

ALBA TO SHOWCASE PRODUCTS AT EXPO

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Aluminium Bahrain's (Alba) focus on strengthening the presence of its product portfolio in Europe and other global markets will gain impetus with its participation at Aluminium 2012: 9th World Trade Fair & Conference taking place at Messe Dusseldorf, Germany from tomorrow to October 11.

Aluminium 2012, one of the foremost business-to-business (B2B) platforms for the aluminium industry, will bring together some of the leading players in the industry comprising the entire spectrum of the value chain from producers, processors, technology suppliers to consumers.

Alba's exhibition stand will showcase the company's high-grade aluminium products whose purity levels exceed industry standards. Visitors will

also get to know of Alba's compliance to strict environmental regulations and in ensuring that ecological concerns are addressed while maintaining focus on increased productivity with state-of-the-art technology.

The company's Chief Marketing Officer Jean Baptiste Lucas commented: "Alba remains keen on increasing the market share of its high grade aluminium products in Europe and our presence at Aluminium 2012 marks another initiative to interact with our current and potential customers and suppliers. We are confident that our meetings with both European and global delegates to this prestigious trade event will translate into business possibilities and yield tangible results for everyone."

More than 20,000 visitors from over 100 nations are expected to attend Aluminium 2012.



An external view of the Alba plant

Kingdom to host HRM Summit 2012

Manama

The Fourth Annual Human Resources Management (HRM) Summit 2012 - the only dedicated conference focused on meeting the specialised HR needs of a fast growing economy announced the confirmation of Bahrain Society for Training and Human Resources Development as a strategic alliance partner of the HRM Summit 2012, to be held from October 16-18 at Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The strategic alliance was concluded yesterday at a specially organised signing ceremony at the BSTD House and was attended by the Board of Directors of BSTD.

Speaking at the event, President of BSTD Mohammed Mahmood Shaikh said: "BSTD is very keen to provide wide-



Officials at the signing ceremony.

ranging support to the HRM Summit 2012. We are committed to enhancing the skill levels and capabilities of HR professionals in Bahrain."

"We recognise that the key areas of HR and training are

important sectors that contribute significantly to the national HR and skills development programme and it is all the more important that we support events that bring in global best practices into the Kingdom,"

he said.

According to Marketing Director of Roshcomm Helen Lobo, the announcement of BSTD support to HRM Summit, represents an important milestone in the evolution of the Conference. It is further proof that the event is recognised as a key contributor to the overall training needs of the HR community."

"We are very pleased to announce that Bahrain Society for Training and Human Resources Development has decided to enter into a strategic alliance with the event. We believe that we shall maximise our efforts in brining the best practices in the HR Strategy and Management fields into the Kingdom through the joint co-operation of BSTD," she said.

Implement ERP when it really required



By CA Sandip Rajpopat
Columnist

Some people say "Change is the only permanent thing in life" and it sounds so real when we think about a paradigm shift in the way the businesses are conducted these days. With technological advancements, businesses have moved on from manual records to paperless offices and that too, so swiftly! In the modern 'instant' era, data retrieval has become a child's play as against a daunting task once upon a time! These developments, coupled with growing business volumes, expanding geographical operations, requirement for real-time information and its affordability, made a change in transaction processing inevitable, which resulted in advent of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning).

ERP is nothing less than a revolution today and a growing number of companies want to implement it, to replicate the success of their peers or competitors and to surpass them. However, to my dismay, there are more failure stories than successful ones in implementing ERP. A close look at those cases revealed the following:

Large number of decision-makers think that having ERP is like a status-symbol, which can be discussed and bragged about on dinner-tables. However, the fact is that an organisation should implement ERP only when it really requires it. By requirements, I mean only when they have massive transaction-base, huge workforce, complex transactions, diversified product / service base, compatible environment, and multi-divisional as well as multi-locational presence. (Other companies may also implement it; however, it may result in costs exceeding the potential benefits.)

Certain members of senior management team feel that ERP implementation is just another project, which can easily be executed without much of their involvement, since it could result in wasting their valuable time. However, this notion needs to be corrected outright, as in case of ERP implementation, commitment of the senior management is of utmost importance.

Some companies feel that ERP implementation is typically the job of 'Consultants' and their duty is only to identify the consultants, handover the job to them and relax! However, the challenge lies in identifying 'right' set of consultants who will assume the responsibility of smoothly implementing ERP within the committed deadlines, or else, it will become a never-ending process and frustrate the employees.

Definition of scope of work and its clear communication to the consultants is a major milestone in ERP implementation. If this is not done wisely and meticulously, consultants will have gala time and the company will never be able to finish the project within allocated budgeted amounts, since several developments / upgrades will be charged 'extra' since those weren't covered in the initial scope.

Popular belief is that ERP implementation is IT and accounts departments' job. However, this is not right, since ERP spans across all the departments in a company and their whole-hearted involvement and harmonisation is utmost crucial. Moreover, ERP implementation is a time-consuming process and hence, it must be planned and timed well, so as not to affect the regular operations of each department.

People think that once you implement ERP, you will soon start witnessing wonders.

Moreover, ERP will automatically result in efficient and error-free transaction processing.

My advice to all those creative thinkers is that "it is not the machine but the 'man' behind the machine, who is instrumental for its success". Hence, ERP is just a facilitator and not a problem-solver in itself. Its success or failure depends on how it is being used and who uses it. Otherwise, it will just result in GIGO Garbage in, garbage out!

Investing huge sums in ERP is of no use, if an organisation is not able to exploit its utilities in totality. In such cases, ERP will just be seen as a financial burden on the company.

Moreover, while configuring the ERP, robust internal controls must be designed at each stage. Otherwise, it will be susceptible to frauds and thereby costing a company very dearly.

Many ERP failures are due to lack of acceptance within the organisation, predominantly because of reluctance and resistance from groups of old employees who are very comfortable with the legacy system. In fact, these employees look at ERP as a tool to make them redundant. Hence, it is very crucial to communicate with them and to take them into confidence, to explain the objectives & utilities of ERP to run the business successfully and efficiently.

While implementing ERP, many people think that 'One coat fits all' and hence, they try and replicate the model implemented by the people whom they know. However, this may not work with your organisation due to the peculiarities involved in your business model. Hence, spend some time for identifying your exact needs. Again, most expensive solution is not the best solution always. Hence, decide what suits you the most and then buy it from the most reliable vendor! So, next time around when you are going to get involved in ERP implementation, take care of the above pointers and refute the famous saying "ERP implementation isn't finished until the last user is dead".

(The author is a qualified Chartered Accountant and is associated as a Director with Infura Consulting Group. Views expressed herein are purely personal.)



A.A. Bin Hindi sole distributors of Kia Motors in Bahrain recognised and rewarded its sales consultant Sadiq Al Raffai for achieving the set sales target for Kia Carens. Seen in the photo are: from left, PR and Media Manager Mo'men Shawqi, Marketing Manager Mahasum Shah, General Manager Mohammed Bin Hindi, Mr. Al Raffai and Brand Manager John Joseph.