

Best Practice: Establishment

Comarch: Steady Growth based on Data Cloud

The Polish IT Specialist Comarch and its Dresden branch has been a pioneer of the region. Today, the company's Dresden location is not only the largest in the German, Austrian, and Swiss business region, but also the home to a computing center with cloud computing applications that the company considers its future.

“Initially, we considered Dresden an attractive branch location mainly for the region's high concentration of IT-companies, its pre-existing regional network as well as its many universities,” Comarch Branch Managing Director Dariusz Biernacki, says.

One of the first Polish companies to establish a German branch, Comarch also chose Dresden as a location because of the city's easy access from the company's headquarters in Krakau. What started as a small office staffed with a few employees has become a major site on the map for this globally-active supplier of IT-solutions.

Today, the branch is no longer confined to the renovated Wilhelminian-period villa on Chemnitz Street that the company moved into in 2013. The Dresden location has become the corporation's largest site in the economic region of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Comarch invested 12 million Euro into the new cube-shaped construction that houses a high-performance computing center; and the center's servers have been realizing Cloud-computing offers from clients since 2013. This offers companies the advantage of a virtual 'data cloud' so they no longer need to maintain servers in their offices, but manage and save their accounting or data externally via the Internet. Many large clients already make use of this computing center which is protected against blackouts by an in-house diesel emergency power generator. Among Comarch's clients are Mercedes-Benz Bank, T-Mobile and Vodafone.

From Telecom Specialist to Full-Range IT-Supplier

“At Comarch, everything started with the development of telecommunications software,” Biernacki says, “and it was another deciding factor to choose Dresden.”

Since 2005, the company had been working on collaborative projects with TU Dresden and later with the University of Applied Sciences Dresden (HTW). The strong connections and close collaborations with the many institutes of these universities still exist today. Projects no longer revolve solely around telecommunications know-how. Comarch has become a full-range IT-supplier with a full-service palette that includes business software solutions for resource planning (ERP); accounting and business intelligence; document management and infrastructure; and IT-services including server storage and network solutions. Comarch focuses on international small-and-medium-sized industrial and trade businesses; and

occasionally, local businesses employ the company's services, such as the Dresden supermarket chain Konsum Dresden which uses Comarch's ERP system.

Mutual Give and Take in the Region

The Dresden Comarch branch employs a staff of 70 in the Dresden region. The region's concentration of IT and telecommunications expertise makes it easy to employ a highly-qualified workforce. The development Comarch has been able to achieve within the past ten years in Dresden, according to Biernacki, is based on a mutual give-and-take typical for the region. The city of Dresden as well as the Free State of Saxony have benevolently supported the company's establishment as well as its expansion with the funding for the construction of the computing center.

Future Field Telemedicine

Biernacki believes that these supportive practices provide an important foundation for the company's future growth. The significance of cloud computing is growing. It is therefore no coincidence that the Dresden Comarch employees frequently are asked to be part of research projects focusing on cloud computing applications and further development. When taking part in these research projects, the company's perspective aims much higher than its own interests. Comarch collaborates with various Fraunhofer Institutes. Along with the data and storage demands such applications need, the company considers participating in this research a step toward the expansion of its business line.

Since 2014, the software corporation has also been providing hardware solutions. For instance, in Poland, Comarch offers high-tech medical assistance products which save doctor visits mainly to elderly patients and aim to improve medical care in rural areas.

"We are making an effort to establish such a project here in Saxony and create reference solutions," Biernacki says. "At its headquarters in Krakau, the company has established a modern sample clinic called 'iMed24' demonstrating the IT and cloud-based medical care of the future."

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