

ADB: Steria runs IT infrastructure

As Antwerp Diamond Bank's business needs evolve, its enabling IT infrastructure needs to evolve accordingly. That's why the bank decided to choose Steria as its IT infrastructure outsourcing partner.

Antwerp Diamond Bank (ADB) is a specialised bank focusing exclusively on the diamond and the diamond jewellery sector. ADB is the second largest diamond bank in the world, with a 75-year experience. The bank's network of offices covers both the major traditional and the emerging diamond centres, such as Antwerp, Dubai, Geneva, Hong Kong, Mumbai, Singapore, and New York. ADB is a hundred percent KBC subsidiary, providing its branches and representations with different types of financial products and know-how. The bank has 180 employees worldwide, of which 125 are located at ADB's headquarters in Antwerp. Over the course of the past eleven years, ADB has known an impressive international expansion. "As a result, we decided to move our IT environment from Bull DPS 7 mainframe with Cobol applications, to open systems", said Christ Vangheluwe, Senior Vice-President Information Technology at Antwerp Diamond Bank. Since then, the bank migrated to Unix AIX and Windows environments.

"We chose Oracle Financial Services as the standard application for financials. But we still needed a tailor made solution for the core activities that are linked directly to the diamond sector." Next to the international expansion of its activities, ADB evolved from a typical 9-to-5 off-line bank to a 24/7 operation with e-banking services. Because of this new business environment, and with the new IT needs the bank was facing, ADB chose to call on Steria as its infrastructure outsourcing partner. All ADB's applications are now physically located at Steria's data center in Belgium. In 2007, after a successful cooperation of four years, ADB

extended its contract with Steria for another five years. "We only changed the SLA", explained Vangheluwe. "We quit measuring the service levels on the systems. All SLA's are now based on the service levels of the applications."

Focus on differentiation

Thanks to the outsourcing of its IT infrastructure, ADB's IT team can now focus on the technical and functional development of its tailor made application for the diamond business. "The application is a key differentiator for the bank", said Vangheluwe. "It was clear from the very start that we would keep that part of our IT outside of the outsourcing agreement." ADB employs two developers working on the application, in close collaboration with five developers of KBC's subsidiary ValueSource in India. Apart from three employees that work on business process management, ADB's IT team has only three employees on infrastructure side. "They

run the management and maintenance of our PC fleet. And of course, they oversee the operations Steria is performing for us regarding servers, storage and network infrastructure."

Last year, ADB opened a new subsidiary in Singapore. Apart from the access to the centralised applications, the new office needed its own local infrastructure with disaster recovery capabilities. This resulted in a new contract, with ADB benefiting from Steria's presence in Singapore. "This is obviously a key element in the successful relationship with Steria. The fact that our outsourcing partner is a company that – like ourselves – is active in many regions of the world, provided us with a very natural and logical solution for our new office in Singapore." The Singapore case clearly shows how Steria, as a specialist for mid-market organizations as ADB, will continue its role as a preferred infrastructure partner for the bank.



Christ Vangheluwe (left), Senior Vice-President Information Technology at Antwerp Diamond Bank: "Steria is our infrastructure partner, but the actual SLA's are measured on application level."
(Right: **Freddy Engels**, Business Development Manager at Steria)