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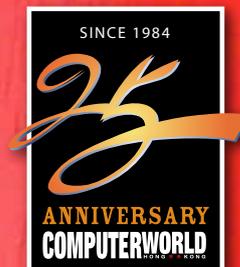
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The power of ten

Ten mainland companies to watch **Page 12**



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University alliance key to Insigma's success

Insigma is dedicated to maximizing ROI for its partners

By Stefan Hammond

According to Ryan Jones, international business development manager for Hangzhou-based Insigma Technology, his firm's close relationship with Zhejiang University is a major strength.

"Insigma was founded in 2001 with a strong focus on IT development due to our relationship with Zhejiang U," said Jones. "We're a top-ten player in the domestic IT services arena with over 25 branches and offices in China, in both the private and public sectors, with particular strength in telecom, electricity, transportation, and other tech services. As a result, we can leverage our channels with these major companies and help our international clients access them."

2008 revenue: RMB 5.25 billion (US\$768 million)

Headcount worldwide: 4,100+

Overseas offices: New York and Massachusetts

"Early on, we focused on developing a strong presence in the Japanese financial market," said Jones, "and today 60% of our business is from Japan. We've worked closely with their stock exchange and top-tier Japanese institutes."

US/China synergy

"One of our favorites milestones is with US-based financial services holding company State Street Corp," said Jones. "In 2001 they set up a vibrant, growing research center at Zhejiang University. To keep the students as they graduated, we established a company called Universesoft, [then] sold it to State Street



Jones from Insigma: Insigma is Microsoft's biggest outsourcing vendor in Asia-Pacific

as State Street's captive offshore IT resource. Then together we built a JV—called Hengtian—which specializes in financial services outsourcing."

"Our signature project with State Street—a reengineering project of their Lattice trading system—has been highlighted for its efficiency and customer satisfaction," said Jones. "The [original] trading platform (buggy and crash-prone) was handed off to Insigma. After we were finished with it, it ran 400% faster and could handle 600% more transactions—at 25% the cost of doing it in-house."

"We've also established strategic investments with companies like Hitachi Systems and Fuji Electronics. Recently we acquired a JV company of Microsoft, called Wicresoft, making Insigma Microsoft's biggest outsourcing vendor in Asia-Pacific."

Expansion

Jones explained that recently, Insigma has expanded to international markets along with organic growth. "We established a branch in Tokyo," he said, "and last year we opened our first US branch in NYC. And Hengtian just opened its first US office in Q209."

Jones said his firm's mission statement helps direct their growth: they plan to be

a leading IT consulting service provider in China and help their clients to maximize ROI. "As we continue to expand throughout Asia, Hong Kong is the most logical place for us to be," he said. "It's a gateway and stepping stone into China and Southeast Asia as a whole. So this is where we want to be."

Hong Kong challenges

The Insigma manager pointed to challenges that "need to be addressed as we continue our plans here in Hong Kong—for example, many clients needing to scale up have very specific needs with specialized domain knowledge."

"In this situation we leverage our relationship with Zhejiang University—we have a unique collaboration model that provides us access to their curriculum of domain knowledge and technical and soft skill training. At the university we can quickly train and prepare employees to handle clients' specific needs as soon as possible—this has already been working for some of our major clients, like Cisco, for whom we deliver and service over 20% of all products in China."

"Our marketing channels, our domain knowledge, and human resources separate us from the pack, and we're confident we'll overcome any challenges that come our way," concluded Jones. ◀