

GIT SECURITY

MAGAZINE FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY

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WILEY

Stefan Olf is now
General Manager
for Advancis Middle
East operations



INTERVIEW

Representative Security

Middle East: Smart Cities and Other Future Projects

Advancis has appointed Stefan Olf as General Manager for its Middle East company in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. In coordination with the Board of Advancis, he will be growing the business of the software supplier. The company will thereby strengthen and grow its already successful activity in a particularly dynamic growth market. GIT SECURITY spoke with Stefan Olf.

■ GIT SECURITY:
Mr. Olf, you have just taken over the leadership of the Advancis subsidiary in Abu Dhabi. Could you tell us a little about your background?

Stefan Olf: I studied Electro-Information Technology in Darmstadt. Since then I have been selling enterprise software solutions, SaaS, and cloud solutions for more than 20 years. Before I started with Advancis, I was Sales Director for Central Europe at Planon, a leading provider of facility management and real estate software solutions from the Netherlands. At Advancis, I was director of sales operations for more than two and a half years before now moving to Abu Dhabi.

Then let us talk about the Middle East subsidiary. How is it set up?

Stefan Olf: Advancis is one of the international market leaders in vendor-neutral security and building management systems. We have a very experienced team here – and that is a big plus. It consists of a service team that supports our partners and our end users with the implementation of our software solutions. It is led by our long-serving technical director Mohammed Zubaidi. I'm responsible for the sales team and the entire company as General Manager.

We have additional resources in Saudi Arabia. We are also supported by our col-

leagues from the global services division that are located either at our head office in Langen near Frankfurt or our office in Ireland. Our partners and customers in the Middle East also benefit from this global and holistic approach. The close networking allows us to advise both partners and customers by using the local and global experience and thereby implementing projects in the best way.

Where do you see the most important tasks and aims for Advancis in the Middle East?

Stefan Olf: We have successfully operated here since 2010 and already serve a broad customer base. Our AIM and WinGuard solutions are used wherever a high level of security is imperative. Our Middle East customers are, among others, in the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, mostly in the petrochemicals and energy supply industries, the military, and public administration.

Advancis is well known in the region, so we are often on the shortlist for new projects with our solutions. One of my tasks is to further expand this strong position. In addition to that, I will be building new strategic partnerships in the region. This will help us further expand our network and reach in the Middle East, as well as intensify our relations with partners and customers. At the same time, we want to drive the integration of the Advancis Middle East processes into the global Advancis structures. My work at the Advancis HQ over the last two and a half years will be of help here.



The WinGuard X5 open platform integrates the entire security, building, and communication systems, as well as the IT infrastructure

Where do you see the greatest opportunities for Advancis to grow business in the Middle East?

Stefan Olf: Large projects are carried out here that just don't exist on that scale in Europe. Saudi Arabia's 'Vision 2030' project covers multiple smart cities that will be built from the ground up. These include many opportunities for providers of innovative security solutions such as us. In addition to that comes the fact that security here in the Middle East is placed very high on the list of priorities. Abu Dhabi is not one of the safest cities in the world for nothing.

All this opens up big opportunities for us. Open security platforms will be required all over the place that can meet the most varied requirements. We offer the perfect solution to providing effective

and efficient security management with our WinGuard X5 open integration platform, which enables the overarching integration of the entire security, building, and communication systems, as well as the IT infrastructure.

The clocks tick a little differently in the Middle East compared to Europe or the USA. How do you perceive the cultural differences of the region?

Stefan Olf: You have to be flexible, particularly in the sales and business processes. Information and decisions are expected quickly – but even with all that speed, things can be delayed. Our experienced team here has the big advantage that it consists of Arabic-speaking colleagues, some of whom have always lived here,

and from whom I can always get some good advice.

What are your first projects and plans?

Stefan Olf: It is particularly important for me to get to know our existing customers and partners, and to get to know them personally in order to best support them with their projects. Intersec in January in Dubai was very helpful for this, and I was able to meet many existing and also potential customers and partners at our stand. I was able to establish the first contacts, which has been very valuable for me. ■



Advancis Middle East
www.advancis.net

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The company's AIM and WinGuard solutions are already used extensively wherever a high level of security is imperative

