

SEPTEMBER 1985

# SPECTRUM

FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF GE INFORMATION SERVICES COMPANY

*cover story*

## MAKING THE MULTINATIONAL SALE



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## WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

This issue of *SPECTRUM* focuses on the worldwide business of GE Information Services.

What else would you like *SPECTRUM* to feature about our worldwide business? Please send any suggestions to G. C. Barnes, editor, QUIK-COMM: YLOP.

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General Electric Information Services Company, U.S.A.

cover story

## ON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS: MAKING THE MULTINATIONAL SALE

Recently, SPECTRUM interviewed Tony Craig, senior vice president, International Sales & Services Operations, and Jim McNerney, senior vice president, Marketing and U.S. Sales Operations, on how they are promoting and pursuing international business and international sales.

**Q:** Why are we having this focus on international sales right now?

**ALC:** This is very much in keeping with what we are today as a business in a world economy that is increasingly international in scope. From my perspective, GE Information Services Company is an international company. Its single strongest advantage is its worldwide network and workforce. When you match that with today's rapidly growing international business needs and opportunities, you understand why we are focusing on international sales.

**WJM:** Tony's right. ISSO has become accomplished at doing business across geographical, political, and technological boundaries.

From my perspective in the United States, the key driver of success will be for us to become accomplished at implementing specialized applications that very often will ride on an international delivery vehicle.

The U.S. needs to focus on office-based distribution/sourcing and corporate system applications. Implementing these applications in an international environment will require more and better cooperation on both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific.

The two strengths that differentiate us from the competition are our ability to deliver international solutions in a quality manner and our applications expertise.

**ALC:** Our greatest successes have been with clients engaged in a global rather than national competition. We are uniquely positioned to offer them the information management systems they need to

win in international markets. We have no competitor today in that area.

**Q:** Could you give us some examples of the kind of sales you are talking about.

**ALC:** I can mention several. There are the global lending management systems in the banking sector that we have developed for Deutschebank, National Westminster, and IBJ. There are order service systems with clients such as Toyota, Nissan, BMW. Our electronic mail information systems are used by corporations worldwide. To cite one more category, there are hotel reservation systems which are now a very successful enterprise. All of these developed from a common client need—to span national boundaries, including the U.S.

**WJM:** We can also add AT&T to that list. In the past AT&T has too often been thought of as a national company, especially because of the parochial regulatory environment in which it operated. Deregulation and divestiture have changed that. To compete in today's market, it has the imperative to do business internationally.

We must also recognize that as telecommunications regulations loosen up in Europe and the Far East the entire world market will face greater competition. And that will open markets to us. But at the same time the U.S. market may also be open to greater international competition.

**Q:** Can you give us some insight, Jim, on how you plan to get the U.S. sales and marketing people to be full players in the international game?

**WJM:** We are going to make worldwide business a central element of our marketing strategy and our organizational structure. Ruann Pengov, vice president and general manager, Applications Marketing Operation, will have the charter to make sure that the cross industry products and applications she develops reflect international needs.

We are also separating those parts of our busi-

ness that are more domestically oriented and vertically aligned and putting them under Dave Foster, vice president and general manager, Focused Business Operation. While Dave's organization will have some significant projects that will require international coordination for success, they will be driven largely by what is going on here in the U.S. And keeping them separate from Ruann's team will allow Tony, Colin Bell, and me to better manage international marketing [Colin Bell is the new Marketing and Technical Support vice president and general manager reporting to Tony Craig].

In addition to the new organization structure, a key ingredient for success in our worldwide sales strategy is sales coordination. And that is more than just getting our job done efficiently, or serving the needs of our international clients on a day-to-day basis. It is an entire concept of sales coordination at all phases of a sale. And Tony and I are now setting up mechanisms in our organizations to accomplish that.

**ALC:** We need to present one face to a client—no matter what country he is in or which GE Information Services organization is servicing him.



*Tony Craig*



*Jim McNerney*

It is critical that the marketing and sales support services worldwide have in effect one strategy, one culture, one view of themselves. So, while we separately drive to meet annual objectives, we need to make sure our worldwide marketing and sales support is well coordinated.

**WJM:** Tony and I agree wholeheartedly on this worldwide direction of our business. In the next few months we both will be driving this to execution down through our organizations. We will depend ultimately for success on the individual account managers, the persons who really control our destiny, to respond to this direction. We will expect them to look at their counterparts across the sea as friends and partners.

**Q:** We have a resource called the "Guide to Managing the Multinational Sale." Are we going to train key sales people in how to use it?

**ALC:** We have gone to great pains to make information referenced in that guide available on various files on DY28. This includes such topics as what modem to use, PTT regulations, lists of import/export managers in the business and pricing struc-

tures by country. And that is all available on the system today. The challenge for us is to show everyone how to use it and to encourage them to use it.

**Q:** What country do you think has the biggest potential for growth?

**WJM:** In this worldwide focus that we are taking, Tony and I are trying to transcend the concept of looking too discretely at countries as separate business units. Rather, we view individual countries as platforms for worldwide growth. I fully recognize that we have to organize by geography, but we don't have to always conduct business within those limits.

Obviously, the major countries that are going to provide these platforms for growth are the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Japan, and the Pacific Basin.

**ALC:** I think you've touched on exactly the right platforms. The clue to future growth will lie in understanding the import/export trade balances and examining those countries that have large dependencies on finished goods' import/export trade balances and finance and services import/export trade balances.

When you look at it that way, the United States is far and away the world's largest international trading partner. Japan is probably second. Intra-country trade in Europe, taken as an entity, would be third. These three large economic entities trade among themselves. We are focusing on the nature of that trade; the companies promoting that trade and the companies servicing that trade. That is where we have the strong competitive edge.

**Q:** What do you think is the key to our success in the arena of multinational marketing?

**ALC:** There are two critical elements which give us a unique competitive advantage. Number one is the global reach and high performance level of our network. It is unparalleled in the world. Number two is the breadth of our presence worldwide. We have a team of people providing service to about 60 countries throughout the world. This international workforce speaks the same language about the network and its capabilities. It is the network and the people being of one mind that is the key to our success.

**WJM:** I would add to Tony's two critical elements a third: the value added layer of specialization that is required to better serve those high potential clients Tony has identified.



Dave Foster

## FOSTER: FOCUSING ON SELECTED MARKETS

"The charter of Focused Business Operation is to pursue those opportunities which are industry-oriented and clearinghouse-oriented," said David F. Foster, vice president and general manager of that component. "Industry-oriented marketing has been successful in a wide variety of businesses, and the explosive growth of intercompany/clearinghouse-oriented applications makes industry focus even more important than it was before."

There are five major business segments identified for focus in FBO: health care, distribution EDI (electronic data interchange), Manufacturing EDI, international trade, and domestic transportation. The primary thrust in the health care business segment (see July *SPECTRUM* pp. 7-8) at present is the exchange of health insurance claims between health care providers and insurance carriers—estimated as a potential \$600 million market within the United States.

"While the claims area itself is being approached on a U.S. domestic basis," said Dave, "we have identified follow-on applications for the ordering of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals. These will have significant international leverage in the long term."

The next two business segments are distribution and manufacturing EDI. This involves computer-to-computer exchange and translation of information relating to the purchase order cycle, in selected manufacturing and distribution industries.

"This area is showing explosive growth," according to Dave, "and GE Information Services Company is in a great position to exploit it." He said that the specific industries on which he is focusing include automotive aftermarket, retail, office supplies, and heavy equipment manufacturing. He









































