the EU-15. This is symbolic because for years this has been AWEX's key performance indicator. It confirms that Wallonia's exporters have demonstrated unrivalled dynamism in international markets for a decade, increasing their market share in comparison with their European competitors. Our exporters' order books were also looking healthy at the end of 2006.

In terms of foreign investment, 2006 can be considered a vintage year. AWEX and its partners contributed to 87 foreign investment projects, an increase of 8.8% on 2005. These investments totalled 1.2 billion euro (+158.4%) and created 1,912 jobs (+33.3%). The size of the investments

was also significant, as one in five applications would create over 50 direct jobs. This increased interest in Wallonia is without doubt the result of various structural and economic measures implemented by the Walloon government since 2004. This investment is the first tangible effect of the Economic Recovery Plan, known as the Walloon Marshall Plan, which was launched in 2005, along with the region's enhanced image among international companies, according to a study carried out by Ernst & Young.

Under the Marshall Plan, AWEX was given additional responsibilities and resources to support the development and international visibility of the five Walloon competitiveness clusters, approved in June and September 2006. This was enshrined in AWEX's new management contract adopted by the Walloon Government on 12 January 2006. In order to carry out its new mission, AWEX will receive additional funding of 10 million euro over four years (2006-2009).

AWEX carried out the following as a result of the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 2006:

- Foreign trade: an AWEX liaison officer has been appointed for each of the 5 competitiveness clusters (15 business development dossiers completed since July 2006), the definition of support arrangements for the recruitment of an export expert for each cluster, support for an annual export action plan (19 projects as of 15 December 2006) and additional projects targeted to reflect the strategy of the clusters (12 adopted for 2006);
- Foreign investments: 3 experts/business development officers were recruited with a view to developing a sector-specific approach based on the competitiveness cluster and defining main factors which make Wallonia attractive as a business location.

In order to fulfil the agency's statutory missions, the principal performance indicators are as follows:

- 19 annual targets out of 26 were met or exceeded;
- 20 performance indicators out of 21 were met;
- the level of satisfaction among businesses with the services provided by AWEX fell slightly (7.94/10).

Finally, a word about the volume of support granted to exporting firms:

- 2,193 (-3.2%) received at least one of the four main types of service provided by AWEX (financial incentives, business development actions, training, individual meetings with the commercial and economic attachés);
- the number of financial incentives, which fell slightly last year, increased (+4.18%) but the average time taken for processing rose by 5 days (to 18.84);
- financial support made possible by the various mechanisms of SOFINEX rose by a record amount: 56 applications (+20%) and 11.2 million euro invested (+50%);
- collective information activity has never been higher (131 seminars and information with over 4,300 participants);
- 163 business development actions (+7.2%) attracted participation by 1,950 businesses (-10%).

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Alterwave

Alterwave, the European Leader in Proximity Mobile Marketing, offers Bluetooth hotspots to shopping malls, concert halls, cinemas, outdoor advertisers etc. enabling rich media interaction with their consumers.



Using Bluetooth to communicate with the consumer's mobile phone is attractive for both advertisers and consumers since it is an innovative way to allow consumers to discover brands through a richer and entertaining/informative consumer experience while being entirely FREE.

Alterwave's core business is the development of software, which is then integrated into hardware enabling the company to offer turnkey solutions, called hotspots, to clients. Hotspots send information and advertising content direct to mobile phones which are in the immediate vicinity, using Bluetooth technology.

Alterwave has used this technology in solutions for brands including Porsche, Coca-Cola, Nokia and JCDecaux. To illustrate how the technology works, in the project for JCDecaux, an interactive advertising panel is created by installing a Bluetooth hotspot inside a bus shelter. This hotspot then scans for mobile phones up to 100 metres away which are equipped with Bluetooth technology. The phone user receives a pop-up message asking whether or not they wish to receive content, for example from Porsche or Mobistar/France Telecom. If they agree, they will receive a message containing rich content, e.g. an MP3 file, video, images, applications or games. The advantage for the consumer is that the message is completely free. The content is information, and may be sponsored. The terminals can be installed in places where large numbers of people pass by. Another project, for Coca-

Cola, was run in a club where terminals were installed on the walls. Clubbers received a message offering them the chance to win free soft drinks which they could collect while they are dancing.

Another aspect of this type of marketing is that it replaces the use of paper flyers, for example at exhibitions and festivals, reducing the environmental footprint in terms of paper usage and creation of waste. At a music festival, mobile terminals contained in back packs invited mobile phone users to download the programme of acts scheduled to appear on the various stages. Unlike paper media, the content can be updated at the last moment. Content held on the terminals can be updated by connecting to it remotely via the Internet or via GPRS.

In terms of exports, Alterwave is present on the UK market, as well as the French and US markets. However, European markets still have a certain technological advance over the US at present. One example of promotion in the UK is for the West End musical "Avenue Q". Alterwave works through a local distributor (Square Group in the UK) which delivers a complete service.

Although this is a new medium, it addresses the traditional aims of marketing: brand promotion, brand activation product launch, loyalty programme, traffic building, promotion and teasing. The major advantages are the immediacy and richness of the content, and the fact that the content is completely free for the user. It is also possible to identify individual phones,

to prevent the same consumer being contacted more than once. It is also possible to link the marketing to a specific geographical location at a given time. The consumer is free to accept or refuse the content, and if they refuse, they will not be contacted again. Another mode invites consumers to place their phone close to the terminal and download only the content of their choice. Or customers can be invited to enter competitions.

At present, Alterwave has 7 employees, and works mainly through local distributors. It is expanding fast, as markets are reaching maturity, and more and more large advertisers are exploring this type of marketing. Alterwave's strengths are the robustness of its solutions and its flexibility in meeting customer requirements.

Export markets at present include the UK, the Benelux countries, Germany, USA, Singapore and Saudi Arabia.

Alterwave is now considering applying for assistance from AWEX in respect of exploration of new markets (initially Dubai) as well as for participating in trade fairs.

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Analisis

As a distributor and manufacturer of laboratory instruments, Analisis is primarily geared towards medical in vitro diagnostics, research activities and quality control. The company sells, installs and maintains laboratory equipment for medicine, industry and research.

This Belgian company was founded in 1927. Its original business was the manufacture of laboratory equipment. After the Second World War, it started importing research and test laboratory equipment from the United States. Today distribution has become its predominant activity.

Analisis is structured into five business units: in-vitro clinical diagnostics, life science, materials testing, analytical chemistry and environmental control and general-purpose laboratory equipment. Nowadays, it also produces chemicals for use with the laboratory equipment that it distributes. The company's main equipment supplier is Beckman Coulter, for which it is a distributor in Belgium.

It has developed a number of electrophoresis and capillary electrophoresis kits for clinical and analytical laboratories, which are distributed worldwide. One of Analisis' flagship products is a kit to enable doctors to screen patients for alcohol abuse. This type of kit is also used by employers to check for alcohol abuse by employees in positions of great responsibility. This is the case of train drivers and guards in France.

In some countries, motorists who have lost their licence for driving under the influence of alcohol may have it returned if the level of a marker remains below a given level over a period of time. This kit is particularly useful for monitoring of repeat offenders.

Another product is its RiskCalc diagnostic software, which is used during pregnancy to calculate the risk of a baby being born with Down's Syndrome, based on the levels of certain markers. This was developed in collaboration with a professor at Queen's Hospital in Burton-on-Trent. Analisis welcomes collaboration with companies or organisations who have particular analytical requirements.

The company has more than 150 employees, over 80 of whom are chemists, biologists, engineers or agronomists. Turnover is 32 million EUR.

Another area in which the company operates via two subsidiaries is the manufacture of equipment for automatic testing equipment for the oil industry, which is distributed via companies specialising in this field. Normalab Analisis is owned by Analisis.



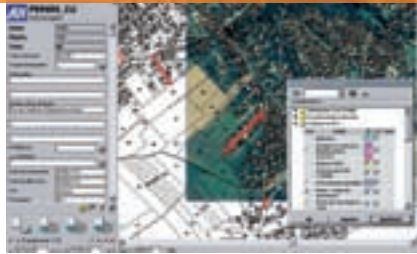
Analisis has made use of the AWEX programme which sent a trainee to the USA to perform market research on its behalf. They have also received assistance in their participation in trade fairs. Analisis will be present from July 15-19, 2007 at the AACC Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, as well as from November 14-17, 2007 at MEDICA 2007 in Düsseldorf, both events in collaboration with AWEX.



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With more than twenty years experience, and offices in Belgium, France, United Kingdom, Morocco and the Czech Republic, the STAR-APIC Group is a leading provider of software and solutions in the field of geographic information systems (GIS) and business applications for network management, and local and national government.

The STAR-APIC Group supplies Integrated Enterprise Solutions that fit perfectly with modern system architectures and meet the fundamental needs of organisations to integrate and share geographic information around a powerful and interoperable database and distribute / exploit data on different plat-

forms (enterprise, internet, mobile devices, DVD-ROM) according to users needs.

The group's main customers include national and local government (for example Land Registries), utility companies managing water, gas, electricity, telecommunication and public transport networks, and national geographic institutes and cartographic publishing companies. The group's UK Operations Centre offers a number of products that have been specifically developed for the national market, which are based on the generic products of the group.

In addition to software, the group offers the complimentary services of consultancy, training and software maintenance, together with integration services with complementary software

from its technology partners. STAR-APIC does not produce geographic data itself, but works with partners to provide integrated solutions. It works with the specific standards applicable to geospatial technology (OGC © -Open Geospatial Consortium) as well as meeting ISO quality standards.

The group is particularly well-established as a specialist in assisting the management of utility networks and land registries. For example, Electricité de Strasbourg, a subsidiary of EDF, which manages all the electricity supplies in Eastern France and part of Germany, manages all its networks via STAR-APIC systems. A few years ago, they added telecommunications to their range of services. They also operate street lighting networks.

STAR-APIC

One of the company's niche products which has proved highly-successful is aimed at certain groups of consumers. Hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts can plan their activities in France using the Georando series of DVDs per region, enabling them to view maps and aerial photos, and download information to a GPS or PDA. A similar product has been launched with the Irish Ordnance Survey (OSi), and others are in the pipeline in other countries.

The company also has a number of applications enabling production of high-quality paper maps, with prestigious clients such as many national geographic institutes and private mapping agencies.

The company intends to expand its business in Eastern Europe via its subsidiary in the Czech Republic. It is also developing sales through its partnership in the Middle East, who are familiar with the regional market. STAR-APIC recently won the largest tender in its 23-year history from the Saudi Electricity Company. In general, it is exploring emerging markets, including Africa, India, Russia and South-East Asia, Central and South America.

STAR-APIC has a strong partnership with SPACBEL, also based in the Liège Science Park, which processes data from satellite photographs, through a partnership with the European

Space Agency. Teledetection data can be extracted from such photos and integrated into GIS for applications run by network management companies and land registries, for example.

Particularly in Africa, STAR-APIC has appreciated the importance of not only submitting projects with a sustainable development dimension, but also making proposals to donor organisations for financing those projects. As the company is able to propose geographical information systems to help manage utility networks, it is able to offer donors the guarantee that the systems installed will have a long working life.

STAR-APIC is increasingly present in the university market, training the professionals of tomorrow. This is particularly the case in Africa, and the Geomatics Department of the University of Ouagadougou (2iE - Groupe EIER-ETSHER), Burkina Faso, which has created a Masters Course using STAR-APIC software. Other institutes in Togo and Mali have already moved to take up the company's technology, and the company is open to collaboration with other universities.

STAR-APIC is proud to state that it has a level of customer satisfaction with projects verging on 100%. Its customers are regarded as its most persuasive sales force. For example, it staged demonstrations of its software applications in

operation at the port of Rouen in order to sell applications to the port of Dunkerque. It has also equipped the inland waterways port of Paris.

The company's dedication to the pursuit of excellence was recognised in January 2007, when H.M. King Albert II of the Belgians visited the Liège site.

The group also won the Marianne de Cristal award, which recognises the best Belgian exporters to France.

In 2006 STAR-APIC received the global "Award for Excellence in Partnership 2006" from ORACLE Corporation, in recognition of the Group's "contribution to the development of the Oracle Spatial partner community in Europe the Middle East and Africa."



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Arpège Music

ARPEGE MUSIC was created in 1990 by Dominique Vandenneucker with the aim of making computer science and electronics work for art. The idea of creating music notation software was already in the air.



The first lines of the program were written in 1992, and a software framework was developed to program on both Microsoft Windows and Macintosh. The first notes appeared on the screen at the beginning of 1993. The current version of the program, known as “Pizzicato” has three versions: Light, Beginner and Professional. They range from teaching the basics of music and notation, to helping musicians to compose.

The software won the Press 3rd prize at the Media Planet exhibition in Brussels, has been featured twice on Belgian television and is regularly reviewed in the press. The software and documentation are available in English and French and can be bought online. An evaluation version is available for free download from the company’s website and users can follow the music course online. They also have access to technical support.

From the outset, the marketing was always the “big deal”. Marketing efforts were meeting targets but were slowing down development. In 2002 a new marketing strategy was devised, selling an electronic version of the Professional and Beginner products directly at a cheaper

price. From then on moment, sales generated by the website have increased worldwide. Prior to this the product was mainly sold in Belgium. The company even discovered an article about Pizzicato in the “Journal of Montreal”!

ARPEGE has launched a music education program for music schools, choirs, orchestras and bands, as well as primary and secondary schools. The idea was to give teachers and students, conductors and musicians a free version of Pizzicato Light, so as to make music education and computer aided music more widely known.

Aside from the development of Pizzicato, Arpège’s know-how in computer aided music has helped the company to collaborate as a consultant for the studios of the world-famous musician and composer VANGELIS in Athens and also to participate in the development of the Music-Touch software for beginners in composition, with the CONTINENTAL STRUCTURES company.

After about thirteen years of development, ARPEGE has software that is highly appreciated by all kinds of users. ARPEGE continues to

develop it. It requires time but the company has always had a very clear purpose: “To make music and composition available to everyone”.

So far, the software has been sold to over 5000 customers. The company’s annual turnover is 56,000 euro, and it employs two people.

Its export markets at present are France, Switzerland and Canada; the software is available in English, and there are around a hundred customers in English-speaking countries including the UK. The company is seeking partners for its distribution in the United Kingdom, so that it can build on these initial sales.

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More than beer and chocolates...



On 30 August 2005, the Walloon government adopted the Priority Action Plan for the Future of Wallonia (more commonly known as the Walloon 'Marshall Plan'), to boost the region's economy. As part of an overall package involving total investment of 1.4 billion euro, the government identified five key areas where the region had particular strengths and potential for future development: these "competitiveness clusters" were identified in the following fields: aerospace, life sciences, transport and logistics, mechanical engineering and agro-food. These are fields in which Wallonia has recognised industrial and academic or research expertise. The Marshall Plan defined a competitiveness cluster as "the combination of companies, training organisations and public and private research centres engaged in a partnership intended to identify synergies around joint projects of an innovative nature. This partnership will be organised in a particular market and a technological and scientific field which relates to that market, and should seek to attain the critical mass to achieve competitiveness as well as a high international profile. The critical mass achieved by this concentration should enable it to develop a virtuous circle of growth. The impact of these competitiveness clusters should reach beyond the frontiers of the region to aim at a critical size on a European or even global scale and be a driving force for regional exports and to attract inward investment".

Food industry in Wallonia:

20,000 jobs

618 firms

Total sales 5.9 billion euro

Regional expertise in the food industry

In the previous issue of Crossover, we looked at the mechanical engineering cluster. This time, we will be concentrating on the food industry, where the Competitiveness Cluster is known by the acronym WAGRALIM.

Food has become a hot topic in recent years. Everyone is concerned about what they eat, where it comes from, and how it is produced. Consumers have become increasingly interested in diet and nutrition as well as in fine food and cookery. They are now familiar with terms like functional food, free radicals, superfoods, anti-oxidants or omega-3 fatty acids. Meeting consumer demands is no longer as simple as it once was, and the food industry constantly faces the challenge of providing healthy, nutritious and enjoyable food to meet those demands.

The food industry is a large, dynamic industrial sector in Wallonia: it is the second-largest industrial employer, accounting for 20,000 jobs and overall turnover of 5.9 billion euro. It consists largely of small and medium-sized businesses, 90% of which have fewer than 50 employees.

The objective of WAGRALIM is to put firms in this sector at the forefront of competitiveness in Europe. Its ambition is to strengthen the growth dynamic of the sector (average growth in jobs of 1% per year since 2000) through the creation of 3,000 new jobs within 10 years.

The dynamic underpinning the Cluster aims to exploit synergies between the food industry and those involved in research and training,



working together on innovative projects. WAGRALIM already involves over 90 industrial partners, 700 researchers working in over 50 research teams, and several specialised training centres. It is by this means that Wallonia's basic research can be channelled more towards the needs of the marketplace.

The Cluster, which has adopted the legal form of a non-profit association, is driven by the food industry: its Chairman is Mr. Jacques Crahay, Managing Director of the Cosucra Group and current President of FEVIA Wallonie, the Walloon Food Industry Federation. The Cluster's Board of Governance consists of 10 industrialists, including 4 from SMEs (a rotation system with 2 full members and 2 substitutes, to ensure effective representation of SMEs). The Vice-Chairman is Prof. Yvan Larondelle of the Catholic University of Louvain, and the other 3 university representatives complete the scientific complement of the Board of Governance.



WAGRALIM's four key topics

Industry defined the four key areas of the Cluster's work :

- “healthy” foods
- innovative technologies
- biopackaging for use with food
- sustainability in the food industry

The 4 key topics defined by the food industry are :

Topic 1: “Healthy foods”: development of products and ingredients that fulfil nutritional and/or health claims with the appropriate/specific tools to achieve this;

Topic 2: Innovative production or preservation technologies: development of products derived from production or preservation processes or combinations of processes (which may use “soft” technologies in order to retain the organoleptic qualities, increase the storage life of products and to substitute additives ;

Topic 3: Bio-packaging: development of packaging for use with food, made from renewable, biodegradable resources.

Topic 4: Development of sustainable (efficient) industrial production: sustainable management of inputs and by-products, efficiency and safety of the value chain, animal and plant genetics.



All the competitiveness clusters operate by means of calls for projects. Projects submitted are first evaluated internally, currently by the Board of Governors. The Cluster is seeking to set up a panel of experts which will carry out this evaluation in future. Once pre-selected by the Cluster, a list of projects is submitted to the Walloon government, which seeks the advice of an expert panel before approving projects. In terms of financial support, projects can apply either for a repayable advance or a grant (at a lower level of support). The academic or research centre component can be financed 100%. Of course, this is attractive for investment projects. However, the most significant advantage may well be involvement in a network of players, companies, scientific researchers,

training organisations, export bodies, etc.) as well as access to databases and information relating to the strategic topics of the Cluster.

The first call for projects, launched on 7 July 2006 with a deadline of 29 September 2006, resulted in 1 training project and 2 research projects being approved by the Walloon government.

So-called “foundation projects” of innovation, submitted in relation to each of these topics, are situated at a pre-competitive stage and involve a greater number of partners. They must allow skills to develop which could be used by all players involved in this topic. More specific industrial projects can then be grafted onto these foundation projects, linked directly to applica-

tions directly targeting specific products or markets. The very concept of a foundation project involves forming a sustainable network of partners and use of a broad base of diverse and complementary competencies.

Nine projects were pre-selected out of 23 (3 training and 20 research) in the second call for projects and the recommendation submitted to the Walloon government on 15 January 2007. These were 3 training and 6 research projects. The Walloon Government and the International Panel adopted 3 training projects and 4 research projects. One research project may be revised for submission in the next call for projects. The third call will be launched in June 2007, and the closing date is February 2008.

Foundation projects :

Walnut 20

This project, under Topic 1, was approved by the Walloon government in 2006. It involves 10 industrial partners and 10 scientific partners. The purpose of the project is to develop products and ingredients that meet nutritional claims, with the specific tools to achieve this. In other words, to develop a range of products with a bio-active compound or a combination of bio-active compounds within a single product. It involves industrial companies upstream, to develop the bio-active compounds or ingredients. Research methods will be developed by the research partners: in vitro, in vivo on animals, and food studies. Industrial partners will develop functional foods or ranges of foods. The companies concerned

will be exploiting some of the strengths of the Walloon food industry: fats, dietary fibre and polyphenols, while the scientific researchers will be working on the metabolic syndrome and intestinal function.

This project will partly address new EU legislative requirements: in response to pressure from consumers, any foods that make claims that they are beneficial to health will have to be able to provide scientific evidence to back their claims before they can be shown on labels or included in advertising.

Biowall

In Topic 3, the Biowall project currently has 2 industrial partners and 1 scientific partner.

The purpose of the project is to develop polylactide type bioplastics intended for food packaging.

Consalim

A foundation project on product preservation for topic 2 was adopted in the 2nd call by the Walloon Government and the International Panel.

Other topics

Task forces are currently working on the development of foundation projects for topics 2 and 4, and a project for topic 2 was part of the recommendation made to the Walloon government on 15 January 2007, which are still awaiting its decision about approval.



Application projects :

65 expressions of interest were appended to the proposal which the Cluster made to the Walloon government on 15 January 2007. The Cluster had assessed 29 of them as meeting the eligibility criteria imposed by the Cluster

for letters of intent: a project coming within one of the strategic topics, submitted by an industrial company, with a minimum of 2 industrial partners and 2 scientific partners, etc.). 36 were deemed “ineligible at the present

stage” (they failed to meet a criterion imposed).

Three application projects were adopted by the Government in the 2nd call.

Training projects :

These projects are targeted at various audiences: workers, office employees, management, job-seekers, trainers, etc.)

They have to meet the needs of the 4 key topics: “healthy” foods, innovative technologies, bio-packaging, and sustainable production.

The have to capitalise on existing and complementary resources (vocational training institutes, higher education colleges and universities, industry and professional associations, etc.)

Sécalim

The first call for projects resulted in an initial training project, known as “Sécalim”, dealing with food safety, and intended to verse the workforce of companies in the requirements for ensuring safety of the food chain.

Training projects still awaiting a decision by the Walloon Government

3 training projects were adopted by the Government and the International Panel in the 2nd call. These three projects concern Health and Nutrition.

Nutrition/Health/Food: to assist companies to develop an approach to nutrition that meets new consumer requirements (training broadened to a series of different target groups, and in modular form, ranging from basic modules to an advanced refresher course).

The current status of WAGRALIM’s work is that the first WALNUT 20, BIOWALL and SECALIM projects are being put into action.

The 3 training projects adopted in the 2nd call will also be able to start.

A programme of export support actions is being prepared. The operational unit of the Cluster will be moved during 2007 to the Créalys Science Park near Gembloux. A Director and an exports expert are currently being recruited.

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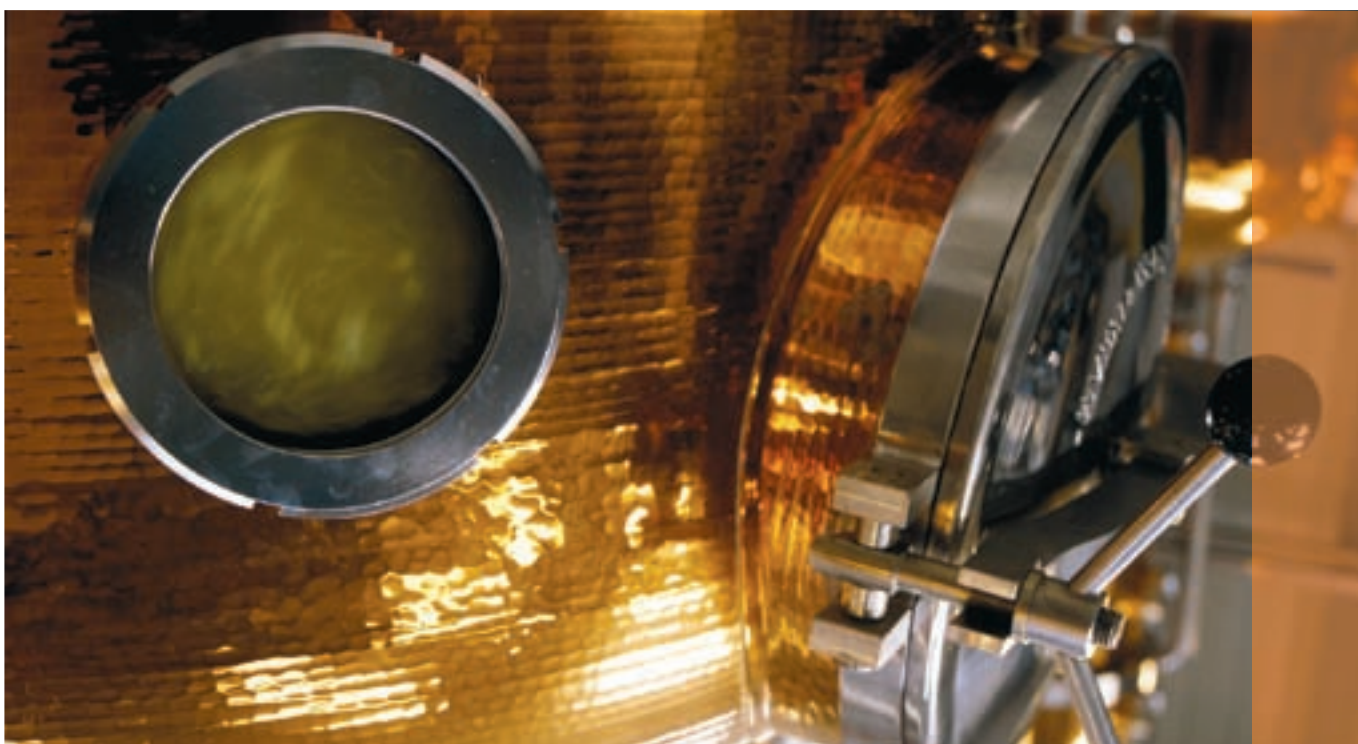
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MANEX

MANEX is a software engineering company based in Boncelles near Liège. It recently celebrated its 20th birthday, and 10 years of development in the Information and Communication Technologies sector. Since 1996, Manex has devoted its energies entirely to the design and implementation of software and network solutions.



Vincent Keunen heads a young, dynamic team of ten highly-qualified staff, who give Manex outstanding and original expertise enabling the company's clients to take full advantage of new ICT technologies.

Its core business is the development of software based on advanced technologies and reliable Open Source software (Apache Jakarta, Tigris, SourceForge, OpenCMS, Compière, etc.). MANEX has expertise in open operating platforms such as Linux, Java and PHP.

It also specialises in Java (JavaME, JavaSE and JavaEE) and XML which are standards that enable applications to run on all types of hardware and operating systems (Windows, Linux, Macintosh, Solaris, Palm, PocketPC, mobile phone, etc.).

Manex operates in many different fields, including:

- software engineering: design and development of:
 - any type of custom application such as ERP, CRM, mobile solutions, audit and reporting;
 - transactional web sites, web applications, connections to databases, electronic data interchange and content management.

- integration of information systems and secure data transfer using encryption techniques, public key infrastructures, certificates, electronic signatures, chip cards...;
- provision of management services for Linux open infrastructures (web servers, e-mail, routing, firewalls, single sign-on, ldap servers, PKI, etc.);
- mobile systems: Palm, Psion, iPaq, SMS, GSM, J2ME, ...
- training: Java, Linux, OpenOffice...
- consultancy concerning all the technologies mentioned and in particular, the "open source" world.

Two products for specific markets :

MANEX has developed two products that meet the needs and requirements of professionals today :



iBats: Inter Business Automated Transaction System (www.ibats.biz)

iBats is a secure platform for exchanging all types of documents. This system guarantees the authenticity of the issuers and recipients, as well as the confidentiality, integrity, traceability and non-repudiation of messages and documents exchanged. The platform is currently used by the medical profession, and is now being developed for application in others sectors such as the legal profession.

More information is available on the iBats site: <http://www.ibats.biz/>



Jafar: Java Advanced Facilities for Audit and Reporting (www.jafar.biz)

Jafar is an audit and reporting software which can integrate all the data collected during a health and safety audit (on a portable or Tablet PC). These are synchronised automatically with a server, and can generate inspection reports, customised recommendations and letters to the persons or organisations concerned.

It is currently intended for auditors working on prevention of workplace accidents and for medical examinations (occupational medicine). Check-lists, recommendations and conclusions were drawn up by recognised specialists. An important reference is IDEWE.

The software can be adapted to many sectors, due to its modular design, and because it is based on an audit and reporting "engine" combined with a knowledge base specific to the sector audited.

For example: inspections of the food and hygiene chain, inspections of building sites, ISO audits, audits for quality labels and environmental audits.

For more info, see the Jafar site: <http://www.jafar.biz>

Existing Manex customers, among many others, include IDEWE, Arcelor Group, the University of Liège, Decathlon International Lille, IBM, Apple, Sun, the Walloon water utility company, Dresdner Bank, Winterthur and various hospitals in Wallonia.

The company, whose employees all speak English, is looking to expand its activities in the UK market and is particularly keen to find new partners.



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EVS

EVS was established in Liège in 1994, and specialises in hardware and software systems for television production. These typically use a digital video server to record live events for broadcast.

The first application developed by EVS was to replay pictures instantly at various speeds, known as 'live slow-motion'. The digital server is able to record pictures from several cameras at the same time, and overcomes the need - inherent in analogue video production - to finish recording before being able to replay the images.

EVS solutions are used by more than 4500 operators all over the world and offer a multitude of applications including:

- Quick and simple editing
- Slow motion and video effects packages
- Comprehensive content management
- Clips and playlist creation, browsing and playout

The initial market for this was sports broadcasters. They instantly saw great value in the ability to add features to live events, such as being able to show edited video footage with pictures from several cameras within a very short time of the action happening. Television production companies started to use this technology to replace the analogue equipment in their outside broadcast vans. Since then, the systems have been adopted for the television coverage of large sporting events, such as the football World Cup or the Olympic Games. The configurations are on a much larger scale; not just a single digital server, but operating with many servers and applications in a network. This involves controlling the channel output via several servers and is much more oriented towards content management.

These large events serve as a showcase for the technology which can then be adapted by television companies for their day-to-day operations. The many broadcasters present at a major sporting event will either handle their own production or use the facilities made available by the international broadcast centre established for the event itself. They're therefore a challenge that EVS readily accepts as an opportunity to develop new concepts which it can then demonstrate internationally.

These technologies are increasingly being used for other types of television programme: they're eminently suited for concerts, award ceremonies, reality TV, in fact any type of broadcast in the "time-critical" live or near-live category, with a large number of cameras and feeds, and the requirement to process the pictures very quickly. Studio shows, entertainment and news programmes are all gradually switching to this digital technology. For studio-based production, EVS is proving particularly useful as it is able to seamlessly integrate its server with the broadcasters' existing post-production and editing systems.

EVS prides itself on being a human-scale organisation. Although many of its customers are very large companies, EVS employs 180 people worldwide and always ensures that it remains in close contact with its customers as people. Eighty of those employees are engaged in developing the next generation of products and responding to customers' evolving requirements. In order to compete with much larger companies, it's essential for EVS to retain its innovative edge and to respond quickly to change. The dynamism of the company is matched by its youthful approach; the average age of the workforce is 33.



The company's turnover is approximately 85 million EUR and the United Kingdom represents 6% of worldwide turnover for EVS. Major customers in the UK include Sky, the BBC and ITV. Channel 4's "Big Brother" is made using EVS technology. The company hopes that the London Olympics will provide yet another major technology showcase. All the football matches in the FA Premiership are produced using EVS hardware and software, together with all the coverage and highlights sold worldwide.

The company already has offices in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, the USA and China and plans to open further international offices in Dubai and Madrid shortly.



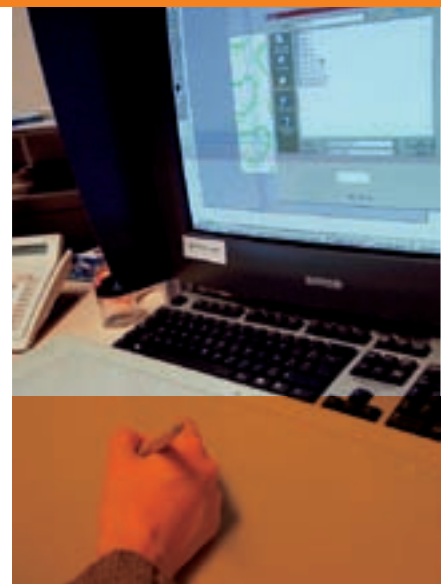
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Happy Paper

Happy Paper designs, produces and markets a complete range of plain and printed paper napkins, tablecloths and plates for supermarkets and department stores, in Belgium as well as internationally. Besides its brand name “Happy Paper”, it also has a large range of private label designs.



The company was originally a firm known as Economatic, trading in disposable paper products for hospitals. It was taken over by the Mr De Witte 25 years ago and he started printing paper napkins. Eleven years ago, it moved to its present site in Enghien and discontinued the hospital disposables business to concentrate on the manufacture and printing of luxury napkins.

The family-run business is still managed by Mr De Witte, assisted more recently by the 2nd generation. Now Happy Paper produces high-quality napkins under the brand of the same name. A large volume of its production is sold under private label through department stores and supermarket chains. Its range includes other products manufactured by partners: disposable tablecloths, plates and cups. The company’s base in Enghien puts it in an ideal position to service its main markets in France and the United Kingdom.

Originality of creative design is a crucial aspect of Happy Paper’s brand as it strives

to be different from the rest. Happy Paper designs a winter and summer collection and prides itself on being extremely responsive to customer requirements. It develops new forms of packaging and displays as well as the products themselves. It has two full-time designers in its twenty-strong workforce, and turnover of 4 MEUR . Eighty per cent of the company’s sales come from exports. The main markets are France, the UK and Portugal, as well as Canada and Japan. In the UK, private label sales predominate, particularly for a large upscale retailer. Happy Paper is investing heavily in its own brand, and is keen to boost its UK sales by finding additional distributors who are already involved in business with the large stores and supermarket chains. It is also looking to expand its business in the North American market.

Happy Paper has been in contact recently with the AWEX Economic Attaché in Ireland, concerning possible opportunities in the Irish market. In the long term, the com-

pany is considering calling on the possibility of AWEX sending a trainee to carry out market research in a potential export market on behalf of Happy Paper.



HappyPaper 

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Wallonia: a great place to invest

Where skills and productivity combine !

For firms who want to set up business here, Wallonia offers a place for innovation and competitiveness that encourages economic growth. Labour productivity in the region is 20% above the European average and the workforce is highly skilled, particularly when it comes to innovation and scientific research. This is an asset for any entrepreneur or investor who wishes to put his money on the right horse.

Wallonia in the vanguard of progress

The Region has numerous resources to help boost the performance of business: there are no fewer than 300 public and private research centres with 11,000 researchers, 20 skills centres to improve the competitiveness of businesses, as well as 9 university centres.

One of the flagship measures in the Marshall Plan is the implementation of these competitiveness clusters which constitute a fabric of large and small businesses, research units, and training centres which are involved in the implementation of joint research and innovation projects. The ultimate aim is the creation of value-added, employment and a higher international profile of companies working with the cluster.

Innovative projects have been set up focusing on 5 competitiveness clusters: aerospace, agro-industry, life sciences, transport and logistics and mechanical engineering.

This dynamic opens the way to exports of Walloon products. This is shown by the example of Kraft Foods, the world's second-largest food group. The group has a processed cheese and snacks factory in Namur, and over 90% of its production is exported. It is not the only example. We could also mention companies like GlaxoSmithKline, L'Oréal and many more...

Microscopes and laboratories have growing appeal

It is important to mention scientific research, one of the strengths of the Walloon Region. Wallonia has inherited a long-established tradition of scientific innovation and is a pioneering region in this field. Major international groups in the biotechnology sector are setting up subsidiaries here. What is it that attracts them? The leadership of several Walloon university research institutes in the field of scientific research, strong partnerships between research centres and businesses, the presence of science parks where no effort is spared to encourage connections, an accessible motorway network, not to mention the languages spoken by the highly-skilled workforce. All of this can be found just a few kilometres from the capital of Europe, a window on the world with its institutions, as well as the air, rail, road and inland waterway routes that pass through it. Wallonia has many attractions, putting it among the highest performing regions in Europe.

A high-quality workforce

A large number of international studies indicate that Wallonia is one of the regions that invests the most in education and training. Its extensive, efficient network of higher education colleges and universities gives Wallonia a multi-cultural, multi-lingual workforce. This cultural richness can be explained by the region's geographical situation. Businesses are so close to neighbouring countries that they need to have excellent knowledge of their languages. Wallonia can claim to have a culture that is open to the world. It has a rich industrial background and every day it takes advantage of its proximity to large European countries.

Rising productivity

Productivity in Wallonia is 20% higher than the European average. This is explained by the motivation of workers, which is among the

highest in the world, according to the IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2006 and is one of the major assets of the Belgian workforce. Wallonia aims to be an area of innovation and competitiveness, where men and women appreciate hard work. No doubt, investors have realised this and are benefiting from this attitude every day.

More info : www.investinwallonia.be





The name of the game is having a great time behind the wheel. An original idea for your incentives that will thrill your customers and colleagues looking for something new to do.

Wherever you are, there is usually a motor-racing circuit not too far away providing a ready source of entertainment. And to prove it, far from the omnipresent concrete of the city and its skyscrapers, the Francorchamps circuit is universally acknowledged in motor-racing circles as the most beautiful circuit in the world. Why not discover it for yourself, or introduce your customers and employees to the thrills of fast cars, offering them something fun and original? If they are worried about the

driving aspect, you can always register them for lessons at the track's driving school.

The Peugeot advanced driving school

Cars part of our everyday life. But do you have the right reactions to deal with difficult or unexpected situations? Learn to control your car in all conditions, whether in the rain or on black ice. Avoiding obstacles, emergency braking and controlling a skid are situations that the instructors will teach you how to master. Or if you prefer to just get on with it and drive, you can discover how to steer a high-performance car. You will learn all the secrets at Nivelles or Francorchamps, the two teaching centres of the

Peugeot school. For more information, take a look at www.maitriseautomobile.com

RACB Safety Academy and the Spa-Francorchamps track

One of the missions of the Royal Automobile Club de Belgique is to increase road safety. What better way than by helping drivers improve their control over their vehicle? Give a defensive driving course at the Safe Academy as a gift to your colleagues and customers with a safety theme. It has been proven that even seasoned drivers change their driving behaviour after this course, and discover a much more relaxed, safer way of driving. Once the course is completed, the neighbouring forest offers a

Organise your day out... on the race-track!

range of leisure possibilities such as 4x4, karting, quad or a helicopter flight over the track and the whole region. The area has an extensive range of infrastructure for accommodation, eating out or offering a relaxing experience for your guests. You could take them to the Hôtel de l'Eau Rouge, at the foot of the "Raidillon", a steep, curvy track section, or invite them to a buffet on the fifth floor of the Uniroyal Tower which overlooks the paddocks and offers a splendid view of the "Raidillon". More info on www.racb.com

A rally at the Château de Harzé

Perhaps you thought that the real thrills of a rally were just a dream? Now, that dream can become reality! Come and try your hand at rally driving, in the company of experienced professional drivers Marc Duez and Pierre-Yves Rosoux. Before embarking on this adventure, eat breakfast at the Château de Harzé in the heart of the forest. After your meal, put your seat belt on, and switch on the engine! Head for the "special" stage in the middle of the fields. As the co-driver, you will be the driver's right-hand man. Your role will be to tell him which bends are coming up, and what gear to select. You will be a team throughout the race. Once you have

crossed the finishing line, you can stop clenching your teeth and undo your seat belt. Back to the château for a meal worthy of a champion and a de-briefing. Put on your helmet and click on www.chateau-harze.be

Andenne : Driving in any weather.

On the banks of the River Meuse, test your dexterity at the wheel, and test the teamwork of your colleagues. You will have the choice between various arrangements, from defensive and preventive driving with a dash of "fun" or "cool", to testing a new car, via the comparison test of 4x4s on a specially-designed circuit. The course is intended to be a faithful reproduction of the weather conditions in Belgium. So you will have the possibility of testing your skills on ice, in the rain, on a skidpan, etc. For more info, go to www.safedriving.be

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