

## Made for the Middle East



\$400 million India-based software solutions company Sonata Software is all set to leverage opportunities in the Middle East market with a three pronged approach. The company's President and Managing Director, B Ramaswamy said the focus will be on three areas – specialised product implementation, value addition on existing solutions and IT skills staffing.

"Entering the Middle East is a follow on of our strategy globally. We have solid presence in the Indian market, established operations in the US, UK and Germany through a JV and now it is the Middle East. We are set to be a long term player in this market," B Ramaswamy said.

According to the company, adopting a cookie cutter approach will not work when entering new markets. "We are set for geographical diversification, but our focus will be on offerings that will serve the unique needs of this region," he added.

With the company having announced the opening of its one hundred per cent owned subsidiary in the Dubai Internet City. Sonata Software FZ will provide value-based IT solutions to customers, strengthening its presence in the region. "Dubai will be a long term hub for us and the Middle East has adopted a model to take on an established product approach rather than a customized approach. Customers in the region are looking to derive higher value from their applications and enabling this will be a key driver of our business in the region," said Ramaswamy.

With a skill pool of over 2500 developers spread across its two development hubs in Bangalore and Hyderabad, Sonata expects to leverage its experience in key technology practice areas including ERP, unified communications, collaboration and BI. "We will have a mixed model here offering a portfolio of services to clients. Program offices will also be established across the region to service specific customer requirements," he shared.

Catering to the skills demand will also be a core area of focus. "We have a large pool of technical resources with Oracle, Microsoft Dynamics and SAP skill sets," Ramaswamy said.

Staffing is also a growing area of business, especially in the Middle East. "Many organisations in the region are not looking to build all skill sets in house and prefer to work with partners like us to source skills as they need. We expect to be able to deliver strongly on this requirement as well," he added.

Sonata Software will use its Dubai Internet City free zone base to target regional market segments including the Travel, Tourism, Hospitality and Construction industries – some of the major sectors that make up the GDP in the Middle East.

Sonata has established a strong team that will manage its Middle East operations and has been enhancing its management team. Mahesh Shastry, General Manager, Middle East and Africa, along with Principal Consultant, A T Srinivasan will together form a team that brings an in-depth knowledge of the Middle East market.