

Effective strategy for regional e-business programmes

The EU project FoCus develops a training concept for planning and implementing regional e-business initiatives

The FoCus consortium develop strategies to assure the successful implementation of regional e-business initiatives in the framework of the EU FoCus project. The result is a training concept that enables representatives of trade associations and politics to deepen their knowledge of the factors influencing the success of such initiatives. One of the training modules was recently tested for the first time in Jihlava in the Czech Republic, when German and Czech representatives of regional business initiatives convened at a workshop on July 3, 2008.

Stuttgart, July 15, 2008 - Communication and marketing are factors with a decisive influence on the success of e-business funding programmes. This is the key outcome of a workshop organised by MFG Baden-Württemberg, the Public Innovation Agency for Information Technology and Media, in collaboration with its FoCus project partner EPMA (European Project Management Agency), the Czech regional development agency, on July 3, 2008 in Jihlava. Representatives of regional trade associations and business consultants from the Czech Vysocina region took advantage of this one-day event to deepen their knowledge of e-business strategies and formulate ideas for their own funding programmes. The main factors that determine the success or failure of e-business initiatives were illustrated with the aid of ebigo.de, a best practice example from Baden-Württemberg.

Kirsten Wissing, Project Manager for ebigo.de, welcomed the exchange with the workshop attendees: "The transnational dialogue with workshop participants helped us view our own e-business concepts from a different perspective and reappraise the status quo. Although e-business initiatives like ebigo.de can serve as a useful model, they cannot always be copied one-to-one to

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other countries. It is vital to take account of the peculiarities of each individual nation when regional funding programs are implemented".

The workshops are part of the EU FoCus project. The aim of this project is to create networks of e-business know-how across national borders. Together with its partners in Italy, Spain and the Czech Republic, MFG Baden-Württemberg has developed a toolkit to support planning, implementation and auditing of new funding programmes and initiatives. In addition to outlining the success factors for regional e-business initiatives, the toolkit also describes best practice examples from the four partner regions: Baden-Württemberg (Germany), Piedmont (Italy), Valencia (Spain) and Vysocina (Czech Republic). Parallel to this, a special training concept has been developed based on knowledge teaching in workshops and online seminars. The training courses are particularly targeted at representatives of trade associations and politics, who it is envisaged will subsequently act as multipliers by passing on their e-business know-how to small and medium-sized enterprises. When it came to implementing the FoCus project, MFG Baden-Württemberg profited from the deliverables of SYNEBIS. The project wiki developed for this predecessor project continues to provide a valuable source of internal knowledge management for FoCus.

The toolkit, a multimedia tutorial, quizzes and checklists are available on www.focus-project.eu.

This press release can also be downloaded from www.doit-online.de or www.mfg-innovation.de.

More information:

www.focus-project.eu

www.synebis.eu

www.ebigo.de

www.mfg-innovation.de

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About FoCus

FoCus provides intermediaries in the field of e-business support useful advices. The FoCus training gives them the opportunity for self-assessment and reflection of current e-business policies in a short amount of time. The aim of FoCus is not offering new approaches but consolidating main findings of various studies on e-business policies. However, FoCus provides not only in depth knowledge on designing, implementing and evaluating e-Business policies but also exemplifies each aspect with good practices from the regions Baden-Württemberg, Piemonte, Valencia and Vysocina.

About SYNEBIS

The SYNEBIS project concentrated on reinforcing synergies between public policies in support of E-Business for SMEs. It gathered and benchmarked regional initiatives from Spain, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, Canada and Germany. Results of the identified best practices were collected on a wiki platform and deepened within regional workshops. At the end the they were verified for transferability to other countries. Within this project – co-financed by European Commission - MFG Baden-Wuerttemberg acted as Lead Partner. Other partners were Generalitat Valenciana from Spain and European Projects & Management Agency from Czech Republic.

About the ebigo.de initiative for SMEs

"ebigo.de - E-Business. IT. Answers for SMEs", an initiative for small and medium-sized enterprises, has been benefiting SMEs in South-West Germany with IT know-how for over six years. IT users in the target companies derive genuine added value from an Internet platform (www.ebigo.de) containing daily news, checklists and best practice examples. A database of IT service providers featuring more than 15,000 contacts is a further advantage of ebigo.de. Current IT trends are presented and analysed at events and seminars tailored to the needs of the SME clientele. ebigo.de was initiated by the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs and

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has been overseen from the outset by MFG Baden-Württemberg, the Public Innovation Agency for Information Technology and Media.

About MFG Baden-Württemberg

MFG Baden-Württemberg is among the leading innovation agencies in Europe, focussing on information technology, software, telecommunication and the creative industries. By networking the creative and the technology sectors, MFG strengthens Baden-Württemberg as a business location, supports cooperation in Europe and enhances collaboration in global value chains. MFG's focus lies on users of information technology across all sectors and their buyer potential. With services certified and according to the ISO 9001 standard and 100,000 technology relationships, MFG pioneers the systemic innovation management in the context of public-private partnerships.

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