

# CONNEXIT – SUCCESSFUL EXPORT AND MARKETING OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

In 2015, *Connexit* has significantly stepped into the markets of the region, Europe and the Middle East, which proved the management planning decision of investing into knowledge and competences of the employees to be justified. About crucial 2015, and plans for the next year, we talked with the President of the *Connexit Board* Amir Mulalic, and the director mr.sci Benijamin Hadzalic.

**Interviewed by Almasa Bajric**

**B**osnian IT company *Connexit*, has made a significant step not only into the markets of the region, but of Europe and the Middle East as well. These are the results of the management commitment to invest into knowledge and competences of their employees. About crucial 2015, and the next year plans, we talked with the President of the *Connexit Board*, Amir Mulalic, and the director mr.sci Benijamin Hadzalic.

**BM:** In the last two years you made adjustments of the company's operation toward the dominating world trends in IT. What has this adjustment concretely brought?

**MULALIC:** In the last year, *Connexit* has been transformed from the company which was recognized in the local market as a system integrator, to the company that offers a whole range of business and IT services. *System integration* is a professional term that signifies linking of different business, mainly infrastructural IT subsystems and creating preconditions for joint functioning of these different components, which can be managed from one unique centre. On the other hand, *Solution provider* is a step forward, where we together with a client define or optimize business processes, which are then informationalized ac-

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## Video game for language learning

**BM:** You participated at the *International Fair* in Kuwait where you presented your innovative project. Could you tell us more about this project?

**MULALIC:** This is the project we are very proud of. It is about a video-game that enables facilitated learning of the Arabic language. The project investor is Kuwait Invention Agency, which decided to present our project at the *International Invention Fair*, this year in November. We can proudly say that the video presentation of our project attracted great attention not only of visitors, but of other Fair participants, something that we take as a sort of recognition of our work.

**We have done a pioneering project in Telekom Serbia, points out Hadzalic**

cording to business priorities. Having in mind that this is a way to multiply effectiveness and efficiency of business processes, client realizes all advantages that comes with modern technology, and *Connexit* is recognized not only as a supplier but as a partner with which a new value is built.

**HADZALIC:** When it comes to the technology as such, the company's move of focus from infrastructural and network solution directed services to various "smart" solutions is noticeable. Here, above all, we think about hybrid cloud solutions. So, we talk about a strategic shift that resulted in a range of activities implemented in *Connexit*. This, at the end, brought to establishment of our Development department in which significant number of people work on the project related to cloud solutions.

We developed a platform based on *Open Working Platform (OWP)* principle, which serve as a basis for development of all other solutions that are used in cloud. At the same time, we recognized needs and defined several business lines where we have already put in use appropriate services in their cloud, and they are related to, for example, hotel operation, private clinics, and small and medium enterprises. With these services we wanted to underline a concept that would enable small and medium enterprises costs to reflect their real needs, and to avoid large initial fixed costs for IT infrastructure. Instead, they would have a monthly cost that is proportional to the services in use. These are complementary solutions that enable small companies to work and be committed to their core activities. These solutions dominantly include *ERP (Enterprise resource planning)* solutions that are related to the management of financial part of operation, and that, at the same time, include solutions for the communication with customers, opening service accounts, issuing invoices. In fact, it is about a closed cycle of analyzing costumers' needs with *CRM (Costumer Relation-ship Manager)*, through contracting to monitoring solution delivery through *ERP*. It is important here to emphasize that the service is parametrised and very simple to use in any business system. This platform is implemented and as such is accessible on our web and cloud infrastructure and it is available to our interested users.

**BM:** Could you say that this, 2015, was a turning point in operation of your company and if so, to which segment this relates?



## Connexit works with the bests

In *Connexit* they are very proud of successes of their partners. For example, *Liva Energy*, the company for which *Connexit* created IT solutions, was announced the most significant investor in BiH in 2015, by investing 15 million KM in production capacities of factory for highly sophisticated electronic production, located in Vogosca. They remind that *Al Shiddi Group* was chosen as the most important investor in year 2010 for its investment in *Hotel Bristol* Sarajevo, and for which *Connexit* also did a project of IT infrastructure.

"We can self-praise by dealing with the bests. From *Al Shiddi Group*, *SEIC Group*, (*Marriott Residence Inn*), *Bosnalijek*, *Bekto Precisa*, *Serbia Telecom*, *Trendtex* to *Liva Energy*. These are all successful stories in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region, with which *Connexit* had succesfull co-operation and still cooperates on IT solution developments", says Mulalic.

**MULALIC:** Company *Connexit* was guided from its beginning by a slogan that investment into knowledge is the best investment. Such approach has as a result all key positions in the company filled with our own human resources. Besides the knowledge, our seniors have enough experience that enables them to design and control the most complicated processes. Additionally, during the last and this year, *Connexit* continuously increases the number of employees, dominantly younger people. In the last three months we got strengthened with another four young engineers, who are undergoing internal trainings phases. This business policy helped *Connexit* to undergo transformation from system integrator to a company that becomes a confidential advisor to our partners. We don't regard our relation with clients as seller-buyer relation, it is more of a partnership that finally results with our commitments for the future, and these are IT governance solutions.

**HADZALIC:** In 2015 we experienced culmination of our commitment to engage in IT solutions that are yet to be recognized as potential in the coming

period. Same as we were pioneers in some other processes that demanded certain knowledge, we want to be pioneers in this segment. This has immensely determined our focus and development, helped us to erase not only administrative borders but also borders in people's heads. We are convinced, and we actually proved, that Bosnian knowledge can be exported and become a recognizable export brand. It influenced us to come out of Bosnian borders, to become present in the region, and later in the Middle Eastern market.

**BM:** It seems somehow that in 2015 you worked more on projects in the region and the Middle East than in Bosnia and Herzegovina. What kind of projects are these, in which implementation phase, and are there any new projects emerging?

**HADZALIC:** We have been recognized as a company that can deliver complex and multidisciplinary projects. One of such projects was done in *Telekom Srbija* where we implemented a system of IT services management, which represented one of pioneer projects of such kind in telecommunication. Also, we are finishing the implementation of PCI DSS standards for cards



## Consulting for Ministry of Defense and BiH Armed Forces

In cooperation with the *Centre for Integrity of Defense Sector* from Oslo, Connexit implements a consulting project of support to the system of procurement in the *Ministry of Defense* of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The implementation of this project started in this year and it will last until 2017.

„Together with the *Norwegian Centre for Integrity of Defense Sector* we participated in organizing and im-

plementing trainings related to application of ISO standards in the *Ministry of Defense* of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project relates to organizing workshops in the BiH Ministry of Defense, for the purpose of education on ISO standard application. We worked on this project in 2015, and we are in the process of preparing documentation for continuation of this project in 2016”, says Hadzalic.

with *Hypo bank of Montenegro*. We are regionally recognized for our knowledge and competences in optimizing IT solutions, so we implemented such a project with *Trendtex* company, a regional textile producer, which employs around 2000 people in BiH and Serbia. There is a series of companies which we cooperate with in IT sector, in financial sector all over the region.

**MULALIC:** This year was interesting as we made a step into the Middle Eastern market, where we in joint efforts with our partners in Kuwait established necessary business infrastructure, made market analyses and started with first projects. What makes us happy is a range of project contracts to be signed in near future. We are present on this market together with our partners, and we appear as leaders of several Bosnian companies consortium. According to the agreement, the consortium united selling and support activities, while each company from the consortium retained its autonomy in domain of their offer. In this market, we appear with an extended offer of IT service that includes solutions in the domain of health sector informatization, E-commerce, GPS solutions, etc. Also, we expect soon contract signing with a partner company from Saudi Arabia, which will be followed by joint projects in this region. When it comes to European market, we have a stable cooperation with our partners in Switzerland. Our plan for the next year is to start with serious projects in German market, as we already entered the process of certification so that we could operate in this large market.

**BM:** The offer of your company is significantly enriched by new services. How they are accepted in the market and do you prepare some news in this segment for your current and future users?

**HADZALIC:** In the domain of hybrid cloud solutions we made another step forward, in sense that some systematic

services, which were traditionally solutions applied in IT infrastructure, we now transferred to cloud. This is primarily related to the solutions linked with telephone systems, security systems, etc. It is about universal business solutions that may not be fully recognized in BiH market, but without doubt will soon be demanded here as well. These are solutions that, primarily, decrease costs of operation, which is principal goal of every company. We are aware that some time is needed for the market to recognize

With this services,  
we wanted to highlight  
a concept that should  
provide for the costs  
of small and medium  
enterprises to be an  
expression of their real  
needs, to avoid the large  
initial fixed costs for  
IT infrastructure, and  
to have a monthly cost  
commensurate with  
the services they use

such a working concept, and that shortly will disappear this general careflessness when it comes to this new, systematic IT solutions, having in mind the fact that these solutions offer lower operation costs. As for IT solutions that we developed, we already have feedbacks of first users that are extremely satisfied with what we have implemented.

**BM:** You have been working in local and international markets. How much are the companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina ready to invest into innovative IT services? And can you compare that to other markets?

**MULALIC:** The issue of decision making related to new IT services in the companies is actually an issue of people from IT sector – of their explaining of new IT service advantages in an adequate way. Simply, in BiH there are companies that grew into IT service that they used to use, and decision makers in these companies face problems, which bring them logically to us, the thing which pleases us, of course. We put efforts to lead these companies to solutions that will improve services and facilitate companies operation. By developing such a relation of trust, we regularly enter processes of optimization and consolidation of existing infrastructure, at the same time using advanced cloud services that we already developed, and which bring to our partners savings in their businesses, undisturbed operation and further development.

**HADZALIC:** The most recent example of such cooperation we had with *Bekto Precisa* company, where we are about to start with consolidation of existing IT structure in the company, after that we will define through a partner-like consultation which are the real services that they need to use, optimize current and develop new solutions. We think that this cooperation is an example of how local companies can jointly implement world solutions, which will bring advancement to all. When it comes to the region, the relation is in general the same as in BiH. The fact that there is a great gap in understanding needs for IT solutions, the real role of IT and companies' investment into this sector. This is why we invested in our knowledge and we try to develop partnership relations, which will bring them the best and the most efficient IT solutions for their real needs, and not to act as a company that will sell foreign solutions. The same principle we apply in the Middle Eastern and European market. The principle where the client is in focus, not technology or its producer, has proved to be the right solution. **B**