

Seamless Cross-Platform Integration

Today, it's possible, according to Trygve Ronningen – CEO - Cenium



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CEO - Cenium

More than 20 years of selling, implementing, training and supporting one of the market's top 5 ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) solutions, IFS Applications. 4 years heading up Americas Services team in successful deployments of leading Enterprise Search Solutions, FAST/Microsoft. Cenium AS CEO since 2011.

Master of Business Economics, Norwegian School of Management, Oslo.

With over 20 years' experience in diverse Enterprise Resource Planning rolls across Europe and North America, Trygve Ronningen, CEO of Cenium, has a unique perspective of how ERP can be applied to the hospitality sector. We asked Mr Ronningen why ERP is still such an eye opener for hoteliers...

When we talk to hoteliers about an all-in-one solution that combines ERP technology to support all core hospitality processes, they are amazed about the breadth and depth of the capabilities we can offer in one single solution. ERP has been around for quite some time in a number of industries, so it's a mature international standard for handling all business needs within finance, asset-management, inventory procurement management, project management and human resources. Today, many hoteliers are finding the need to call upon a multitude – sometimes up to 20 – best-in-breed solutions to cover all business areas. These can be replaced with an all-in-one solution from Cenium. There are a number of hidden interface costs related to having disparate solutions and hotel IT departments need to spend a great deal of the time just making sure they actually work together. Then in the case of

upgrades, new rounds of rigorous testing are required, ensuring these subsystems still communicate effectively with one other, if indeed they are integrated at all!

When your company started out twelve years ago, it quickly became the “backbone” of a major Scandinavian chain. Tell us more about this.

Nordic Choice hotels were expanding rapidly in Scandinavia, and as they acquired new properties, each one came with a new set of best of breed solutions. Each had its own IT infrastructure and IT department and there was very little synergy between them. The management of Nordic Choice realized that a unique User Interface would vastly increase efficiencies, and thus came the solution by Cenium. One database allowed consolidation of data across different functions and different properties in a much more efficient manner.

Who are some of the main clients today and how are they leveraging the solution?

Nordic Choice is a major franchiser with five different brands with over 170 hotels and total capacity of around 50,000 rooms. They have 12,000 employees and host close to 8 million guests annually. It's an interesting opportunity for us because the group spans business, conference and resort markets. Then there's the Grand Ho Tram Strip in Vietnam – a full service establishment with a complex casino environment, or Blue Mountain - a resort destination which is again full-service, and where Cenium also handles ticketing, ski rentals and lessons. We have a worldwide network of partners working with our teams in most regions of the world. The platform's multi-language and multi-currency functionality is critical for hoteliers looking to grow their brand internationally.

What's changing when it comes to the Microsoft platform?

The Cenium product utilizes the Microsoft NAV platform, but it is just one element. Microsoft's platform is well tailored to the size of the opportunities we have been working with. We have also introduced the Dynamics AX platform with our latest release. This suits larger operations that need the capabilities of an even more comprehensive feature-set such as AX can give. The new release with the NAV platform carries with it a totally different user interface. People today are accustomed to iPads and iPhones, and the new look and feel of the Dynamics platform really is appealing to that kind of user. They have also introduced a multi-platform architecture, which allows more options for deployment models: not only on-premise platforms, but also cloud deployments or a hybrid of both models. The platform allows us to have even stronger integration with other Microsoft technologies, such as SharePoint for storage of data and documents, or Office 365, a cloud-based solution. There are also reporting tools and document management integrated into this new solution. So overall, the combined solution is more than just NAV. We have the new capabilities of NAV and AX, plus the new aspects that this architecture allows Cenium to deliver, depending how they're deployed.

What do you see as being the future of hospitality ERP?

I believe our focus on the all-in-one goal is going to be more of a driving decision-making element in the future, because people will look at how to save costs in all the integration work they have to do today. I also believe that this future generation of hospitality technology will need to have a more innovative User Interface



and seamless mobile device integration. With this new release we have a second-generation of mobility and a uniquely different User Interface experience. Ease-of-use across platforms is important, but being able to do that on a single solution is where the hospitality market is going. We are of course also considering alternative deployment models, looking at how we can leverage cloud technologies to rapidly deploy around the world. Cenium will take technology and the user experience to a new level.

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