



## Development of a high tech company

# High professionals start sales offensive

When recently a huge wave of insolvencies spilled over the technology sector, which had been spoiled by success for a long time, the Comet Software-Beratungs GmbH<sup>1</sup> in Mönchengladbach was able to uphold its order volume. In fact, the systems house with international orientation already has clear concepts for the development of its services and for the increasing of its staff. The long-term trust of customers in the great competence of the IT company is certainly the reason for the stabilisation of the order situation in difficult times and increase of turnover in a more favourable economy. But there is another factor for the success: the realised ideas of potential consulting. Nobody can deny Comet Software-Beratungs GmbH their experience. For seventeen years the lower Rhine company has been successfully planning and realising IT-projects for key accounts like IBM, Metro, T-Systems, Raiffeisenbanken and HDI, it takes on the total jobs or provides task-specific IT-specialists through its Professional Services for customer projects: for the system integration of standard and individual software solutions as well as for the project support of system analysis, project management and quality assurance. Despite the recession in the sector the employees, all highly qualified experts, are working at full capacity all the time.

But the total involvement of IT specialists in projects with purely productive activities has an undesired side-effect: it goes at the expense of the sales.

### Man-Power for canvassing

It was the manager and name giver of 'Beratung und Projekte Petra Rudolph'<sup>2</sup> from Duisburg who discovered and drew attention to lost development chances in the course of a potential consulting. The trained Diplom-Informatikerin<sup>3</sup> worked in leading jobs in systems and software houses for many years, from hardware selection, programming and data collection to quality management. Her expert assessment of Comet: "The special know-how of the company is highly demanded on the market. The company has high quality standards and excellent employees. But you almost get the impression that the company is not aware of its exceptional ranking." Her first suggestion: create capacities for an expansion of the sales department. Comet manager Ulrich Weidner has realised the suggestion immediately and has given top priority to sales. While all other employees are working in full-time projects, he himself is investing his time and knowledge full time in procuring orders and canvassing new customers. His previous

<sup>1</sup> Comet Software Consulting Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> Consulting and Projects Petra Rudolph

<sup>3</sup> graduated computer scientist



activities in project and professional support of the established key accounts have been taken over by his deputy. The experience of the manager in the new sales field: "The companies are still reticent with their investments, but the concepts for the development and reorganisation of their IT-equipment are already in their drawers. Our order volume will increase. We are already busy searching the labour market for highly qualified personnel."

**Standardised inventory control systems**

Parallel to the canvassing for further IT-projects the potential consulting pushed the opening of the services of the high-tech company to medium-sized companies. The new strategy does not only hold the promise of more orders, but also more independence from the key accounts. The manager and the consultant developed the exact course of action together: Comet is to approach the companies with a product that will be in high demand in the future, that is: a standardised inventory control system. Inventory control systems have been a special strength of the Comet Software-Beratungs GmbH for a decade. But unlike the individualised systems more suitable for large firms standard software is of advantage for the medium-sized companies. Ulrich Weidner: "It is a debugged, calculable product and the maintenance is much more cost-effective. Our software will be so modular and web-based that we can integrate it ideally into the existing IT-environment of the customer."

**Sophisticated Software**

The product is combined with a newly developed training programme for small and medium-sized companies – another result of the potential consulting, which underlines the multi-dimensionality of the

strength-weaknesses-analysis. The 'Trainingscenter für anspruchsvolle Software'<sup>4</sup> addresses customers who purchase the inventory control system from Comet, but also developers who want to work with the latest technologies. "Aren't there enough relevant training programmes on the market?" you might ask critically. The manager's self-confident but not arrogant answer leaves no doubt about the further success of the company. "That is true, competition is fierce and there are training programmes. But we have competence!" The company director describes the value of the potential consulting in concluding words: "The orders are coming in and our employees are constantly under steam. Everything is going smoothly, but if we want to develop our company further, we have to find out what else we can do. That is exactly what the potential consulting has shown us."

<sup>4</sup> Training Centre for Sophisticated Software

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