

CONNECT

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Europe Bound Mudit Patni

ITC Infotech (www.itcinfotech.com), a wholly owned subsidiary of USD 7 bn ITC Limited, is a global IT services and solutions company. Unlike most traditional Indian IT firms who had their eyes set on the American market, ITC Infotech, thanks to its lineage began operations in 2000, and had the European market high on its radar ever since. Connect caught up with Mr. Mudit Patni, part of Global Account Management Team of ITC Infotech, to find out more about the Company's European trust.



Tell us a little about your foray into the European market and growth over the years.

Our journey as a Company began with the thought of consolidating ITC Group's internal IT operations, and that's how, in the year 2000 ITC Infotech was born. Over the years we have managed to find our niche in the Indian IT industry and create a business of global repute. When we started out, the recession had just hits its peak, but that hardly deterred us, as we had a very strong foundation in our parent Company. Our foray into the market began with Europe in fact. And about 60% of our business today comes from there. We entered the European market, and owing to our lineage and cultural similarities, we were able to create long term engagements with some of Europe's biggest players.

You already had a strong presence in London for your European operations, what prompted to choose the Netherlands? How large is the Dutch team?

Our UK operations started in Milton Keynes. Over the years, we have also created a large presence in each of the Nordic countries. We are engaged with Danske Bank, Denmark's largest bank, and Finnair, Finland's oldest operating airlines.

To consolidate our success in the European market, we made the strategic decision of setting up operations in Netherlands, with the Benelux market forming a key market for us. We have already signed up our first customer in the Dutch market. Our clients are usually our advocates long after we have completed projects for them, and we focus on value delivery. Also our domain experience in the retail sector helps us understand the complexities of that other technology companies might not have an insight on. We have also recently completed SAP MDM upgrade for CSM Bakery, the largest bakery in Netherlands.

We continue to grow and expand our portfolio of services for our Dutch customers.

How has your stint in the Netherlands been in particular?

ITC Infotech has been running operations in Amsterdam since 2009. We have also recently added a sales team to accelerate growth. Netherlands has extremely friendly policies, a strategic location, and better GDP growth compared to some of the other European countries. Netherlands ranks high for me, in terms of livability, as well.

As for the business, we have multi fold objectives for the Dutch market. We are open to partnering with local companies who want to be competitive in the global scenario by leveraging our delivery capability. The second objective is to have local partnerships through which we can reach out to the right set of companies.

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You recently announced some hiring plans to expand your team, would this include your Dutch offices as well?

Whenever we give a hiring number it is inclusive of our European, US and India operations. As of now Europe and US form a small part of the overall headcount, however that is slowly changing, as we revise our client engagement model. We are now laying greater emphasis on hiring local talent, in order to provide a better connect with the

customers. Secondly, we have also started seeing traction on large deals that are governed by program management offices; here too, we need local talent to manage the project on the customer site. For instance, the delivery manager is on the client location, and talks the same language, and is capable of mediating between the clients' needs and our team in India. Currently, we are pursuing few engagements in the Netherlands, and as the relationship matures we will be looking at increasing our presence.

Your services span across numerous industries, according to you which industries in Europe have been least effected by the economic slowdown? And what are some of the growth areas you see in the times to come?

A major part of our business comes from the Nordic region, which has borne minimum impact of the European crisis, thanks to its high focus on manufacturing, a key sector for us, as a business. The major manufacturing companies in Europe have been smart to focus on China and India, and have over the last few years shifted their factory and management to these countries, and their revenues from these developing countries are increasing.

So, yes, the least affected sector, according to me, has to be manufacturing. We have a 10-year-old relationship with a Company called PTC (Parametric Technology Corporation) that makes Product Lifecycle Management software. That product is quite popular, and it is on Gartner's top list. We are the implementation partners for PTC, which has launched products like Flex PLM for the RFA (Retail, Apparel & Footware) sector and WindChill for the manufacturing industry. In the last one year, ITC Infotech has had good success in PLM projects.

Tell us about your future plans to scale up your European operations, and Netherlands specifically.

Over the next 3 – 4 years, ITC Infotech has identified five growth areas, and those five growth areas will be the focus for the Netherlands also.

The first one is ERP where we aim at enhancing returns from SAP investments for our clients, through niche value-added services around: BI/BO, SCPM, SuPM, MDM and Automation Testing.

Another focus area is Product Lifecycle Management (PLM). We have created process maps and developed best practices through our experience of over 700+ PLM implementations for some of the biggest businesses globally, helping us reduce costs and time drastically for implementations, upgraded & migrations. Additionally, our domain knowledge of the RFA industry helps us mitigate risks for our clients, and provide them with the fastest time to market at the lowest cost.

The next growth area for the company is Infrastructure Services - We deliver world-class quality and have demonstrated agility in delivery for global majors in the area of standard desktop and application packaging. We also offer a very strong value proposition to clients looking at migrating to Windows 7: We understand remediation of user made systems, and hence can provide the best suited tools for a smooth transition, with zero user disruption.

ITC Infotech has been very successful across the Banking, Financial Services & Insurance sector. Our unmatched implementation experience and expertise of creating larger scale offshore developments centers for global giants, provides our partners speed-to-market at optimized costs. This is an area where we see increased traction.

Last, but not the least, Loyalty has been a strong differentiator for the company. The depth and breadth of expertise, developed by ITC Infotech through large scale implementation, makes the company a leader in offering Loyalty services & solutions. ITC Infotech has the unmatched experience of implementing Siebel Loyalty across industries. We are also the first system integrator company to implement Siebel loyalty for the airlines industry. Most airline customers of Siebel Loyalty choose ITC Infotech as their implementation partner.

We are optimistic of creating similar success stories in Netherlands.
