

SUPPLIER PROFILE INIT

From university spin-off to international leader

When INIT was founded in 1983, Dr Gottfried Greschner, chairman of INIT AG, had no doubt that this company would have a future. Now, 25 years later, the fact that intelligent transportation systems are more in demand than ever and are used in projects worldwide proves quite impressively that he was right. In celebration of the company's success, INIT commemorated its 25th anniversary on 4 April 2008.

INIT is technology and market leader in the area of telematics and electronic fare collection systems for public transport. Worldwide more than 250 public transit authorities rely on innovative and integrated hardware and software technology from INIT.

It was on 7 March 1983, the University of Karlsruhe's 'On-demand bus transportation' project became INIT Innovative Informatikanwendungen in Transport-, Verkehrs- und Leitsystemen GmbH.

As a recent doctoral graduate, Gottfried Greschner along with a few close colleagues had a vision of future transportation telematics systems, and thus went in 'search of the right market'.

They soon found it, and within a few short years the company expanded from Karlsruhe into the international market.

The breakthrough for INIT came in 1988 with the implementation of a computer-aided operation control system in Osnabrück; a success that even had politicians taking note. In 1989, the Karlsruhe-based company received the distinguished Innovation Award from the state of Baden-Württemberg for its outstanding developments in the field of new technologies.

Barely a year later and other European countries began to introduce the advanced technology from INIT, causing sales to climb. The transport authority of the Swedish capital, Stockholm, selected INIT as their partner of choice to implement a new operation control system.

To date numerous other projects have been added to INIT's roster of national and international projects, including Munich, Nuremberg, Wuppertal, Oslo, The Hague, New York City, Houston, Dallas, and Vancouver (BC).



Dr Gottfried Greschner (left) with the INIT Board

■ KARLSRUHE SUCCESS STORY

Due to its success story, INIT's facilities in the Technologiefabrik Karlsruhe became too small for the rapidly growing company. One of the reasons for this rapid expansion was that the product range had been extended to include electronic fare collection systems. Thus, in 1996 the company packed up and moved to its current location in Karlsruhe's East End. In 1999, to round off its product spectrum INIT bought Krupp GfT's development and sales division for the MRS 90 planning system.

A further milestone in the development of INIT was the formation of its US American subsidiary INIT Inc in Chesapeake, Virginia in 1999. Today, INIT has 17 successful projects in the US and Canada. Since 2006, the Karlsruhe-based telematics specialist has also operated two branch offices in Canada (Vancouver and Montreal), where it has already completed four projects. In 2007, INIT continued its growth opening offices in the Middle East and in Australia.

For INIT the beginning of the new millennium was the start of a new era. In 2001, INIT was listed on the stock market as init innovation in traffic systems AG, and has since continued to expand its business quite drastically on an international level.

The Karlsruhe-based telematics specialist has also managed to tap

new markets in the Asian-Pacific region.

■ LEADING THE WAY

Worth a particular mention is a contract INIT was recently awarded in Dubai. Over the coming years, the Arab Emirate intends to establish the most modern local public transportation system in the world. Consequently, the individual components must meet the highest standards. Dr. Greschner says: "The fact that we were awarded this contract in Dubai underlines quite impressively the important role that technology from INIT plays at an international level." In 25 years of company history, Dubai is the largest individual order to date, with a volume in the double-digit millions.

However, business in the domestic market has no need to fear comparison.

For example, INIT will provide four regional bus companies of the DB Stadtverkehr with an area-wide integrated multi-client control and payment system for around 3,000 vehicles in Bavaria. This is currently INIT's largest contract in Germany.

On the whole, 2007 brought with it the third consecutive year of record-breaking results – and there is no end in sight for the Karlsruhe-based company.

Against the background of the debate on climate change the implementation and development of efficient and environmentally friendly

local public transportation systems is of ever increasing importance. Thus, INIT will continue to develop innovative systems and solutions in the future. Today hundreds of transportation companies worldwide already operate tens of thousands of buses and trains with intelligent solutions from INIT.

Further potential for growth comes from the automotive sector – in which INIT has been operating since 2004 – and from the takeover of the INTERPLAN division from PTV AG, a former competitor in the field of scheduling software, on 1 January 2008.

■ A REASON TO CELEBRATE

INIT celebrates its 25th anniversary with several events. On 3 April it hosted an International User Meeting, while on April 4 current developments in local public transportation were among the topics highlighted in a symposium.

Well-known personalities from politics and industry focused on the success of INIT in a number of celebratory speeches and talks.

Speakers include the former German Environment Minister and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer, and the UITP Secretary General, Hans Rat, rounded off with a festive gala evening.

■ Details from www.init-ka.de