



CASE STUDY: BUSINESS EXCHANGES

<http://www.be24.gr>

FACT FILE				
Company name	Business Exchanges S.A.			
Business Activity	Supplier of electronic commerce services			
Region	Greece			
Number of employees	35			
Business Range	Local	Regional	National	International
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Description of market / client / target group	Provision of a secure and reliable environment, in which products, services and information are exchanged between businesses.			
Description activities / products / services	Electronic market services are available: suppliers' catalogue, administration, auctions, business data, consulting services, etc.			

CASE DESCRIPTION:

The business

Business Exchanges S.A. was created by three Greek companies, which are EFG Eurobank-Ergasias (60%), Vodafone-Panafon (30%) and Hellas-on-Line (10%) in order to meet the needs that arise from the activity of enterprises in Business-to-Business (B2B). Apart from the basic shareholders, Business Exchanges S.A. collaborates with the companies Ariba, IBM, LogicDIS and Info-Quest for its technology solutions. It is estimated that the shareholders will need a period of only three years to gain a return on their investment. Furthermore they expect to take advantage of Business Exchanges S.A. by selling banking, economic and telecommunication services through the portal in the future.

Introduction of e-business

Business Exchanges S.A. provides electronic commerce services. It began its activities in June of 2001, after a period of pilot applications. Since then, electronic commerce services are available to the business public. These services are obviously updated, depending on the needs that arise from the activities of the current client enterprises.

Business Exchanges S.A. aims at extending its main activity in a wider business community of electronic commerce, so as to succeed in creating a secure and trustworthy environment, in which companies can exchange products, services and information.

There are a great number of services that are offered in Business Exchange's electronic business market. These services include suppliers' catalogue administration, pricing and relationship management tools (for discrete pricing for individual buyers or buyer groups), electronic transactions/procurement tools, auctions, dynamic negotiations, international news channels for vertical markets (Retail Sector, Food Industry, Banking, Construction, Technology, etc.).

In the future Business Exchanges S.A. intends to increase the number of services it provides. This increase will depend on the needs of its clients and will include services such logistics, banking and insurance products, management of business information, connection to international electronic markets, electronic payroll, real estate, integration with ERP information systems and supply chain management.

Business Exchanges S.A. intends to achieve several significant business targets such as: maximising the possibilities offered by clients using electronic markets and becoming a significant supplier of services of electronic commerce among businesses. Also, the company wants to create successful electronic markets that provide high liquidity and increased volume of transactions. Furthermore, it aims to enter into alliance with international electronic markets and let the users of local electronic markets have access to a wide international list of buyers and suppliers.

In order to realize its business targets, Business Exchanges S.A. employs people of high scientific standards and applies the latest technology solutions found in the global market.

The implementation software for electronic markets is ARIBA's Marketplace and Dynamic Trade. ARIBA is considered a significant supplier of solutions and services in the field of electronic commerce.

The hardware used is IBM hardware, which is situated at Vodafone-Panafon Services' Data Centre. IBM undertook the set-up of the whole system including the development, the interconnection and the pilot operation of the ARIBA Software.

Lessons learnt

Business Exchanges S.A. is already playing a key role in B2B marketplaces in Greece, via its portal **be24.gr** and it provides a variety of services related to e-commerce. The company has plans for providing further e-business services in the future depending on the needs of its clients and the market trends such as ERP integration and supply chain management solutions.

From the beginning the company has had significant support from the shareholder companies, not only financially, but also at organizational level utilizing experienced management and scientific staff contracted from the shareholders companies. Such support from the shareholders is a significant advantage for Business Exchanges S.A. Support was also received with regards to marketing networks and existing clients of the shareholder companies.

The company seems to have a very promising future. The existing clients and co-operations are very impressive considering that among them are large Greek business organizations such as Super Markets Atlantic, the Fourlis Group of Companies, Famar Pharmaceuticals, Korasidis Group etc.