

ALWAYS ON CALL

In three short years, DRGT has grown its Belgian gaming business into a major global systems force. G3 interviews CEO Jurgen De Munck

THE ACQUISITION OF SiP CAME AS A SURPRISE TO THE INDUSTRY - WHAT WERE THE REASONS FOR THE PURCHASE (YOU ALREADY HAD SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY) AND HAVE THEY PROVED THE RIGHT ONES?

The clear synergies possible by purchasing the Austrian company Systems in Progress were clear to us. SiP has an excellent position in the marketplace due to its quality. This was the first of a number of reasons for integrating SiP within DRGT. Secondly, SiP offers serverless technology just like we do – so technically the merging of both systems fit on the right platform. Thirdly, our technology focuses on the marketing possibilities of systems. Thus, this is a perfect fit and both sides of the systems have been integrated. The industry knows and trusts SiP systems and we have added the marketing opportunities such as with drScreen.

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION IS NOTORIOUSLY DIFFICULT, HOW HAVE YOU COMBINED THE INDIVIDUAL DRGT SOLUTIONS WITH SiP AND WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES AND GREATEST REWARDS?

We looked for commonalities and synergies. We were very excited at the prospect of purchasing SiP and integrating such strong and proven systems. We knew exactly where we wanted to take the company and that naturally made the integration much more straight forward. Our goal and challenge is to make the question you have just asked something that belongs to the past... so you would ask in future something like "Systems integration used to be notoriously difficult". We are taking systems to a new level – and systems is being seen in a different, a new and exciting light. Systems are not just a necessity – they are a marketing tool – an excellent way to reach the individual player. Systems can open up a new world of choice – for example, how to best manage the slots based on the clear, precise information



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that we provide. Systems grow with our customers. We have especially made our solutions flexible and modular so that they can be built upon / expanded when the time is right for each single customer.

The greatest challenge lies in front of us – to grow the company to find its just potential. These are very exciting times and the demand for DRGT systems is constantly growing. We have to keep pace – have the necessary investment in infrastructure – to ensure that we are in the position to offer the support to our customers around the world. We do appreciate that this is a step-by-step process. In 2012 our major focus was on the Peruvian gaming market with the required systems connection in 2012. We see it as our duty to support and educate where we can. Thus, operators come to us knowing that they have a partner who will not just implement a system – but provide the training and support so that the customer can then master and make use of the full systems potential.

HOW MUCH UPDATING OF THE SiP SOLUTION HAVE YOU UNDERTAKEN? IT'S A PRODUCT THAT WAS LAUNCHED 10 YEARS AGO AND HAS CHANGED HANDS BETWEEN UNICUM, WMS AND NOW DRGT, WHAT HAS BEEN THE EVOLUTION OF THE SOFTWARE AND WHAT DEVELOPMENTS ARE YOU UNDERTAKING AT PRESENT?

The answer to this question is to look at the name of SiP today. It is called DRGT

systems. The previous owners did not have their main focus on systems. That is where we make the difference. We are a pure systems company and have our specific knowledge in this field. SiP is not a subsidiary of the owner as it was in the past. SiP is fully integrated within DRGT with a new company name to resemble that. The team has been completely integrated and each person knows his or her duties and responsibilities. Our dedication to the Austrian base in Graz (the SiP location) was underlined very quickly as we moved to larger, more modern and convenient offices in Graz (above) within nine months after having purchased SiP. The Austrian team is continually growing in size.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE STATE OF THE SYSTEMS SECTOR IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY RIGHT NOW AND HOW DO YOU SEE THINGS CHANGING?

My challenge that this question, too, will change in the near future to: "How have you been able to make the systems sector so user-friendly, such a great marketing tool?" Our goal, our added-value, our *raison d'être* is to make systems accessible to our customers. Accessible means that our customers see the great benefits we offer, embrace them and make complete use of them. We are constantly developing new ideas. Our drScreen provides key data directly on the slot monitor. Players can continue to play the game and see the accounts

information. And they can flip the screen – so for example the account data is on the upper screen and the game on the lower one...or vice versa naturally.

Systems are the new way to have direct access to the customer. It is the best and most cost-effective marketing tool an operator can have. And systems are available to every operator – no matter where they are situated, how many gaming locations and slots they have. The fact that we can connect all slots of any age or from manufacturer means that the operator does not have to part from older, popular reel-based slots. We do not demand that a certain technology level has to be present in the slots. If that technology is not there, then we integrate it in the machines. For example, for operator wishing to go ticket-in, ticket-out on older slots that do not have the necessary SAS level or mechanical space for fitting a ticket printer in the slot machine – we provide a side box solution and completely integrate it. Another example: We can replace the upper printed screen on reel-based slots with a touchscreen that emulates the printed screen – so that players do not notice the difference. This monitor can then provide the complete players accounts details to the player and these older slots receive a new lease of life and are just as capable of being best used for systems data as the new video-based slots.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE GREATEST

CHALLENGES AS YOU HAVE EXPANDED THE DRGT BUSINESS? THE COMPANY HAS GROWN VERY QUICKLY AND YOUR MARKET PRESENCE IS GLOBAL, BUT HOW DO YOU BUILD THE STRUCTURES YOU NEED TO SUPPORT YOUR CLIENTS IN SUCH A SHORT TIMESCALE?

The challenge is to provide the necessary structure to mirror the growth rates. Let's look to Peru. Here we knew we were going to play a major role – but only if we made a clear statement to the operators – that we are here and local. Thus, we moved quickly to create DRGT Peru and employ local staff. We are fast moving and very professional. We believe we attract highly motivated and talented people. This gives us increased impetus. We are a young company with young management. We are dynamic.

It is naturally challenging to be able to expand any business. Based now in three locations (Austria, Belgium and Peru), we are well equipped for further growth. A major advantage we have – we follow our strategy and invest quickly and firmly to ensure that we can provide long-term support to our clients. That is a very important message. Operators have to trust that systems providers are here for the long-term as an investment in systems is a long-term investment. We are prepared and plan to further grow the team and open new subsidiaries in the future to support our clients around the globe.

The Global Headquarters of DRGT based in Knokke, Belgium.

HOW HAVE YOU ACHIEVED INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS SO QUICKLY - YOUR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERU MARKET IN PARTICULAR IS ASTONISHING CONSIDERING THE TIMEFRAME?

We are seen as the company who is revolutionising the systems market. Systems are now something that creates new opportunities for operators. It has become user-friendly, cost-effective, simple to use. It is a marketing tool – a way to reach players to inform / entertain / reward them. We will continue to grow these marketing possibilities as we will be explaining at the ICE.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT GOALS AND AMBITIONS OF DRGT AND HOW ARE YOU LOOKING TO ACHIEVE THEM?

We are well structured in Europe in Latin America and Africa – the latter with our distributor Simplicit-e in South Africa. Our focus has to be on Asia and so our current goal is how best we can serve Asian operators. We are willing to invest in the Asian market long-term and our challenge is how to best do this. We are very much looking forward to the ICE and are taking a much larger stand to reflect how our company has grown over the past twelve months. Our management, sales and service teams will be there and we cordially invite operators to come and see us and learn how they can benefit from DRGT systems. And naturally we look forward to greeting our customers.

**JURGEN DE
MUNCK,
CEO, DRGT.**