

SME INC

Keeping the show going for its clients

Award-winning Emerio GlobeSoft helps customers cut operating costs and achieve consistent quality, reports JERMAINE NG

EMERIO GlobeSoft is not a household name. Which isn't surprising, since the global IT services company doesn't place heavy emphasis on marketing and advertising. But no one should rush to judgment; this is a company that has collected major awards in just the past two months.



Besides receiving the Enterprise 50 award, it was awarded International Headquarters (IHQ) status by the Economic Development Board. And chief executive Harish Nim also won the SICCI Indian Entrepreneur Award in the large enterprise category.

Speaking from his office in Ubi TechPark, Mr. Nim said the awards are an honour for the company: 'We do not advertise ourselves much, since we prefer people knowing us through recommendation.'

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'I like to think of our managed services business like public utilities - electricity and water - because we ensure IT is always available to clients when they need it.'

- Harish Nim, CEO, Emerio GlobeSoft

But awards assure potential clients of Emerio's credibility.

The technology services and outsourcing company aims to help customers cut operating costs and achieve consistent quality. According to Mr. Nim, corporate IT budgets attach considerable weight to support and services, the sector his company focuses on. 'I like to think of our managed services business like public utilities - electricity and water - because we ensure IT is

always available to clients when they need it,' he said.

Emerio operates in 14 countries, across the Asia-Pacific and in the UK and US. It has 1,400 staff and serves big names like HP, Citibank, JTC, the National Environment Agency (NEA), the Asian Development Bank, and the United Nations.

Besides providing IT services, the company focuses on business intelligence and software application development. For example, it revamped the Lotus Notes Domino platform that JTC was using into a robust net-based solution, creating a functional and Web-based application.

Another major accomplishment was developing an integrated waste management system to help NEA run its waste management department and site operations at incineration plants.

Impressive is the word that best describes Emerio, which grew from humble beginnings in 1997. Mr. Nim, a pioneering professional Indian expatriate, took Singapore citizenship and worked in the IT industry here for years before deciding to start his own business. 'I didn't like how things were going in my previous job, so I decided to venture into providing IT services. With three other people and \$12,000 in my pocket, I started this company.'

Within a few weeks of starting out, Emerio clinched its first contract - from DuPont Singapore, to keep an eye on its IBM mainframe application. The company earned about \$80,000 a month from this deal alone, which spanned three years.

Emerio has been expanding ever since, at a compounded annual growth rate of 35 per cent. Even during the 2009 downturn, it grew 5-10 per cent.

The privately held company has also been growing its regional presence. Five years ago, it expanded into Malaysia, then Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. Its Singapore centre is its headquarters. 'Singapore may not be the most cost-effective place to provide all kinds of services,' said Mr. Nim. 'That's why we chose to expand abroad.'

'Everyone who joins the company should have the opportunity to grow. I have been growing the company so that its people can grow as well.'

Despite Emerio's strong overseas presence, Mr. Nim intends to keep its HQ in Singapore - especially after it was awarded IHQ status last year: 'I am committed to keeping our headquarters here - it's comfortable, and once you've stayed here, it is hard to relocate.'

Right now, Mr. Nim feels the company's focus should shift from reaching out to new countries to developing business in existing markets. Emerio has about 50 local clients in each country, and is working to increase that number.

'I think we've expanded as much as we want to,' said Mr. Nim. 'The next stages are to grow within South-east Asia and increase our clients in each country to give our company more local stickiness.'