

France: TIC-PME 2010

Initiative: ICT-SMEs 2010

Web address: <http://www.telecom.gouv.fr/tic-pme2010>

Description of the initiative

To improve their profitability and their competitiveness regarding the market, SME's have to co-ordinate their strategy in accordance with the sector strategy they belong. "Sector strategy" involves particularly the harmonisation of the exchange model used between each actor of the sector from main principals (for instance Renault, Airbus, Carrefour,...) to others main representatives of the industrial, or services sectors, subcontractors (level 3, 4,..) included. The fundamental objective is to find agreement in order to optimise whole production and procurement processes in terms of profitability, time to market, reactivity.

The exchange models included data structures, catalogues, standard such as ebXML, GS1. They have to be compliant with EC standards as far as possible.

The measure begins by a call for tenders. Tenders are projects involving the whole sector from top to down with the objectives to harmonise and standardise the exchange models. The success depends on the following criteria: the tenderer must be representative, legitimate and proclaimed by all the sector he belongs, in order to be able to make the harmonisation of the exchange model agreeable for each component of the sector (main principals, subcontractors).

Objectives

When the exchange models are defined and harmonised through all the sector, it is possible to standardise them and consequently to stabilise the data processing architecture. So that, three consequences are expected:

- At the moment the data processing architecture is standardised, it becomes easier to define software solution suitable for the SMEs. Moreover, this approach promotes compatibility between solutions
- For the SMEs, risks to investment in ICT become more acceptable because more "readable".
- Compatible data processing architectures make easier the improvement of the internal organisation of SME. In the same way, clients / provider relationship between companies can also be optimised as supply chains and time to market constraints.

The consequences of such an approach are, later on, to be able to take into account the "ecosystem" (relationships between industrial sectors) which is a fundamental point for the SMEs as subcontractor level down to 2. These SMEs actually are involved in many sectors in the same time (in mechanic domain, for instance, they have to provide components for cars, aeronautic, railway, marine industries. For them, it is unthinkable to adopt different data processing architecture for each main principal. As a result, for a same "ecosystem" the data processing architecture design has to be carried out with a shared understanding.

Timeline: 2006 - 2009

Expected impact / targets

The call for tenders was closed in early november 2005: 75 projects were proposed for 30 different sectors (such as aeronautic, agriculture, mechanic, railway, tourism, building,, sectors). After a first selection, 20 projects were short-listed. Tenderers have to present precisely their strategy by early April for some of them and early July for the others in order to apply for the final label. By the end, about ten projects will be selected by a comity composed of both public and private representatives.

7M€ are provided for this program. For each project, the found given cannot be up to 50% of the expenses planned on preliminary studies, needs assessment and change management. French Ministry of Economy offers to support sectors in these first steps of their project provided they make commitment regarding the way to give their solutions acceptable from top to down. All the cost regarding development of the solution has to be beard by the tendered and his partners. As the deployment to SMEs is concerned, founding will be proposed by regional involvements or EEC programs.

- Improvement of all sectors in terms of profitability
- Increase of ICT investments
- Development of enhanced services for SMEs

Target group

The sectors finally labelled but also the other through good practice applications

Communication strategy

On one hand, designed by both public and private representatives (business organisation including) this program is personally supported by the ministry of economy since it has been launched. On the other hand, each project has to be support by the headquarters of the sector, which drive the project. This commitment is one of the conditions to be labelled.

Assessment by national business organisations

As national business organisation belongs to the comity in charge to manage this project, the continue assessment is included in this mission.

Results already achieved

The constraint to select one project per sector as a maximum obliges the business organisations belonging to the considered sector to negotiate together in order to reach agreement to build a common project. This can be considered as a positive result.

Evaluation

To be planned at T0+ 1 year for each project.

What makes this practice better than others?

- To avoid to finance similar projects which are not able to be compatible with the existing ones.
- To oblige sector to harmonise their strategic plans

Inspiration of the initiative

The measure was inspired by the evaluation of a previous program called "UCIP" (Collective uses of Internet by SMEs) and a similar approach which was driven in aeronautic field (in this

context the sector is hyper-structured and more flexible to be improved the harmonisation of the data processing system).

Contact details

Responsible organisation: MINEFI / DGE

Name: Antoine Tardivo

Address: 12 rue Villiot, 75572 Paris CEDEX 12

E-mail: tic.pme2010@telecom.gouv.fr