

Leather Software Made in Brazil for Export

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This Brazilian group's goal is to provide complete software solutions to the international market. They are 11 micro and small companies from the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in the southernmost region of Brazil. They develop specific software solutions for the leather and shoe industry and are joining forces to start a product internationalization process.

The companies are supported by the Sectoral Software project of the Metropolitan and Sinos River Valley regions, implemented by the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service in Rio Grande do Sul (Sebrae/RS). During the International Fair of Leather, Chemicals, Components and Accessories, Equipment and Machinery for Footwear and Tanneries (Fimec), held in March in the city of Novo Hamburgo, the group of businessmen presented its software solutions to business agents from India, Ethiopia, Mexico and Italy. In June, the group is planning a market prospecting action for the Guangzhou Fair, in China.

Paula Nicolini, a technical assistant at the Sebrae/RS, says that in case the mission to the Chinese fair is confirmed, then this will be the businessmen's first international market prospecting activity. According to her, the group also plans on launching its own brand logo in the coming months, and investing on advertisement of the services supplied by the companies.

"The aim is also to seek new partners outside the country, reaching out to other publics, and consequently expand the market for the enterprises," explains Paula. The group is comprised of companies from Novo Hamburgo and one from the state of Paraná.

According to Sebrae/RS consultant Sandro Cortezia, the group's companies provide a vast array of solutions, ranging from management systems for the leather and shoe production chain, to solutions for integrating the production chain itself.

"The software cater to nearly all of the links in the production chain, incorporating specific functionalities of the leather and shoe industry and meets fashion industry requirements such as, for instance, management of samples and variety of products with a fast development and production cycle, among others."

In the evaluation of Cortezia, the first contact with international buyers was very positive, having generated good business perspectives for the businessmen. "During the Fimec, representatives of several different countries were able to assess the potential of the products offered by the companies in the group. The response was quite encouraging."

According to the consultant, "while contributing to the development of the leather and shoe industry in Brazil, the software companies have internalized competences and gained knowledge of the leather and shoe business. Now, the time has come to export this knowledge. This is the purpose of the group," he claims.

The initial focus of the entrepreneurs will be on the Asian market. Cortezia explains that, the upcoming actions on schedule include consolidation of product portfolio, definition of a common brand for the foreign market, and prospection of the markets in India and in Latin America.

The Sectoral Software project of the Metropolitan and Sinos River Valley Regions involves software development companies and service providers in the cities of Novo Hamburgo and São Leopoldo. The project aims to increase revenues and the number of clients by improving management and seeking new markets.

Sebrae