

**GÜNTER LANDA,
MANAGING DIRECTOR,
ADVANCIS AUSTRIA**

WE HAVE 2,000 INSTALLATIONS IN MORE THAN 70 COUNTRIES

IN 2001, ADVANCIS HAS EXPANDED TO A MEDIUM-SIZED COMPANY ACTING ON A GLOBAL SCALE, TODAY BEING ONE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET LEADERS IN PHYSICAL SECURITY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE. OUR BUSINESS IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSTANT GROWTH BY CREATING SUSTAINABLE AND WELL-DESIGNED SOLUTIONS FOR ITS CUSTOMERS. IN ADDITION TO ITS IN-HOUSE DEVELOPED PSIM SOFTWARE, ADVANCIS ALSO OFFERS THE NECESSARY SERVICES, SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE

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a&s Adria: Mr Landa, could you present yourself to our readers: when did you start working for Advancis, what is your role/what are you in charge of, and your educational and professional background?

Landa: As Managing Director of Advancis Austria, the Advancis area representation in charge for the Austrian and Southeast European market, I live and work in Vienna. I am 54 years old, happily married and have two children. I am a software engineer and worked in this sector – last in a leading position – until 2008. In the year 2009, I started focusing on building automation and management. During this time I encountered the open PSIM software WinGuard from Advancis. I was immediately captivated and very fascinated by the broad functionality of this product so that I came to the decision to market it locally. In 2010, there was an agreement with Jan Meiswinkel, CEO of Advancis, and I founded the first Advancis area representation in Austria. Today, Advancis Austria is responsible for both sales and services in Austria and Southeastern Europe. We now have nine employees in Sales, Support & Service and our customers appreciate that they can contact us locally for all issues.

a&s Adria: Tell us about Advancis: what were its most important milestones, how many employees and offices do you now have, revenue, in which countries do you do business, etc.? I noticed that in the last couple of years you opened several new offices?

Landa: Advancis Software & Services GmbH is an ISO 9000 certified software company headquartered close to Frankfurt, Germany. Advancis was founded in 1994 as a regional software manufacturer by one of its Managing Directors, Hartmut Nöll. The company pioneered with regard to cross-domain security management, inventing its open PSIM software WinGuard, which is developed exclusively in Germany by qualified software engineers. With the participation of the second Managing Director Jan Meiswinkel in 2001, the company has expanded to a medium-sized company acting on a global scale, today being one of the international market leaders in PSIM. Advancis is based on the principle of constant growth by creating sustainable and well-designed solutions for its customers. In addition to its completely in-house developed PSIM software that is steadily improved, Advancis also offers the necessary services, support and maintenance.

In the course of time, the number of Advancis employees has continuously grown, leading to a steady increase of office space, resulting in the construction of an own Advancis Campus at the Advancis headquarters close to Frankfurt in Germany in the year 2014 as well as in the recent opening of several new area representations. Today, Advancis has around 130 employees worldwide with offices in Austria, the UK, U.A.E., the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden – approximately 50 % of the company sales come from outside the German-speaking countries. According to a B2B sales model, international WinGuard partners (integrators) certified by Advancis market and distribute the software around the world, execute related projects at customer sites and render any necessary additional services.

a&s Adria: Physical Security Information Management (PSIM), a software platform that integrates several non-connected security systems, is at the core of your business. But, Advancis offers something more – your software platform WinGuard is defined as PSIM+. What is the difference between the two: PSIM and PSIM+?

Landa: A PSIM software is a platform that integrates different security systems, controlling them via only one user interface. This enables the operator to detect occurring events triggered by different security systems and to resolve them in an optimal way.

With our PSIM+ software WinGuard which

WinGuard system integration

a&s Adria: What types of security and other systems can it integrate?

Landa: WinGuard integrates all technical systems installed in a building and the monitored premises, i.e. security, building management and communication systems of lots of different manufacturers. This can be CCTV, intercom, access control, fire and intrusion alarm, perimeter protection and personal security systems, key management, HVAC, leak detection, parking management systems and a lot more. In addition, the direct connection of related systems such as ticketing or computer aided dispatch systems is possible.

Further system types are possible to add to the integration scope anytime as Advancis steadily develops new interfaces, both independently and upon request.

is an open and vendor-neutral platform, we offer a solution reaching far beyond the common scope, realizing cross-domain integration not only of the complete security, but also building management and communication technology. Furthermore a direct connection to higher-tier mission control systems or further process-supporting software is possible, e.g. incident management, ticketing or data mining systems.

a&s Adria: Explain in detail the main features of WinGuard?

Landa: WinGuard is an open architecture software platform so that the total technical infrastructure of a building can be visualized and controlled. The operator works with an intuitive and adaptable user interface providing them with contents such as maps and camera images depending on the situation. Key is to collect live information from all connected systems and to filter this information to facilitate event processing, particularly the handling of emergency incidents. The systems integrated in WinGuard interact automatically in case of an incident: For example, in the event of an unauthorized access attempt, the cardholder's data is automatically transferred to the operator, the video camera in the monitored area is displayed, an intercom connection is established, etc. Most important are the guided workflows (SOPs) that support the user in event processing and lead them through the required actions for a quick and secure resolution of the situation. It is possible to forward an event message automatically from the control center to other operators or personnel on site by phone, e-mail or SMS. Automatic actions and dynamic workflows increase security in case of emergencies or malfunctions, but also simplify daily control center tasks. As all actions are logged, reports and eva-

luations can be easily generated, offering a quick overview of relevant key figures. For external use, this information can be exported into standard formats or provided in real-time.

The reliability of WinGuard is ensured by redundancy concepts, e.g. using hot standby servers. If there is a failure of an important component, system availability is ensured. The complete database of the main system is continuously kept on one or more other computers, avoiding downtime and data loss.

WinGuard is scalable from a single workstation system to an internationally cross-linked control center to monitor several sites of a company in different cities or countries. The software can be extended anytime by further servers and clients, function and interface modules. Currently, remote access is in high demand to facilitate working from remote operator stations or from home. With the WinGuard App for iOS and Android, mobile access to the platform and all connected systems is possible at any time.

a&s Adria: Easy operation is one of the important advantages justifying the investment in vendor-neutral PSIM software. How does it help in reducing operational costs and streamlining procedures?

Landa: It is simple to use, saving money by enabling control room operators to be trained quickly for security monitoring and incident handling as they work with only one system and user interface. The software consolidates information from all connected systems and prepares it for the user so that those incidents are detected which are really critical instead of having to care about lots of false alarms. Whenever an incident happens the software guides users step-by-step with dynamic workflows that show them the specific procedures for any security



alert from any connected systems. This means that the workload is managed very efficiently and may reduce the need for staffing levels. Using a PSIM software, a multi-location company can monitor all its sites centrally, e.g. during the night, requiring less personnel resources.

As an open PSIM can integrate any technical system, the customer can freely decide which hardware products they prefer to deploy, extend or renew in their organization – on the one hand, regarding costs, but on the other hand they can choose whatever system is most suitable for their internal processes and infrastructure.

Open PSIM automates information gathering and sharing, streamlines procedures and removes much of the human error from the management of an incident. It possesses integrated evaluation and reporting tools to help further analyze and improve how incidents should be handled in the future.

a&s Adria: You market several types of WinGuard: Express, Basic, Professional, and Enterprise. Are they intended for different purposes?

Landa: To provide the optimal solution for projects of any size, we offer four product versions, from WinGuard Express for small projects (single location not requiring any further clients) up to WinGuard Enterprise, designed for multi-site systems with an unlimited number of locations, clients and interfaces such as the distributed stores of a global retail chain.

The four different versions mainly differ about the number of sensor connections

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and system interfaces that are already included. There are customers who only like to link access control with video surveillance or visualize and control fire alarm systems including automated printout of fire detector positioning plans in case of an event, so they can go for the small WinGuard Express solution. Others require a large number of sensors and clients to be connected as well as multiple redundancy levels, e.g. in the finance sector, data centers or other highly sensitive areas, choosing WinGuard Professional or Enterprise. However, the selected version itself does not limit a customer to a certain size or scope, it only serves as the basic installation for a project because WinGuard is scalable so that a smaller installation can be extended to a more comprehensive one anytime.

a&s Adria: Last year alone, you had 30 new and 188 extended interfaces. For those not familiar with your software, what do these interfaces represent, how many do you offer up to this point, and with how many companies do you cooperate with?

Landa: There are two ways to realize the connection of technical systems to a PSIM software: either via standard protocols such as BACnet, OPC or Modbus IP, or via

manufacturer-specific interfaces. The second is preferable as only individual interfaces can integrate the entire functional scope of the respective system in the superordinated PSIM software and they can also be updated in case functions or features of the connected technical system are changed by its manufacturer. Advancis advises to integrate systems via such individual interfaces and has focused on their development and extension. Currently, almost 500 interface drivers to security, building management and communication systems of lots of different manufacturers are available in WinGuard, new ones are constantly developed.

As Advancis do not sell any hardware and can develop new interfaces anytime, end customers remain totally free in the choice of their installations. This also enables us to form strong collaborations with system manufacturers when developing and maintaining interfaces, ensuring we improve the quality of integrations. To support this further, we launched our technology partner program in mid-2019. In particular with our premium technology partners, we communicate continuously and share technical know-how to always keep interfaces up to date and provide excellent project support for our joint customers.



For us as the manufacturer of WinGuard it is, of course, important to develop both interfaces and functionalities ourselves, but in addition we offer our integration partners and users the possibility to become more flexible in case they would like to realize very specific project requirements. Therefore the current WinGuard version is already supporting 3rd party developments of interface drivers – even if a functional project scope is very unique, it can be provided individually.

a&s Adria: What cyber security measures did you undertake to ensure secure data transfer?

Landa: The latest WinGuard version offers innovations in cyber security such as encryption of network communication and databases using AES. Secured signature storage protects all external files such as CAD floor plans from unauthorized manipulation. The support of central key management (PKI) allows an easy administration as well as the integration into already existing systems and security concepts.

Given the recent global focus on network and device security, WinGuard is one of the most highly protected systems of its kind in the market.

a&s Adria: How many installations have you done so far and can you present some

Pandemic as a challenge

a&s Adria: This is a success taking into account all the pandemic-related issues. How was generally your business affected by the pandemic? Were you able to adapt to the changed conditions?

Landa: Our PSIM platform WinGuard is deployed across a diverse range of industries such as defense, critical national infrastructure, retail and finance to name just a few. The pandemic has been a challenge for everyone, however some of our customers in certain sectors have been affected more than others. The leisure and entertainment industry and public transport have been hit hard by the crisis, whilst other sectors such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, data centers and other critical infrastructures have been less affected and, in many cases, increased revenues. Secondly, mostly up to a few years pass between the decision of a customer for a PSIM system and project start, meaning that projects distribute over time so that our company did not experience any order leak during the pandemic.

of the most complex and significant ones?

Landa: Advancis has realized 2,000 installations in different business sectors in more than 70 countries worldwide. As confidentiality is a top priority in the security industry, very few customers agree to have their names or details of their installations published. Amongst those we are allowed to name are the world leader in semiconductor solutions, Infineon, the Austrian Federal Railways OEBB, the chemical company Henkel, the supermarket chain Auchan and the German leisure park Europa-Park. For all available references please check our website: <https://advancis.net/resources/success-stories/>.

a&s Adria: What are the most important global trends that define the PSIM market? And according to that, what can we expect from Advancis in the years ahead?

Landa: In the future, an even larger number of systems will have to be integrated in a PSIM platform which involves high effort and lots of resources for the development of new interface drivers. In addition, system manufacturers are constantly improving and extending their functional scope so that the interface drivers must be constantly kept up to date. Besides the high effort of interface development, the PSIM platform itself has to offer a broad range of functions and steadily increase



them further. As new technologies appear and security continues to converge, there is no doubt that integration will be at the heart of the industry's future.

Therefore, in the coming years, we would like to focus even more on the openness of our software. Our goal is to offer a totally flexible platform to process and prepare data. We constantly enhance WinGuard's functionality to address new and existing challenges in the management of incidents, prioritization of events, intelligent automation, data security and analysis. The more functions the systems connected to WinGuard cover, the more they have to be intelligently integrated in the PSIM platform too so that the user receives well-prepared data depending on the incident. Think of creating intelligent graphics for the display of value comparisons or the integration of communication mechanisms to inform exactly those team member that are currently available on site to handle an incident.

a&s Adria: In October 2021, you attended the Adria Security Summit in Belgrade. What is your opinion on the Adriatic region security market and Advancis' position in it? What are your plans in this area, are you looking for a regional partner?

Landa: The security market in the Adriatic region is still a young market but shows lots of potential. Advancis as a global

SPELL platform

a&s Adria: In June 2021 the SPELL research project funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy has been launched. Your company is a part of it. Can you tell us more about the project? How will artificial intelligence be used to help the population in case of crises?

Landa: SPELL is the abbreviation for "Semantic platform for intelligent decision-making and deployment support in control and situation centers". The aim of this project is to use artificial intelligence to initiate emergency response, emergency aid and supply measures for the population more quickly and in line with the situation in case of crises (e. g. major incidents, pandemics, natural disasters or widespread power failures). Precondition is a data-based overview of all relevant information as an overall picture of the situation and the networking of all involved parties. Artificial intelligence can create this basis and significantly support decision-making and implementation to minimize incorrect decisions.

Advancis' focus within the project is on the integration, harmonization and utilization of sensor data from security, building management, communication and information technology in near real time. With the help of artificial intelligence as well as data technologies, a significant information and time gain in incident management is to be achieved in crisis situations. Advancis will primarily test this in concrete applications of networked BOS and industrial control centers.

player in PSIM can make a valuable contribution here and sharpen the perception for security, networked systems, the use of synergies and guided workflows. We can observe this in various tenders: PSIM has already found its place in the security landscape and its benefits are highly appreciated.

Our sales structure aims at establishing and strengthening local integration par-

tners so that the best possible support for the end customer and be provided locally. We already work together with highly qualified companies that distribute our software in the Adriatic region, execute projects at customer sites and render any additional services such as individual adaptations by customizing or maintenance. However, we are still looking to further expand our partner network in the region. ◀