



## **Press Release: Consulting network Sanet in an interview with DAW (German Asian Business-Circle)**

Sanet, a consulting network focusing on South-East Asia, has been a member of the German-Asian Business Circle since January 2009. It just celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary and was simultaneously entrusted by DAW with the task of coordinating the association's activities in the ASEAN area. Alexander Alles, Director Int'l Relations of DAW, took this opportunity to interview Sanet founder and ASEAN coordinator of DAW, Dr. Gunter Denk, about the objectives of his company and the cooperation with DAW:

**DAW: Mr. Denk, why did it actually take five years until you found your way to DAW? Is it that you didn't want to have anything to do with us before that?**

Denk: Frankly speaking, as we, a group of entrepreneurs, founded our consulting network in 2004, we initially did what everybody else was doing and joined the largest association for companies doing business in Asia at the time. We still didn't know much about DAW back then.

**DAW: Well, why did you switch to DAW last year then?**

Denk: Over the course of time, each company develops in a very specific direction: as for Sanet, it turned out that the huge majority of our clients were medium-sized businesses, i.e. companies, which were less interested in the "overall economic context" and, instead, more interested in the practical and operational support for their Asian strategy.

**DAW: And what does this have to do with your decision in favour of DAW?**

Denk: DAW came closer to the position of our network. I have got to come to perceive its management as being very oriented towards the interests of its members. In DAW, the members are in close contact with executives and vice versa. I was missing this before. Other associations tend to put the contact with big businesses to the forefront. This is different with DAW. Bodo Krüger and his team have managed to turn the association into an organisation that is friendly, highly informative and close to its members.

**DAW: Stop, enough praise! Now, how do you plan on helping DAW with Sanet?**

Denk: First, let me point out that the ASEAN area is increasingly attracting the attention of medium-sized businesses. Until now, most people associated Asia with China or Japan. In the meanwhile, it has become clear that the economic union located between the blocks of India and China was actually one of the fastest growing economic areas in the world. The GDP of this community of states is now bigger than that of India. Sanet will help DAW to intensify its relations with these countries.

**DAW: And how exactly will this work?**

Denk: First of all, the way will be determined by the management, of course. Nonetheless, Sanet can help in providing the association and its members with direct business connections to medium-sized companies in this region. For this purpose, there are already very good representatives of the association in various countries. I can well imagine that bringing them all together and developing a certain "team-oriented thinking" could be one of Sanet's responsibilities. And, of course, we would be glad to provide support for events, the delivery



of information or comprehensive consulting in the ASEAN countries. Our network will surely also be useful in the scope of relationships with quite a few authorities and associations in this region.

**DAW: Now, let's talk about Sanet. I can imagine that the first years in the consulting business were not easy. The market is highly competitive.**

Denk: You can say that again. The biggest problem is that you cannot show any references in the beginning. It's true that all founding partners were and are experienced entrepreneurs and managers in Asia and Europe. However, their experience and knowledge always flowed into their own companies. And then it is difficult to suddenly convince other companies in other sectors of industry of your own competence.

**DAW: It seems that it has worked out though, hasn't it?**

Denk: It has, indeed, but no one could have accomplished this quite as easily on one's own. The network concept of Sanet, i.e. the combination of individual competencies under one "brand" was decisive in winning the confidence of customers. Then all that's left to do is "only just" to deliver a professional performance. Afterwards, word gets around fast. To date, we have completed almost 40 consulting projects with different areas of application and in many sectors of industry. By now, our key task is often to organise various projects simultaneously and to guarantee the quality of all services.

**DAW: And what are your future plans for Sanet?**

Denk: First of all, we will remain true to our principle of rather completing fewer projects, but doing so to the perfect satisfaction of our customers. At the same time, after five years of work in this field, I have to face the challenge that each entrepreneur must face at some point during a period of growth: it is crucial to start working *on* the company itself and not just *in* the company. We would like to expand our power in some key countries, in which we operate, by alliances with young, ambitious consultants. However, they are also proud of their performance, which attracted our attention. Winning such partners and integrating them into a concept represents my main challenge. This involves great sensitivity and respect, especially in Asia. The gapless presence in Germany must also be ensured as well as possible. Both objectives will certainly keep us occupied for a while. Withal, the projects of clients still have the highest priority. So, it is safe to say that things won't get boring around here.

**DAW: There we have another similarity between Sanet and DAW: things always remain exciting for the two. Thank you very much for this interview.**