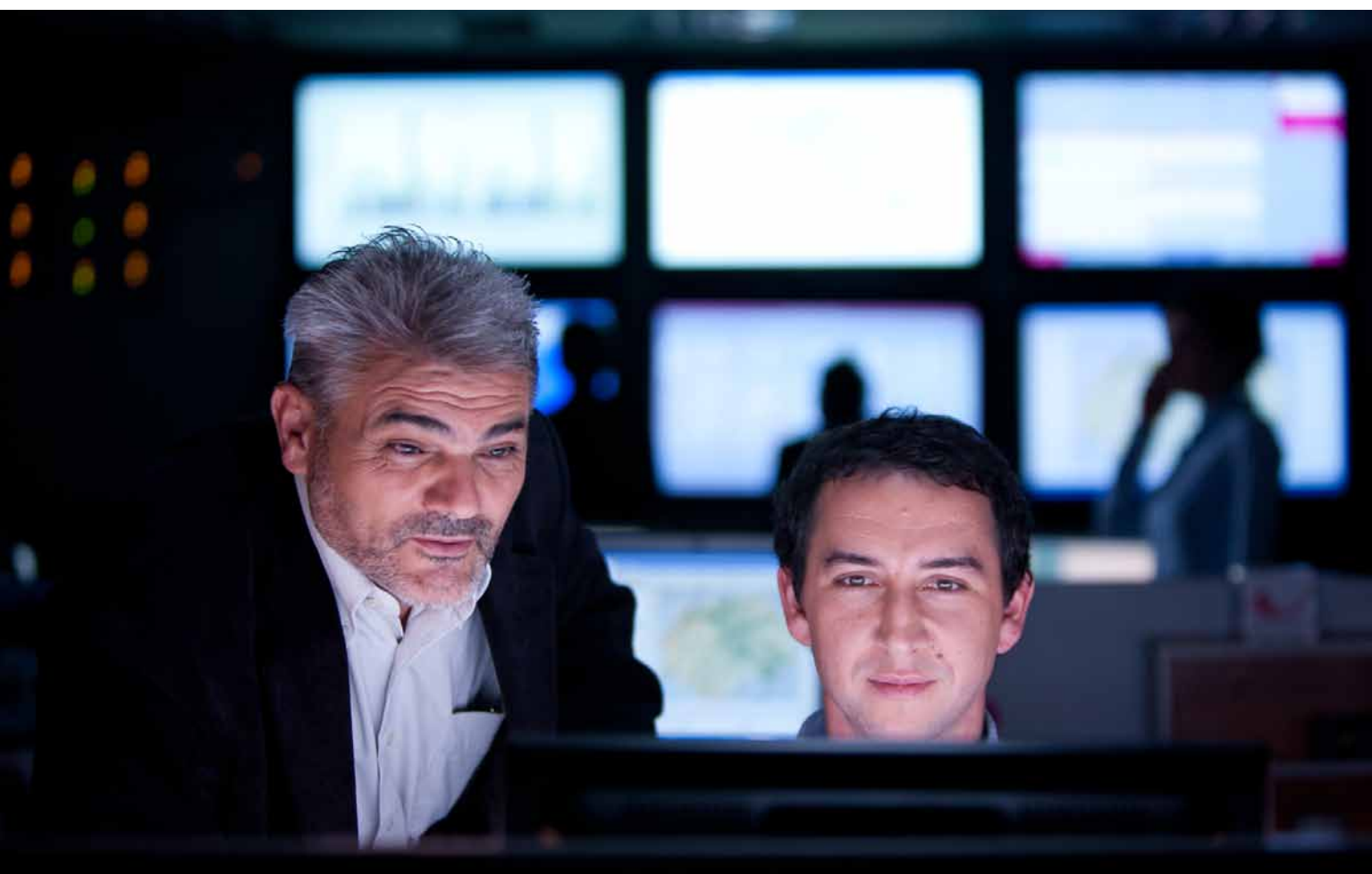


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MAKEDONSKI TELEKOM

CONNECTING THE DOTS



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CONNECTING THE DOTS

Chief executive officer Daniel Szasz talks about how the company is contributing to the development of Macedonia's telecommunications industry

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In the years since gaining independence from the former Yugoslavia, Macedonia has undergone considerable economic reform. In fact, its development of an open economy saw the country ranked as the fourth 'best reformatory state' out of 178 countries rated by the World Bank in 2009.

The economic development of the country has seen the rise of various industry sectors, not least the telecommunications sector. At the end of 2010, Macedonia was estimated to be home to more than 413,000 fixed line telephone customers and a staggering 2,150,000 mobile phone subscribers.

Providing innovative solutions with high quality and efficiency Makedonski Telekom plays a defining role in modernising and improving the telecommunications market within the country. A leading national provider of electronic communications, the company offers its customers a range of cutting-edge services and entertainment content.

Through the development of industry-leading products and services, Makedonski Telekom promotes personal and social networking between the people of Macedonia. It is this networking that is fast influencing the construction of the country's information society.

Prior to 1 January 1997, and operating under the name PTT Macedonia, the predecessor of the company originally provided telecommunication, postal, banking and other services. In accordance with a decision taken by the country's government in 1996, however, PTT Macedonia was subsequently divided into



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MAKEDONSKI TELEKOM IMPLEMENTS NEXT GENERATION NETWORK WITH CISCO TECHNOLOGY



“Three fundamental trends are shaping the world of service providers today: mobility, video and cloud,” says Peter Hajdu, general manager Cisco South East Europe.

For the past 14 years, Makedonski Telekom has been working with Cisco, the worldwide leader in networking technologies, to build a state-of-the-art telecommunication infrastructure for Macedonia and to get prepared for these new trends. A key milestone was the implementation of an end-to-end Internet Protocol Next-Generation Network (IP NGN) to expand IP-based and broadband services and to create a platform for video, mobile, and for managed and cloud-based services.

Cisco technology helped enable Makedonski Telekom to design and build a highly reliable countrywide service delivery network to support the introduction of new, interactive applications such as Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (2003), Voice-over-IP (2005), Point to Point Metro Ethernet (2005), Ethernet in the first mile over copper (2006), Internet Protocol-based TV (2008), Video on Demand (2008), and Fiber-to-the-Home (2009). At the same time, Makedonski Telekom was able to improve the quality of all existing IP services, for example IP/MPLS Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and high speed internet access.

The proven reliability of Cisco networking solutions helps Makedonski Telekom to fulfil its aim of having a core network with 99.999% availability—a milestone for every top service provider worldwide.

Most recently, by deploying the Cisco® Carrier Routing System (CRS) family, Makedonski Telekom is preparing its network for an increase in high-speed broadband demand and the launch of advanced IP-based video services.

The Cisco IP NGN architecture enables Makedonski Telekom to expand its broadband subscriber base and evolve service offerings from the current triple play and quad play to “any play” services. The close integration of services with T-Mobile and implementation of fixed-mobile convergence will enable customers to fully enjoy the power of mobility and borderless networks.

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two legal entities, thus dividing postal and telecommunication activities.

It was in 2001 that the company formally became part of the international Deutsche Telekom group. Seven years later the current era of Makedonski Telekom began with its adoption of the globally recognised ‘T’ brand. Since 2001, and thanks in part to a brand new custom structure that has allowed it to remain in-step with the latest achievements

in electronic communications, Makedonski Telekom has strived to meet the demands and needs of its customers. One way it has done so is by always using the best practices of the Deutsche Telekom group in order to maximise user benefits.

“One of the biggest challenges that the company has had to overcome since it became part of Deutsche Telekom,” explains chief executive officer, Daniel Szasz, “has

“THE COMPANY HAS BEEN ABLE TO RETAIN A LOCAL EMPHASIS, WHILE STILL ENJOYING THE BACKING AND SUPPORT OF A GLOBAL TELECOMS POWERHOUSE”



Customers waiting for the new iPhone



T-Home employees

been the task of blending its traditional, local values with the international branding and reputation that exist throughout the Deutsche Telekom Group. By successfully overcoming these issues, the company has been able to retain a local emphasis, while still enjoying the backing and support of a global telecoms powerhouse.”

Making the transition from being a more traditional, state-run, fixed telecoms company dealing with landlines to becoming a competitive mobile operations provider has also not been without its difficulties. One particular challenge has been its need to integrate together its

2011

Named Best Employer in a Triple S Group survey

long-serving employees and its next generation workforce. A programme of heavy investment and a comprehensive training structure have combined to help bring these two groups together under a shared business philosophy.

Makedonski Telekom’s commitment towards the wellbeing and success of its employees has been rightfully recognised in recent times, most notably by the Triple S Group’s anonymous survey of the best employers in Macedonia. The results of the survey, whose participants include employees from the cream of the crop of Macedonian business, identified the company as the



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Best Employer for 2011, in the category of companies with over 500 employees.

In order to achieve its aims of being recognised universally as a highly esteemed service company, Makedonski Telekom has developed a new company strategy incorporating three main messages, “Sustain-Transform-Innovate”. This strategy is very much aligned with that of Deutsche Telekom, which is “Fix-Transform-Innovate”.

Customers and their demands, as well as market movements, are the main drivers of the changes that have been made

to the company’s strategy. In a market that is continuously evolving and highly competitive, both private and business customers are increasingly seeking an all-in-one service that provides them with constant access to information via various different devices and platforms.

“The company is continually looking for opportunities to modernise, invest and diversify to provide new income streams as traditional fixed streams become less relevant,” Szasz continues. At the forefront of the industry today are themes including

IPTV technologies, implementing 3G networks and platforms. The evolution of Macedonia’s communication network and the introduction of new services is clearly the primary focus of the company. Of critical

importance is the implementation of the “fiber to the home” project. This involves the construction of a significantly faster telecommunications network, providing speeds of up to 100 Mbps to every home.

“MARKET CONDITIONS STRONGLY HINT THAT EVEN-GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN TELECOMS PROVIDERS LIE AHEAD”

100 MBPS

.....
Target speed to every home

Makedonski Telekom is a company that is seen as leading the way in the region in terms of the many technological advances being worked on at present. Furthermore, through a mix of local implementation, strong relationships with maintenance service providers and the know-how and support Deutsche Telekom is able to offer, the company has built itself a long, proven track record of handling vital telecommunications projects.

Future prospects for the company revolve around exploring the opportunity to expand into other sectors of the industry. These include media advertising, e-payment and mobile payment services and the launching, and hosting, of cloud computing solutions. "Wherever business may take it," Szasz concludes, "Makedonski Telekom's immediate focus will remain primarily on the local market. Nevertheless, while there are no direct plans to expand regionally at this time, market conditions strongly hint that even-greater opportunities for cooperation with other European telecoms providers lie ahead." **BE**

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