IFS Delivering Cutting-Edge Business Solutions



By Dinali Sugathadasa

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is no novel concept to the Sri Lankan business environment, yet it still remains unexplored by a larger proportion of the business community. Jayantha De Silva, Vice President South Asia of IFS – a leading global ERP solutions provider explains how important they can prove to be in maintaining proper management and thus competitiveness of a company in the modern business arena.

An enterprise is entirely constructed on its resources, physical or otherwise, and the optimal use of these results in how effectively company objectives are achieved. “If you have a company with about ten people you know exactly what they do, because you get involved. When you grow bigger, direct involvement is humanly impossible, and then you need a good solution to push and pull information to properly manage the business. This is where ERPs come in,” De Silva explains.

IFS, a Swedish multinational has been involved in developing, providing and supporting Enterprise Resource Planning in Sri Lanka since 1997. IFS applications are currently used across borders in diverse sectors and industries such as automobiles and electronics manufacturing and services, telecommunications, energy and utilities, defence and construction. “We are the number one ERP solutions provider in Sri Lanka and number three in the world,” he adds.

IFS applications support the management of four core processes: Service and Asset, Manufacturing, Project, and Supply Chain through a single integrated product. Together with specialised industry knowledge and horizontal solutions such as financials, HR and CRM, they provide complete ERP solutions for any enterprise. Security is inbuilt into the very framework of IFS applications and the company is focused on making technology that serves each individual business’ needs based on best business practices avoiding the hassle and expense of integrating contrasting applications and technologies.

The modern business environment demands proactivity and transparency across all activities. Many businesses fail due to information mismanagement, when intelligence lies in the hands of a few who either misuse it or don’t recognise the warning signals. Explaining further De Silva said, “ERPs always bring everything together and give you a profile. It’s an online system. It shows when you’re not going in the right direction and signals red lights showing when to take action… it actually eliminates the dark spots, it brings a lot of transparency and enables you to be proactive.”

A good ERP system apart from being competent and agile also needs qualified, trained and experienced personnel to implement and support it with certain companies needing almost 24 hours and 365 days of maintenance. IFS develops

and provides ERP solutions while supporting implementation in enterprises spread over 52 countries, and its main support and R&D centre which caters to the entire world is located in Colombo. Speaking of their 800 strong Sri Lankan workforce De Silva goes on to say, “The adaptability, the intelligence and the conceptual design ability of Sri Lankans I would say is on the top anywhere in the world, we’re second to none to be very honest. For IFS Colombo has been a huge success.”

The international requirement for Information Technology is immense and Sri Lanka according to Jayantha De Silva has the ability to cater to that. Although a young industry, the IT/BPO sector is the fifth largest exporter in the national economy and can positively look forward to becoming a billion dollar industry with Government support. IFS has already taken pioneering steps to provide scholarships, train and retain local talent within the country and is working very closely with the Government through SLASCOM (Sri Lanka Association of Software and Service Companies) to improve the Sri Lankan IT/BPO industry.

With demand for ERP technology showing large growth potential in Asia and Asia Pacific, IFS Sri Lanka is looking forward to a bright future ahead while taking the initiative to ensure likewise for the nation.