

Dynamic Approaches to Business

Transas is a developer and supplier of a wide range of software, integrated solutions and hardware technologies for the aviation and marine transportation industry, including both onboard and shore-based applications.<P>

The company has come a long way since its birth in 1990 and now Transas' marine onboard equipment is used on more than 10,000 commercial ships and yachts; Transas' chart collection consists of more than 13,000 charts; more than 1,700 Transas simulators are installed in 300 training and simulator centres in 70 countries; and Transas' shore-based Vessel Traffic Management Systems function successfully in more than 70 ports worldwide (see web reference 1).

Different Approach

The company was founded in 1990 in St Petersburg, Russia: three deep-sea captains and a naval architect co-operated with a shared interest in computer technologies, and they became general managers of the Transas Group. The main aim from the very beginning was to provide advanced marine navigational systems that could be run on standard PCs. "At that time, a full-mission hardware-based bridge simulator using complex computing technologies would cost up to US\$8 million dollars. We chose a different approach; this resulted in new navigational and training solutions. It was due to these novelties that, for example, simulator prices worldwide dropped from several million to thousands of dollars," commented Nikolay Lebedev, Transas Group president.

As development progressed, our company opened offices in Southampton, UK, and then started to open offices in other countries. After initially having four employees, Transas earned its first US\$1 million revenue within two years. Transas grew rapidly and currently it has more than one thousand employees worldwide, and Transas products are being distributed and supported by a vast network of representative offices in more than one hundred countries. The international activities of Transas are co-ordinated through a group of twelve offices located worldwide.

Marine Products

Today, Transas is a modern 21st century group of companies, looking forward to using its expertise to contribute both to the development of today's industry and to the training of those who will be on watch tomorrow. The Transas range of high-technology marine products include:

- marine onboard equipment, complex integrated onboard systems
- electronic cartography
- training simulators
- coastal surveillance, waterside security and Vessel Traffic Services systems
- fleet management and crisis management systems
- Transas Aviation: products for the airborne industry.

Transas offers technologically advanced solutions for maritime security services; shipping companies and ship operators; naval and coast guard organisations; training and educational centres; port and harbour administrations; governmental, municipal and local authorities and administrations; environmental services and institutions; and original equipment manufacturer partners.

Maritime Trade Booming

A dynamic marketplace demands dynamic approaches to business. Recent years have seen economic growth in all regions of the world, albeit at a different pace. Forecasts of world economic output growth for the coming year predict that the world economy will expand by about 3.6% and continue to grow modestly for the next few years. With economic development, world seaborne trade obviously increases. Between 2007 and 2020, maritime transport is expected to grow by 64%. Rising prosperity in many parts of the world, rapid growth in global trade, and rapidly rising demands for oil and gas and other raw materials comprise the many reasons why maritime trade has been booming in recent years. Economic experts are confident that maritime trade will continue to grow at an above-average rate in the coming years. Transas works at the forefront of a highly specialised market, where it has two important resources:

1. the highest professional qualification, erudition and competence;
2. innovative ideas and decisions based on the latest computer technologies (using tried-and-tested industry standards for user stability, alongside our trademark innovation). Besides, as has been said, Transas made a critical decision at the very beginning to create an international distribution network, involving international managers with extensive trading experience. The company has entered three markets at once, working within a framework of uniform competence and specialisation: the market of navigation systems (ship and the navigation companies), the simulator market (sea academies and educational training centres), and the shore-based systems market (marine port administration). Time and again, our innovation has been recognised and rewarded. By dispensing with some of the more traditional methodologies, the groundbreaking Transas products and services provided clear benefits to customers and threw down the gauntlet to our competitors.

From the very beginning, the founders of Transas Group believed that close working relationships with our customers would enable us to not only foster long-term relationships but also have a huge impact on our R&D processes. We understand the necessity to adhere to customer requirements, which is usually achieved by means of customisation. In each particular case, the delivered equipment is brought to the required state in accordance with the customer's needs (whether these are to do with a concrete ship model, training requirements or port capacity). The concrete benefits for customers consist of automated and improved routines with improved safety; savings in costs (running, maintenance, fuel, crew); delivering on time with improved safety; and transparency of information. In addition to this, we achieve the main aim of every fast-growing ambitious IT company: we invent new solutions.

"First and foremost, in a booming market we ensure that our production processes are ISO-quality approved and that our products are approved by DNV and BSH, helping us to maintain quality for our customers even during times of increased production," said Carl-Olof Carlsson, Managing Director, Transas Ltd. "It was also of paramount importance that we secured agreements with our suppliers and significantly increased our logistics capabilities in order to maintain those production levels. Boom times are both rewarding and challenging."

Responding to Market

Our target is to stay in the IT market in the field where we evolved and to search for the markets where we could use our cumulative potential. We should remain a technological company – this is our primary competence. The market is very dynamic – it changes rapidly, with implemented solutions fast becoming outdated – and Transas is determined to promptly respond to the new requirements and meet new challenges.