

## Brazilian Medical Firm is Equipping Iraq's Hospitals

Contributed by Geovana Pagel  
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The manufacturer of medical and hospital instruments, Erwin Guth, located in the city of São Paulo, southeast of Brazil, is going to supply surgical equipment to two hospitals that are going to be built in Iraq. The construction works are due to start this year.

"It is a very big project. The contract forecasts the supply of the entire instrumental part for the two hospitals. Our exports director (Karin Guth) is visiting the region to negotiate with those responsible for the projects," stated the exports assistant at the company, Leandra Piscor.

"Sales to Iraq already happen indirectly through Jordan and have increased with the reconstruction process in the country," she highlighted.

According to Leandra, the factory made their first contact with the Arab market in 2001. One year later they signed a contract with a distributor based in Jordan and started their sales to the Jordanians.

In 2004 they also started exporting to the United Arab Emirates and, in the beginning of the year, signed a new contract with a distributor in Kuwait.

"We still haven't settled any sales to Kuwait as the distributor is still in the market study phase," she explained.

According to the exports assistant at Erwin Guth, Jordan imports more basic surgical instruments for general surgery, like needle holders, forceps, scissors and retractors. The Arab Emirates, in turn, import more dentistry equipments, like pliers, mirrors, excavators, blades, scissors and spatulas.

Founded in 1957, Erwin Guth manufactures and sells a line of more than 3,500 items, which includes medicine, dentistry and veterinary articles, surgical kits and sterilization boxes. In the internal market they supply all states in the country. Abroad they are already present in 29 countries.

External sales started in 2001 and are responsible for about 20% of the company's revenues, US\$ 7.26 million last year. "But our aim is to double exports up to the end of 2006," said Leandra.

Erwin Guth, which today employs 30 workers, plans on doubling their production capacity up to 2010. "With the current installed capacity we are able to expand our production in 60%, but even so we already think of expanding our production capacity and hiring more people," remarked Leandra.

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