

## Efficient platform gives head start in Far East, Hong Kong Trader April 2006

French technology company Corebridge credits much of its business success to Hong Kong's efficient business platform.

Corebridge has its global headquarters in London, R&D operation in Paris, while Hong Kong serves as its Asia-Pacific Head Office. From its Hong Kong base, the company gains easy access to emerging markets in the region, says Neil Orvay, Managing Director of Corebridge Asia Pacific.

Corebridge represents the next generation of Computer Telephony Integration based business solutions. The company is leading the way in the integration of telephony, email, business applications and data in order to take business communications and processes to a new level.

Over the past two years Corebridge has focused on setting up its offices in Hong Kong, securing funding and hiring the right people. With its Asian head office now well established it is looking towards new markets. Currently operating in five main sectors – investment banking, insurance, legal, local government and logistics – Corebridge clients currently include CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets (Hong Kong), Infocomm Development Authority (in Singapore) and various Chambers of Commerce and Industry in France.

"With excellent industry partners, such as Cisco, 3 Com, IPC and Alcatel, we can expect this business to really begin growing from strength to strength," Mr Orvay said.

### Easy to get started

The success of its Asian Operation will be largely attributable to the excellent business platform Hong Kong provides, he added. "Setting up a business in Hong Kong was easy and uncomplicated. Local government agencies are incredibly efficient and endeavour to support new businesses in any way they can. In our case, they were even prepared to introduce us to potential investors", Mr Orvay said.

"In many other countries, tax regulations are stifling. Hong Kong, on the other hand, is one of the most tax-efficient regimes in the world. It is also a truly entrepreneurial environment and there is a real willingness to do business here.

"Another advantage to doing business in Hong Kong is the quality of the labour pool, which is exceptionally high with many excellent local and foreign candidates. Employees seem more prepared to take risks than they are elsewhere, and will readily leave an established company to join a start-up. Mr Orvay noted.

"At Corebridge, we've also found it easier and quicker to reach senior level personnel, such as the company MD, in prospective client companies – even when these people are not based in Hong Kong. Typically, legal companies have their headquarters in the UK or US, where the Chief Information Officers and IT Directors reside. We find that once we are in conversation with their Asian office, we are able to reach the decision makers, wherever they are based."

Corebridge perceives that Hong Kong is the gateway to China, a market with huge potential for many businesses. Although it has no imminent plans to enter this market, it plans to focus on markets such as Japan, Korea and eventually China in the long-term. Another important market for its business is Australia, a country very advanced in terms of technology.

"Hong Kong provides easy access to these attractive markets," concluded Mr Orvay.