

INFOMA[®]

Software Consulting GmbH



Overview

Country or Region: Germany, Switzerland

Industry: Professional services—Information technology

Partner Profile

INFOMA Software Consulting helps public-sector customers in Germany and in other European countries manage finances, assets, and operations by offering solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics[®] NAV.

Business Situation

The company wants to grow its business and market share, generate more revenue, and help customers address a wider range of critical needs.

Solution

INFOMA engages with Microsoft to grow a partner network to drive vertical and geographical growth, boost technological capabilities, and offer an attractive value proposition with a certified solution.

Benefits

- Deliver proven, sound technology
- Build on a shared, strong vision for your vertical
- Grow through a partner ecosystem
- Offer compelling value
- Meet a wide spectrum of vertical customer needs

Software and Consulting Company Achieves Strong Vertical Growth

“Microsoft is completely focused on the partner ecosystem and shows a commitment to our vertical business that equals ours. We would not be where we are without the industry’s best partner program.”

Oliver Couvigny, General Manager, INFOMA Software Consulting

With a sharp vertical focus on supporting the financial and asset management of local and regional governments, INFOMA Software Consulting provides vertical solutions based on Microsoft Dynamics[®] NAV. To meet ambitious growth goals and address increasingly complex customer challenges, INFOMA pursues a multitiered strategy. The company created a partner channel of companies that resell, implement, and localize Microsoft Dynamics NAV to enter public-sector markets outside of its German base and develop new solutions to support customers. INFOMA also achieved Certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV status for its solution. Today, the company is poised to take its solutions into new international markets and is firmly established as a valuable, highly credible public-sector technology vendor with the ability to deliver broad efficiencies and savings to customers and partners.



Situation

INFOMA Software Consulting built a successful business by focusing exclusively on supporting customers in a closely defined vertical market. The company specializes in providing software and services to help local and regional governments manage their finances, real estate, and processes to meet constituents' needs and comply with regulatory standards for financial management in the public sector. Founded in 1988, the company has its headquarters in Ulm, Germany. INFOMA is a Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner qualified for two Microsoft Partner Network competencies: ISV/Software Solutions and Microsoft Dynamics® NAV. INFOMA's parent company, Imtech N.V., is a large, internationally active technology provider based in the Netherlands.

In the 1990s, far-reaching reforms in the financial management of public-sector organizations in Germany led to the adoption of a more comprehensive, double-entry accounting system. This made it possible to track not only the costs and revenue generation associated with governmental assets and investments but also show projected future costs, amortizations, and incomes. Local governments also needed to achieve compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards. To help meet these requirements, many governmental entities make more intense use of software and technology to manage their finances.

Robust, Versatile Software Solution For the Target Vertical

Given that most towns, districts, and regional governments use software running on the Windows® operating system, INFOMA grows its business

based on Microsoft technology. INFOMA chose Microsoft Dynamics NAV because it provided a perfect fit with the needs of smaller public-sector organizations. Oliver Couvigny, General Manager at INFOMA Software Consulting, explains, "For the customers in our vertical, Microsoft Dynamics NAV is extremely robust and easy to learn and use. It's modular, so people can work with exactly the functionality they require. The solution is easy to implement and it provides a powerful development environment that our developers rely on to create and evolve specialized add-ons."

That targeted software, called *newsystem public*, offers more than 40 modules of wide-ranging capabilities and integrates with Microsoft Dynamics NAV. Public employees work within a single, richly featured solution.

Ambitious Growth Targets and More Complex Customer Needs

Today, approximately 850 German administrative districts and 55,000 public-sector users work with Microsoft Dynamics NAV and *newsystem public*. With account ownership of approximately 15 percent of the available market, INFOMA is clearly one of the leaders in its vertical. However, the company has ambitious goals to grow market share and revenue. In doing so, INFOMA competes with a number of companies, including SAP, Unit 4 Agresso, and specialized software vendors.

At the same time, customer needs have become more demanding. Public-sector organizations that are used to working with low and limited funding face additional shortfalls during a slow economy. Also, they need to deal with

“Certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV recognition opens doors and is more than worth the effort of obtaining it. It shows that we have a proven response to customers’ urgent concerns.”

Eva Wagenpfeil, Business Development Manager, INFOMA Software Consulting

increasing complexity in financial management, regulation, and reporting. In managing assets and properties, they must practice efficient, accountable administration, as well as reduce CO₂ emissions and minimize energy utilization.

Eva Wagenpfeil, Business Development Manager at INFOMA Software Consulting, states, “To continue to grow our business and serve customers well, we had to find ways to address a broader range of customer concerns and extend INFOMA’s capabilities. We had already proven that the vertical approach was successful far beyond expectations. Now, we needed to make it scalable.”

Solution

INFOMA devised an efficient, multitiered strategy. The company collaborates closely with Microsoft and draws strongly on Microsoft resources in developing a thriving partner network, enhancing its technology and enabling business growth in Germany and other European countries.

Broadening Technological Capabilities

Developers continue to enhance *newsystem public* with more advanced capabilities. In addition to the core financial management functionality, *newsystem public* now encompasses advanced software modules to manage real estate and other public assets, including reduction of CO₂ emissions and minimizing energy utilization. Some of the most recent software capabilities that INFOMA designed support local law enforcement.

In addition, INFOMA is extending its solution portfolio outside of Microsoft Dynamics. Currently under development are two solution sets using other

Microsoft technologies: a business intelligence (BI) solution based on Microsoft SQL Server® 2008 and a document management system that uses Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2007. INFOMA draws on the expertise of specialized Microsoft Certified Partners to create these capabilities. A typical application for the BI solution might be gaining insight into constituents’ use of educational services. The BI system would also assist local governments in achieving greater consistency and efficiency in developing policies and decisions, ensuring regulatory compliance, and tracking contributions from citizens. The document management system features an integrated workflow and service architecture to support management of incoming and outgoing receipts, automatic integration of existing and new documents, audit-compliant archiving, and leaner, more efficient procedures.

Fostering a Channel

A partner network called INFOMA partnergroup is a key element in the company’s channel strategy. Members of INFOMA partnergroup—some of them co-owned by governmental entities—are organizations that provide data center services to serve the IT needs of local and regional governments. INFOMA has licensing reseller agreements with 15 of the 35 data centers dedicated to the public sector in Germany.

Starting in 2001, INFOMA made Microsoft Dynamics NAV and *newsystem public* hostable. Data centers can offer the complete solution to public-sector customers as a hosted service. Part of the hosted-solution environment is a job scheduler, which automates such functions as sending “invoice due”

reminders or transferring funds. Data center customers also receive automated software updates when they become available.

Collaborating with Microsoft

INFOMA engages with Microsoft to improve and enhance technology and bring it to a wider audience. For many years, the company has been a participant in the Microsoft Dynamics ISV Partner Account Council to provide Microsoft with input and to help set directions for the independent software vendor (ISV) community. INFOMA joined the ISV beta program for Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009 and is readying customers to migrate to the solution's newest version.

To verify the complete interoperability of *newsystem public* with Microsoft Dynamics NAV, INFOMA submitted it to a rigorous testing process, in which the solution received Certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV status. In addition, INFOMA is 1 of 22 partners worldwide to achieve Certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV 2009 status.

Accessing Foreign Markets

INFOMA works with other Microsoft Certified Partners to take its solution to new markets. Those partners share the ability to produce localized versions of *newsystem communal*, make inroads with local and regional governments in their countries, and successfully implement the solution. "When we assess the business potential for our solution in other countries, we first find out whether they have experienced public-sector financial reforms and whether they have introduced complex, double-entry bookkeeping," says Couvigny. "If both answers are affirmative, we reach out to potential partners."

INFOMA already has a strong presence in Switzerland, is running pilot projects in the Netherlands, and is preparing to take its solution to Denmark, France, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. In a subsequent initiative, INFOMA will identify partners in east European countries.

Benefits

As the INFOMA strategy for growth and customer empowerment pays off, recognition follows success. Microsoft acknowledged INFOMA as its "Microsoft Dynamics Partner Nr. 1" for the public sector in the Europe, Middle East, and Africa region. Says Couvigny, "Microsoft is completely focused on the partner ecosystem and shows a commitment to our vertical business that equals ours. We would not be where we are without the industry's best partner program."

Deliver Proven, Sound Technology

To customers hoping to ascertain the credibility and trustworthiness of a technology vendor, INFOMA representatives point out the certification of *newsystem public* to highlight the fact that the company's investments in technology innovation are bearing fruit. "Certified for Microsoft Dynamics NAV recognition opens doors and is more than worth the effort of obtaining it," says Wagenpfeil. "It shows that we have a proven response to customers' urgent concerns."

Build on a Shared, Strong Vision for Your Vertical

Already widely recognized as a leading public-sector solutions provider in Germany and other countries, INFOMA augments the value and relevance of its brand and solutions through its relationship with Microsoft. Microsoft shares strategic insight with INFOMA

executives and is instrumental in facilitating complementary partner relationships to accelerate the company's entry into markets outside of Germany. "Our Microsoft executive sponsor is instrumental in helping us identify likely partners and establish profitable relationships with them," says Wagenpfeil.

INFOMA continues to enhance its solutions in alignment with the Microsoft technology road map, confidently pursuing other solution categories. Couvigny states, "Partnering with Microsoft readies us for the future. We can grow our business based on a shared vision of what technology can help people achieve."

Grow Through a Partner Ecosystem

An effective partner channel, such as INFOMA partnergroup, offers a compelling value proposition for all stakeholders. As a segment leader and innovator with a Microsoft-validated solution, INFOMA contributes valuable

technology and rich domain expertise. The data center partners have their own relationships with public-sector customers in their areas and, because they are local to these customers, they can take care of them in a highly personal and responsive manner. In addition, the data center partners generate substantial revenue for themselves and INFOMA. "The channel is essential to our business model. Close to half of INFOMA's licensing revenue from the German market comes through the data center partners," says Couvigny.

Other partners in the INFOMA network help the company meet growth targets by taking Microsoft Dynamics NAV with *newsystem public* into new market segments and geographies. Explains Couvigny, "With their strong customer relationships, our experienced partners make it possible for us to establish a presence for our vertical solutions in many more countries and markets."

The vertical solution from INFOMA, *newsystem public*, presents a familiar, comfortable user interface.

Proc. Name	Financial Budget (Mn)	2009	2010	2011
00 Taxes and similar duties	-120.000	-120.000	-120.000	-117.600
02 + Benefits and general allocations	-132.815.100	-132.234.000	-132.074.000	-130.217.000
03 + Other transfer revenue				
04 + Considerations subject to public law	-814.000	-807.000	-807.000	-807.000
05 + Considerations subject to private law	-949.500	-169.000	-369.000	-165.625
06 + Cost refunds and cost allocations	-346.000	166.700	264.700	165.325
07 + Other ordinary revenue	-341.500	-102.500	-302.500	-100.450
08 + Internally produced and capitalized assets				
09 +/- Inventory changes				
10 = Ordinary revenue	-135.446.100	-132.299.800	-133.531.800	-131.253.025
11 - Personnel costs	36.814.300	36.667.500	37.210.600	36.368.000
12 - Post service costs				
13 - Costs for non-cash and similar payments	1.813.200	1.740.700	1.809.800	1.809.800
14 - Balance sheet appreciation				
15 - Transfer costs	48.173.700	48.532.800	48.107.500	47.615.750
16 - Other ordinary costs	3.229.300	1.723.300	1.252.300	1.325.250
17 = Ordinary costs	88.729.500	88.744.200	88.969.300	88.664.240

“With their strong customer relationships, our experienced partners make it possible for us to establish a presence for our vertical solutions in many more countries and markets.”

Oliver Couvigny, General Manager,
INFOMA Software Consulting

Offer Compelling Value

Public-sector customers always operate with strictly limited budgets, so the availability of a powerful, hosted software solution is a real advantage. Hosting of Microsoft Dynamics NAV and *newsystem public* at the partnering data centers makes the complete functionality of the solution available without requiring a large purchase. Instead, customers pay reasonable subscription fees and receive support from the hoster. The data centers already have effective disaster recovery and data protection strategies in place, which means customers don't need to acquire them.

The hosting scenario offers further cost-saving efficiencies to partners and customers. For example, a job scheduler helps customers automate and streamline frequent, time-consuming tasks. And, the ability to distribute software updates automatically ensures that customers receive enhancements consistently and in a timely manner, with a minimal workload for the data center partner. As Wagenpfeil describes, “In one case, a data center with approximately 300 customers needed as many as seven employees to perform the manual distribution of software updates for three weeks, up to five times a year. Now, the data center broadcasts updates in half a weekend day and needs just one systems administrator to monitor the process—a substantial savings of cost and labor.”

Meet a Wide Spectrum of Vertical Customer Needs

With support from Microsoft and the participation of specialized ISV partners, INFOMA can grow far beyond its core competencies of financial and asset management. The BI and document management solutions can help public-sector customers connect accountable, rigorous financial management closely to the changing needs of populations and play an enabling role in supporting the development of policy decisions. Public-sector customers and their constituents stand to benefit from more informed decision making, more efficient and consistent administrative workflows, and more dependable, verifiable compliance with regulation.

“We aspire to be a holistic, preferred partner to our public-sector customers, helping customers in our vertical address a broad range of critical concerns,” says Couvigny. “With the support we receive from Microsoft and our close-knit partner network, we are accomplishing that goal.”

For More Information

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234 in the United States or (905) 568-9641 in Canada. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:

www.microsoft.com

For more information about INFOMA Software Consulting products and services, call 001 49 731 1551 0 or visit the Web site at:

www.infoma.de/webinfoma/ihome.nsf

Microsoft Dynamics

Microsoft Dynamics is a line of integrated, adaptable business management solutions that enables you and your people to make business decisions with greater confidence. Microsoft Dynamics works like familiar Microsoft software such as Microsoft Office, which means less of a learning curve for your people, so they can get up and running quickly and focus on what's most important. And because it is from Microsoft, it easily works with the systems that your company already has implemented. By automating and streamlining financial, customer relationship, and supply chain processes, Microsoft Dynamics brings together people, processes, and technologies, increasing the productivity and effectiveness of your business, and helping you drive business success.

For more information about Microsoft Dynamics, go to:

www.microsoft.com/dynamics

Software and Services

- Microsoft Dynamics
 - Microsoft Dynamics NAV
- Microsoft Office
 - Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007
- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft SQL Server 2008