



J.M. Sundaresan, M.D., Accord Software & Systems Pvt. Ltd. receiving the Certificate of Honour from Werner Burger, Head of Software Development, Diehl Avionik Systeme GmbH, in recognition of the superior performance in achieving CMMI Level 5 (November 2004)

Commitment, customer focus, quality consciousness and trust are the key components for success – An interview

Accord Software & Systems Pvt. Ltd. a Bangalore based company founded in December 1991. Accord has carved for itself a niche in the fields of Avionics, IT Services, Digital Signal Processing and Global Positioning Systems. The Company recently bagged a \$ 4 million deal in 2005 (up from € 2 million in 2004) from Diehl Avionik Systeme, Germany, which is the largest avionics systems supplier in Germany and number one software supplier to Airbus.

The IGCC spoke to J.M.Sundaresan, Managing Director, Accord Software & Systems Pvt.Ltd.:

Can you tell us briefly about your company and your successful partnership with Diehl Avionik?

ACCORD is a Bangalore based company founded in December 1991 by five technologists. Our focus areas are Aerospace, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Digital Signal Processing and IT Solutions. We have more than 400 person years experience in Avionics Software and Systems development. Through our in-house R&D initiatives we have successfully developed GPS technologies for use in automotives, aircrafts and space applications. We have patents both domestic and global in the field of GPS. We have developed SmartWorks – a suite of applications meant for improving business productivity of SMEs. This product is sold internationally through internet and we have a large base of satisfied customers worldwide.

Our software division has been assessed at SEI-CMMI Level 5 maturity and the company as a whole is ISO 9001:2000&TickIT certified. Our human resources are highly skilled, dedicated and aligned to deliver quality outputs demanded by our worldwide customers.

We have been honored with Karnataka State Recognition Award for the year 1994–

95 and the prestigious First National Award for Entrepreneurship for 1996 – presented by the Honorable President of India.

Diehl Avionik Systeme, Germany (Diehl) is the largest avionics systems supplier in Germany. Our relationship with Diehl started in a very small way in the year 2002 and today we are an esteemed strategic partner to Diehl in their avionics programs. We participated in a big way in Diehl's Airbus A380 programs. A380 is the largest commercial aircraft being designed by Airbus Industrie. We are proud to be part of this state-of-the-art international aviation project. We, as a partner of Diehl enjoy their trust and respect.

What were the initial hurdles to be overcome?

Our first meeting with Diehl was in January 2000. The working relationship started in August 2002. In the intervening period, Mr. Werner Burger, Head of Software Development, Diehl Avionik Systeme had visited us twice to evaluate us. We had to go through stringent evaluation before being accepted as a potential working partner. The working relationship grew step by step from being a potential to a working partner. We built our business with Diehl based on commitment, customer focus and trust. For a short-term business relationship all the

initial efforts and experiences would seem like hurdles. But they are the necessary elements one has to undergo for creating long-term business relationships.

Germany ranks 3rd after USA and Japan in terms of share of the IT market. How do you perceive the German IT, particularly software, market?

Our majority of interaction with Germany is through software services in the Aerospace domain. We have about 40% of our revenues coming from software services rendered for Germany. Besides offering software services, we also develop and sell software products through Internet. Smartworks, Our business productivity suite has customers in Germany too. Even though we have only English language edition for sale, Germany contributes to nearly 5% of our Global sales. We could improve this significantly if we could make a German edition of our software. We are actively looking for partners who would help us to localize our software and reach the German market. Hence Germany is a very important market for us.

Frankfurt has lot of opportunities for commercial software while places like Bavaria offer immense possibilities for technical software. India has great potential to tap the German IT market.

You have been a member of the IGCC since 1999. How has the IGCC supported you in your business relations with Germany?

IGCC has supported us in many ways. They helped us participate in SYSTEMS 2001 at Munich which gave us a good exposure to German IT markets. The meetings and presentations by Frankfurt Economic Development Forum organized by IGCC provided valuable insights to us. The opportunity to meet individual businessmen and delegations from Germany were also provided by IGCC. The literature available at IGCC office at Bangalore also helps in understanding German businesses. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the team at IGCC Bangalore for their encouragement and support. Their friendly and cheerful disposition at all the meets made us feel at home.

Do you have any advice for new entrants into the German market for software?

The new entrants must have patience, commitment and intention to enter the German market. As I know, the large German companies' culture is to plan on a fairly long-term basis. They are also very quality conscious. We cannot achieve success in a very short time. It takes a while to achieve significant business and can only be done through demonstration of commitment, customer focus, quality consciousness and trust.