

Export and Innovation Award 2011 Pride of the Latvian Economy



 **LIAA**
Latvijas Investīciju un attīstības aģentūra
Investment and Development Agency of Latvia



Dear Reader!

A company that has created an innovative product, achieved noteworthy export results, or offers a product or service that is a serious rival to imported products or services, sets a good example of how the spirit of enterprise is fostered in Latvia. Such examples are compiled in the publication *Pride of the Latvian Economy*.

We are pleased to present to you the winners of the Export and Innovation Award 2011 competition – companies that have not only achieved notable results in their business sectors but, by participating in the competition, confirmed the spirit of competition so characteristic of the business environment.

The Investment and Development Agency of Latvia has been organizing the competition Export and Innovation Award for several years in a row. The competition is important in presenting an opportunity to evaluate and honor the best Latvian enterprises engaged in healthy rivalry. The participants vie for awards in several categories, presenting their achievements, new products that are successfully marketed abroad or high-quality products made for the local market. The companies' applications for the Export and Innovation Award competition prove its importance for Latvian enterprises and its popularity with the general public.

The publication *Pride of the Latvian Economy* was prepared as part of the European Union's Structural Funds project *Programme for Motivating Innovative Entrepreneurship*. A key objective of the program is to encourage society to set up new businesses. We hope that the publication will become a source of inspiration and a guide to new, active enterprises, fostering their successful development.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Ozols'.

Andris Ozols
Director
Investment and Development Agency of Latvia

In Search of the Pride of the Latvian Economy

Basis for the national economy of Latvia, like of any other country, is successful entrepreneurship which in turn is based on the initiative of people whose essence is the creation of new added value. This means implementing ideas based on one's abilities, experience and knowledge, constant learning, and ability to overcome risks and failures. Continuous encouragement and development of this entrepreneurship spirit and initiative is one of the key tasks.

That is why, already for the eighth year, the Ministry of Economics and the state agency Investment and Development Agency of Latvia organise the competition called the Export and Innovation Award. This is an opportunity to rate competitive ideas and products, to praise the best companies and to encourage national identity.

The participants of the competition are evaluated by competent experts, and thus they can compare their performance with other contestants. There are many excellent enterprises in Latvia, yet the average citizen often knows nothing about most of them, because 95 % to 100 % of their products are exported. Besides, mutual competition encourages entrepreneurship spirit.



Export and Innovation Award

The objective of the competition is to increase competitiveness of Latvian companies on the Latvian and foreign markets – to create innovations and products with high added value, to improve quality and to raise export.

The jury evaluates Latvian companies who offer innovative products on the market, who are able to replace imported analogues with their products and to compete with similar foreign companies.

Companies may apply in four competition categories: Best Exporter (in two groups: large and medium-sized companies and small companies), Import Substitute Product, Innovative Product and Industrial Design. Participants in the fifth category, Leading Exporter, are selected by the jury.



The number of categories of the competition has been increased over the years thus providing the possibility to apply for a wider range of enterprises.

Over the years, the quality of projects submitted for the competition has also steadily improved and it is noteworthy that the added value of new products and brands still continues to increase.

Within a tough competition altogether 32 companies have been nominated as finalists of the Export and Innovation Award 2011.



Evaluation and Awards

Enterprises registered in Latvia that export their products, that have introduced products substituting imported products on the Latvian market, that have created innovative products or original industrial design thereof, may apply for the awards.

Evaluation of the participants in the competition is done in two rounds. In the first round, the jury evaluates information presented by the companies about their products participating in the competition as well as their operational indices, and selects the companies for the final round. In the second round, the jury visits every finalist and evaluates their performance.

The jury is made up of economists, mass media representatives, university and college lecturers, representatives of the Latvian Employers' Confederation, Latvian Institute, Latvian Technological Centre, heads of regional agencies, and other experts.

The winners of the first and second place within their categories are awarded with money prizes in the amount of LVL 2,000 and LVL 1,000 to cover the costs of company' participation in business delegations accompanying top state officials on foreign visits and trade missions organized by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, participation in fairs or individual business trips. Winners of the third place are offered the opportunity to place advertisements in any of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia publications.

The winners of the competition may use the award logo in their marketing activities.

Companies that participate in the competition gain publicity already when applying for it since information about the participants is posted on the website of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia and the Latvian foreign trade portal, especially emphasising information about the finalists. The competition participants also attract much attention from the media, thus increasing their recognition on the local as well as foreign markets, which contributes greatly to the sale of their products and services. Such awards are held in high esteem in many export countries of Latvia, and the Export and Innovation Award has helped many companies to begin expansion into new markets.



Title Leading Exporter

JSC Valmieras stikla šķiedra





JSC Valmieras stikla šķiedra

Fiberglass and fiberglass products



**Andris Oskars Brutāns,
JSC Valmieras stikla šķiedra
Chairman of the Board**

„I agree with the opinion of international business experts Vijay Govindarajan and Chris Trimble, who say belief that innovations are all about an idea is a myth. Of course, you cannot start to work without an idea, but the importance of the Great Idea is exaggerated. An idea is just the beginning – without the necessary concentration, discipline, resources and implementation, nothing will happen. We can't wait for someone else to accomplish something. We must do it ourselves, reach the goal.”

Website: www.vss.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 47.7 million

Number of employees (2011): 830

Export countries: EU, USA, Canada, CIS countries

Joint-stock company Valmieras stikla šķiedra is a chemical and textiles company with years of experience in the production of fiberglass and fiberglass products. JSC Valmieras stikla šķiedra is the only fiberglass producer in the Baltic States, and it is one Europe's largest producers of technical insulation materials.

„The company's exports make up 96% of the company's output; the company's products are exported to 32 countries around the world.”

The company specializes in fiberglass research, development, manufacture and marketing. These products are used for the production of thermal and technical insulation materials, and in the construction industry (chopped fiber, single and textured yarns, technical and textured fabrics, nettings, and mats).

These products are used for high-tech industries, for instance, aviation and space industry, chemical industry, metallurgy, military industry, production of protective overalls, production of recreational and sports equipment, shipbuilding, construction, electronics, energy, household appliances, automobile manufacture, mechanical engineering, and many others. The customer is the key to the success of JSC Valmieras stikla šķiedra.

„Investing in the customer helps us sell our products, especially when there is tough competition on the market.”

Additionally, the company keeps a close watch on market trends. Valmieras stikla šķiedra's team is confident that innovation is the main driving force in business, and for a company to be innovative, means to be competitive on the local and global markets, making products or providing services with high added value. That is why, in joint effort and discussion, new solutions are constantly being sought.

Participation in the Export and Innovation Award 2011 competition helped the company evaluate those initiatives that the company pursues in management, community, environment and business areas, and once again confirmed that the company may be – and is – one of the most exportable enterprises in Latvia

Planning the company's operations in the long term, much has been achieved in modernization and development of the company, and the company continues work on new projects and ideas to meet the customers' wants and needs. Therefore, the Export and Innovation Award 2011 may be seen as an important benchmark and rating for the work and contribution of Valmieras stikla šķiedra.



Category Best Exporter in the Group of Large and Medium-sized Companies



1st place – **CEMEX** Ltd. for Portland cement and composite Portland cement

2nd place – JSC **Dobeles Dzirnavnieks** for flour, other food products, animal feed, bran

3rd place – JSC **Severstal** for various types of steel products

Recognition –

JSC **Baltijas Gumijas fabrika** for rubber compounds and technical rubber products

Gamma-A Ltd. for sprats in oil, 250 gram glass jar

JSC **Krāsainie lējumi** for aluminum and non-ferrous products

JSC **Sidrabe** for the development of technological vacuum coating processes, development and manufacture of equipment



CEMEX Ltd.

Portland cement and composite Portland cement



**Enrique Garcia, CEMEX Ltd.
Chairman of the Board**

„We perceive the award as confirmation that we are heading in the right direction to achieve our goals, so that CEMEX can become an example or reference point in the sector. More than EUR 275 million worth of investments confirm the company's long-term vision and trust in Latvia and the entire region. In order to achieve success, cooperation is important, particularly with state institutions, since their role in forming an export platform and improving Latvia's competitiveness is invaluable.”

Website: www.cemex.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 53.4 million

Number of employees (2011): 303

Export countries: Estonia, Finland, Russia, Belarus, Lithuania

CEMEX Ltd. is one of the world's leading producers of building materials, providing services in more than 50 countries worldwide. In Latvia, CEMEX started its activities in 2005. The company produces cement, ready-mix concrete and inert materials. The construction of a new cement plant in Brocēni, equipped with the most modern and energy-efficient technology and purification equipment, was finalized in 2010, creating 100 new workplaces.

CEMEX is a global company. To exchange experience and the best practice, the company's team consists both of Latvian residents and foreign employees.

„A multicultural environment and international experience are among the means to introduce innovations in the company, resulting in new products, operational practices and a tolerant business environment directed to the client needs.”

CEMEX actively masters new export markets, increasing its presence in the Baltic States, Russia, Belarus and Scandinavia. The company constantly analyzes and assesses cooperation opportunities in other countries. By using various information channels, CEMEX's strategic analysis team studies the respective export market. On the basis of the acquired information, CEMEX makes strategic decisions on expanding the company's operations, export markets and the most suitable trade model.

„In its export countries, CEMEX organizes presentations, where the company's current and potential clients are invited to be introduced to its offer and discuss topical issues.”

CEMEX also organizes visits to Latvia for the existing and potential clients, where they have the opportunity to become acquainted with the plant's operations on the spot and discuss topical issues with the company's management.

The country's representations provide significant support for the company's market research – CEMEX and Latvian embassies have established excellent mutual cooperation.



JSC Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks

Flour, other food products, animal feed, bran



Kristaps Amsils, JSC Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks Chairman of the Board

„Each competition allows us to mobilize and evaluate ourselves from a different angle – already completed fruitful work, as well as those aspects and processes that require improvement. Therefore the company’s participation in the competition is a wonderful experience, confirming that a highly qualified and motivated staff and constant investment in developing products, are its main success factors.”

Website: www.dzirnavnieks.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 56.8 million

Number of employees (2011): 155

Export countries: Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Israel, Gambia, Thailand, Vietnam, Panama

JSC Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks was established in 1994. Since 2008, it belongs to the Estonian flour-processing company Tartu Mill. The company’s main operational directions are production of all types of wheat flour, semolina, flour mixtures, pasta, grain flakes, grits and animal feed.

Over the last few years, Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks has defined its strategic goal – to increase the company’s turnover on export markets. Compared to 2009, the company’s export turnover grew more than twofold in 2010. In 2011, it increased an additional 130 percent and currently amounts to 44 percent of total sales.

„Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks products on local and export markets are adapted to client needs. The company’s efficient production process ensures a competitive price. Due to the mastering of new export markets, the company’s production volume grows, increasing purchased and processed grain. Moreover, instead of grain, Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks exports flour and flour-processing products with high value added.”

The company’s export development concept envisages attracting specialists in the strategically most important countries. Therefore, alongside export managers, Dobeles Dzirnāvnieks has trade representatives in Lithuania and Poland. The company’s representative in the Netherlands attracts clients from the so-called third countries.

„When choosing export countries, a study is conducted to assess their potential, cooperation guarantees, competitors and logistics. The initial sources of information are the company’s cooperation partners – specialists in their own areas, aware of all market nuances. At the moment, considerable emphasis is on export to third countries.”



JSC Severstāļat

Various types of steel products



**Andrejs Aleksejevs, JSC Severstāļat
Chairman of the Board**

„In 2009, when domestic metal consumption fell, Severstāļat was ready to switch to export supply. We are currently selling steel production on nine markets, from Scandinavia to Central Europe. Each region has its own specifics, determining consumption and price dynamics. At the moment, we choose the countries that we will supply our production to, ensuring the highest sales efficiency and additional profit.”

Website: www.ssl.lv,
www.severstallat.eu

Turnover (2011): LVL 121.6 million

Number of employees (2011): 190

Export countries: Poland, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Lithuania, Estonia

JSC Severstāļat was established in 1992. In 20 years it has grown from a cargo transportation company to the Baltic States' leader in metal trade and processing.

Severstāļat exists only because there are clients, who want to purchase its production, therefore the company's priorities are its clients and their needs. Their feedback is carefully considered. If they want new packing, Severstāļat technologists develop it. If several clients are interested in a new production service, the company assesses economic considerations and sets up new equipment.

By introducing new products on the market, the company facilitates its development, sets and achieves new and bold goals. JSC Severstāļat is delighted that its production creates high added value and contributes to the country's economy and economic development.

„We are proud that our production fosters Latvia's recognition abroad, since it has „Made in Latvia” written on it.”

In choosing export markets, Severstāļat establishes their potential, since each market has five percent of consumers willing to change their suppliers. Therefore, regular market studies are conducted.

„We are well aware that our production is not unique – our steel product qualities are set by standards. Thus, to attract the said five percent, we offer not only products, but also „client wishes” – quality steel production, cut, packed and delivered.”

Each year Severstāļat participates in subcontractors' exhibitions in the company's regions of interest. Moreover, Severstāļat clients are invited to visit and witness the company's production process with their own eyes. The company's brand is actively used by Philips, Konecranes, Greif, Snaige, Nibe, etc.





JSC Baltijas Gumijas fabrika

Rubber compounds and technical rubber products



Aleksandrs Kernožickis,
JSC Baltijas Gumijas fabrika
Chairman of the Board

„Export growth has always been among the company’s main strategic goals. During the crisis, many governments, hoping that their economies will return to growth faster, decided to make considerable investments in in these sectors. Therefore, the demand for technical rubber products grew.”

Website: www.bgfrubber.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 2.7 million

Number of employees (2011): 67

Export countries: Germany, Belarus, Finland, Estonia, Sweden

Baltijas Gumijas fabrika is the largest manufacturer of rubber compounds and technical rubber products in the Baltic States, ensuring a full manufacturing cycle – from product development and formulation to mass production.

„The company has significant experience and ample opportunities in supplying rubber compounds and technical rubber products to the European Union and CIS countries.”

By using high-quality raw materials, Baltijas Gumijas fabrika specialists quickly develop new formulations and improve existing ones to manufacture rubber compounds in accordance with various specific exploitation conditions, including color spectrum, in compliance with European quality standard DIN, EN, SIS, GOST and TU requirements. The company’s database contains a wide assortment of rubber compounds with more than 2,000 formations, based on natural and synthetic rubber.

The company’s technical rubber products are designed for various sectors – agriculture, rail and municipal transport, chemical industry, mechanical engineering, automotive industry, construction, as well as everyday purposes.

„Baltijas Gumijas fabrika’s export market was mostly mastered during trade missions, by participating in exhibitions, conferences and establishing close contacts with potential clients.”

Baltijas Gumijas fabrika’s export countries are chosen on the basis of marketing research results. First and foremost, they are German and Scandinavian markets, where the company’s production is particularly demanded in the automotive industry and railway infrastructure.





Gamma-A Ltd.

Sprats in oil, 250 gram glass jar



Jūlija Locika,
representative of Gamma-A Ltd.

„Despite the crisis and supposedly negative prospects for growth, the minds of Latvia’s businessmen are chock full of ideas, creating new products and finding new markets. It’s all a matter of attitude and the ability to continue moving forward.”

Website: www.gamma-a.lv
Turnover (2011): LVL 19.6 million
Number of employees (2011): 630
Export countries: 44, including Brazil, USA, New Zealand, Australia, Japan

Gamma-A was established in 1995. The company produces around 140 types of canned fish – Atlantic fish products, herring, mackerel, sardines, sardinella, cod liver pate, sprat pate, fish rissoles and noisettes.

Due to its internal control system, Gamma-A closely monitors its production process and raw fish quality. The company produces its own cans, ensuring consistent quality and an additional guarantee to its production.

„The idea about our product, submitted for the competition, came about when the equipment for producing sprats in unprecedented packaging – elegant glass jars – became available to the company. By participating in the Export and Innovation Award 2011, organized by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the company gained greater recognition and popularity on the market.”

To develop new product types, Gamma-A conducts surveys among its clients regarding the required improvements in terms of taste, appearance and packaging. The company also researches the latest global technologies and innovative technical options to improve its production process.

Gamma-A regularly participates in international food industry exhibitions in Moscow, Brussels, Cologne, etc., presenting itself and its latest products. During these exhibitions, the company establishes new contacts, choosing potential cooperation partners from a business perspective.

„The biggest benefit to selling canned sprats on local and export markets is the company’s recognition, since this is the way Gamma-A is popularized worldwide. It is proof that we are among the world’s competitive companies, appreciated and desirable cooperation partner in many countries.”





JSC Krāsainie lējumi

Aluminum and non-ferrous products



Jurijs Drobotovs,
JSC Krāsainie lējumi
Chairman of the Council

„Export allows us to sell quality products produced in Latvia in those countries that are considered economic leaders. Moreover, the quality of our products is consistently high. By taking part in the Export and Innovation Award 2011, Krāsainie lējumi has gained wider recognition.”

Website: www.kl.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 39.19 million

Number of employees (2011): 96

Export countries: Germany, Cyprus, United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Vietnam

Krāsainie lējumi processes non-ferrous metals, produces LED luminaries, city infrastructure products – lanterns, benches, lighting columns, casts metals, processes non-ferrous scrap metals, produces technical castings (housings, casings, fastenings, etc.) and household objects.

When developing and improving Krāsainie lējumi products, experienced employees assess market demand and supply. The company's products are improved periodically, taking into account demand, production opportunities and possibilities for optimizing costs.

„When new product is developed, a sample is prepared and tested later on. In case of positive feedback, the company considers its mass production.”

At the same time, the company makes estimates and analyzes similar product prices. The idea is implemented if Krāsainie lējumi is certain the product is unique, sufficiently comfortable, its price matches demand on the market, and capital investment is in compliance with the company's potential profit.

„Krāsainie lējumi usually masters export markets by visiting the sector's exhibitions abroad, seeking potential cooperation partners.”

The Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, which cooperates with many similar foreign institutions, also assists in promoting the company's products. Information about Krāsainie lējumi and its products is included on the agency's website, appearing in the mass media and reaching potential clients.



JSC Sidrabe

Development of technological vacuum coating processes, development and manufacture of equipment



Nils Veidemanis,
JSC Sidrabe Chairman of the Board

„Our team’s cornerstone is positive and open communication. The best driving force is a clear-cut goal to be achieved all together. New ideas at JSC Sidrabe are generated via exchange of opinion.”

Website: www.sidrabe.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 3.9 million

Number of employees (2011): 90

Export countries: USA, Japan, EU

JSC Sidrabe is a high-tech company that designs technological vacuum coating processes and technology-intensive equipment for the coating of foil, 3D articles, glass and various powders. The company also undertakes contract research work and provides technical maintenance of the equipment. The materials produced by JSC Sidrabe are environment-friendly.

The technologies and equipment designed by the company are applied in various industries, mostly in solar power, scientific and research projects, production of specialised glass, electronics, health care, production of consumer goods. JSC Sidrabe has also developed a unique technology for the coating of lithium.

„Laptop computers, mobile telephones mostly operate on lithium ion batteries – the arrival of the new technology will make the batteries much lighter, less expensive, and increase their capacity.”

During the product design and upgrades process, the company maintains constant co-operation with scientific institutions in Latvia and abroad. Regular monitoring and analysis of the market situation, competitors, potential customers are also highly important.

„The greatest myth about innovations and entrepreneurship in Latvia is that everything can happen by itself, free of charge and without any investment.”

The company believes that an idea is worth implementing the moment there is demand for it. New products are designed based on the company’s know-how and experience, and in accordance with market requirements.

For the purpose of expansion into new markets, the company participates in international fairs, pays direct visits to potential customers, and researches markets, whereas the choice of the company’s export markets is determined by the demand for a given product in the particular country. JSC Sidrabe is an innovative company that makes products with high added value, therefore the company’s products are exported to industrially developed countries.

Participation in the Export and Innovation Award 2011 increased Sidrabe’s profile on the Latvian market and with state authorities and institutions.



Category Best Exporter in the Group of Small-sized Companies



1st place – **AmberCRO** Ltd. for clinical trials of medication, drugs and other products

2nd place – **PAA** Ltd. for bathtubs, washbasins and shower trays

3rd place – **Latlaft** Ltd. for handmade wooden log cabins

Recognition –

Mediteks Ltd. for medical cotton wool

Real Sound Lab Ltd. for loudspeaker and headphone equalizer technology CONEQ



AmberCRO Ltd.

Clinical trials of medications, drugs and other products



Jūlija Gabrusenoka,
AmberCRO Ltd. Head

„Because we are a family company, our operations are based on trust and mutual assistance. All employees are ready to help each other. Therefore all problems are solved instantly.”

Website: www.amber-cro.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 936,000

Number of employees (2011): 22

Export countries: Germany, Austria, UK, France, USA, Canada, Switzerland, Poland

AmberCRO Ltd. organizes clinical trials in Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus and Russia. In these countries, the company offers a full spectrum of services in order to conduct them. AmberCRO management emphasizes that clinical trials are not pharmaceutical companies' experiments with ill people, but a well-organized and strictly-monitored process, one aspect in developing new medication and combating disease.

AmberCRO is a team of highly motivated professionals, capable of providing top notch quality services for reasonable prices. The company's values are loyalty, high quality and swift solutions to situations at hand.

„All employees, when starting out at the company, are trained and correspondingly prepared. They are trained by the company's management. Therefore, it is easier to maintain AmberCRO-style operations. Constant quality services have become the company's standard.”

The company constantly improves employee qualifications, increases their experience and raises service quality.

„Services are the main export product of AmberCRO Ltd. Depending on client location, a map of export countries is created.”

A number of AmberCRO clients call or write e-mails to the company, since it is already known worldwide. The other segment is addressed by the company via conferences and business meetings. The company also makes direct calls and writes e-mails to potential clients.

AmberCRO points out that the biggest myth regarding innovation in business activity is that it is impossible to engage in business activity and develop new and competitive products in Latvia. According to the company, it is of utmost importance to believe in personal capabilities.

When participating in the Export and Innovation Award 2011, organized by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, AmberCRO realized there are many businessmen in Latvia, who continue functioning and developing successfully despite difficult conditions.





PAA Ltd.

Bathtubs, washbasins and shower trays



Pēteris Treicis, PAA Ltd. Director

„Taking into account that a family usually purchases quality plumbing fixtures only a couple of times in a lifetime, PAA reached this capacity a long time ago, exceeding the needs of the Latvian market several times over. Therefore, to prove our capabilities outside Latvia was a logical and necessary step. We feel the world’s breath on foreign markets, face various competitors, helping us avoid stagnation.”

Website: www.paabaths.com,
www.paa.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 1.7 million

Number of employees (2011): 65

Export countries: Austria, Belarus, France, Estonia, Russia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Ukraine, Germany, Sweden

Established in 1993, PAA Ltd. is one of the first and leading manufacturers of plumbing fixtures in the Baltic States with an export network in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Scandinavia and Russia. A creative and innovative approach to design and manufacturing allows PAA to occupy a unique niche among various other manufacturers. Both in Latvia and other countries, the PAA brand is associated with collections of cast stone and colorful bathrooms. PAA products successfully combine artistic values and ergonomic functionality.

„PAA currently employs around 70 people. One of the company’s main conditions has always been to ensure that its employees feel like-minded and jointly participate in implementing the company’s vision and goals.”

PAA follows global plumbing fixture trends, analyzes customer wishes and demand, organizes brainstorming sessions, ideas banks and design contests. PAA is aware that it is capable of creating unconventional and functionally diverse products.

Therefore, when releasing products on the market, it is necessary to precisely segment each one, carry out its marketing campaign in accordance with the required information for the corresponding segment, sales channels, etc.

„There are many excellent ideas, interesting designs and innovative products in their development stages in Latvia. However, many of them do not make it to the manufacturing stage, since Latvian design is not recognized as a valuable brand on foreign markets (Scandinavian, German and Italian brands are demanded).”

PAA’s idea generation process is often initiated by its clients or foreign dealers. The market mostly determines the company’s next product.

To master export markets, PAA participates in various trade missions and international exhibitions. Via the Internet, PAA analyzes the market, its competitors, promotes the company’s brand on the market. Since 1999, PAA has made excellent contacts with Ukraine and Lithuania. In Sweden, France and partially Poland, PAA also cooperates with the large plumbing fixture corporations and, since 2001, also produces for their brands. In 2009, PAA established a joint venture in Belarus.



Latlaft Ltd.

Handmade wooden log cabins



Eriks Eisaks, Latlaft Ltd.
Head of Sales Department

„Using the trademark Best Exporter and recognition by the state is really helping us build customers’ confidence. The Norwegians are skeptical about producers from Eastern Europe, therefore such recognition lets us stand out from the rest.”

Website: www.latlaft.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 980,000

Number of employees (2011): 37

Export countries: Norway

Latlaft Ltd. produces handmade log house frames in Latvia, while all the necessary construction supplies are assembled and the construction of the houses takes place in Norway. They are mostly erected at Norwegian ski resorts and used as families’ second or even third holiday homes.

Due to circumstances beyond the company’s control, participant of Export and innovation award 2011 Latlaft Norge Ltd. is no longer in business, but the new company Latlaft Ltd. was established by people who partly owned Latlaft Norge Ltd. The new company bought facilities and equipment, hired the same specialists as its predecessor.

„We try to bring together the best log cabins builders in Latvia, therefore the main criterion in staffing is applicants’ past job experience. The same goes for other areas.”

Expansion into other markets is done via direct visits, participation in fairs, Internet advertising, and through the specialized press. The company’s sales benefit the most from positive feedback regarding the company’s past projects, which the company uses in its marketing activity.

„The product is aimed specifically at the Norwegian market. Logs are assembled according to a technology called „Norwegian corner joint”. On other markets, there is higher demand for log houses built in other styles.”

In product development, Latlaft Ltd. keeps a close eye on Norway’s construction regulations, experimenting with various solutions to find the best ones, and sometimes also analyzes what improvements have been made by rivals. The company has realized that the quality of its products has to be constantly improved, learning from past mistakes. Every customer has to be fully satisfied with the product so he or she provide positive feedback.

However, one should be cautious with innovations where traditional log houses are concerned. The company once had an idea to produce all wooden pillars mechanically, thus creating much more complicated and interesting products, but the customer did not accept this solution, preferring rougher traditional handicraft. Innovative materials can only be used in places that no one can see, and they mostly serve to improve the building’s thermal efficiency.





Mediteks Ltd.

Medical cotton wool



**Valērijs Bočarovs, Mediteks Ltd.
Chairman of the Board**

„By taking part in the competition we gained experience and conviction that there is much to improve. Our company is unique, since we are the only producers of medical cotton wool in Latvia. Therefore we believe there is no sense in importing similar items from China, Turkey or other countries.”

Website: www.mediteks.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 457,000

Number of employees (2011): 14

Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Italy

Mediteks Ltd. is a modern company, which produces medical absorbent cotton from 100 % cotton and distributes other medical products.

There are various types of Mediteks absorbent cotton on the market - rolls, zig-zags, 50, 100, 200 and 500 gram packages, etc.

„Initially, Mediteks was a wholesale company, purchasing and selling absorbent cotton. However, our suppliers did not have sufficient product selection to satisfy Latvian buyers. Therefore we came up with an idea to launch our own production. We bought the equipment in Poland and Hungary in 1997. Since then, we have been medical absorbent cotton producers.”

A large share of Mediteks production is exported to neighbor states, Scandinavia and Germany.

The company constantly develops, conducts market segmentation studies and estimates the demand of potential buyers.

„Mediteks widely uses a complex marketing strategy, which manifests itself as influencing demand with goods, prices, companies-buyers and sales promotion methods.”

Mediteks employees have frequent business trips to inform about the company's production in person, demonstrate its samples and participate in various exhibitions. To expand export, Mediteks representatives make systematic direct calls and send written information about the company's production. Mediteks buyers can visit the company, become familiar with its products, their quality and technological process improvements. The company's client database is constantly being expanded.

In the future, Mediteks plans to upgrade its equipment, improving the company's products.



Real Sound Lab Ltd.

Loudspeaker and headphone equalizer technology CONEQ



Viesturs Sosārs, Real Sound Lab Ltd. Chairman of the Board

„Real Sound Lab export choice is based on a combination of three factors: a suitable and active local partner, market size, the overall economic situation on the corresponding geographic market. The company has been offering CONEQ technology related products since 2007, constantly improving them, adapting to specific uses and upgrading their functionality.”

Website: www.realsoundlab.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 470,000

Number of employees (2011): 7 (including those employed in other countries – 12)

Export countries: Japan, USA, South Korea, Germany, China (Hong Kong)

Real Sound Lab Ltd. operates in the audio engineering sector. The company offers a self-developed loudspeaker and headphone equalizer technology called CONEQ. Real Sound Lab research and development activities are basically focused in Latvia, however, the company has structural units for licensing in the United States, Japan and Taiwan. CONEQ technology is offered for consumer electronic market consumption – for licensing in the products of various electronics manufacturers, for example, TVs, home and vehicle audio, computers and mobile devices. On the professional audio market, Real Sound Lab offers CONEQ measurement and equalizer software, as well as APEQ series equalizer equipment.

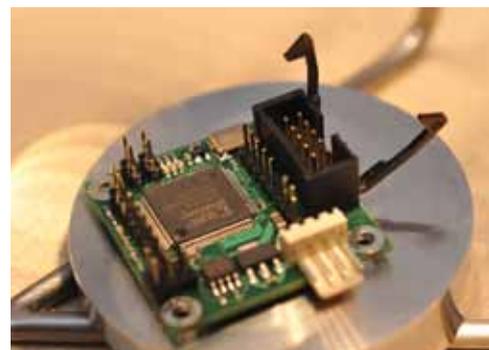
The Latvia-based company employs only seven specialists, therefore, when choosing new team members, additional attention is drawn to complementing competence and similar values.

„Most often, to conquer new markets outside Latvia, depending on industries and geographic location, we attract local business developers. In case of sufficient activity, we consider establishing a structural unit and participate in specific industry exhibitions relatively frequently.”

Within the limits of its possibilities, the company attempts to ensure that the development of its production depends on market demands and desires. When introducing its product, Real Sound Lab concluded that the licensing business cycle is considerably longer than usually in B2C or „business-to-consumer” business models, therefore sufficient financial, development and sales resources are required to implement this process.

„In Latvia, it is traditionally considered that the invention of products is the same as their innovation. In reality, however, inventing is only relatively and surprisingly slightly connected with innovating – commercializing inventions.”

Due to the company’s participation in the Export and Innovation Award 2011, Real Sound Lab Ltd. was able to compare the assessment of its export capability with other participants’ achievements in this regard.



Category

Innovative Product



1st place – **GRANDEG** Ltd. for heating boiler GD TURBO

2nd place – Firm **BF-ESSE** Ltd. for dietary supplement Fitesten

3rd place – **Rišon Inter** Ltd. for passenger platform of fibreglass composites

Recognition –

Getliņi EKO Ltd. for electricity and heat from landfill gas

Inovativās konstrukcijas Ltd. for reusable mobile cardboard potty for children Pipin

Tieto Latvia Ltd. for software Card Suite

Unda Ltd. for canned fish Smokets in Oil



GRANDEG Ltd.

Heating boiler GD TURBO



**Andris Lubins, GRANDEG Ltd.
Member of the Board**

„Generation of new ideas is a day-to-day process at GRANDEG Ltd.: the company’s very existence and development model is to constantly think of and come up with ideas how to further improve the product.”

Website: www.grandeg.com
Turnover (2011): LVL 1.3 million
Number of employees (2011): 30
Export countries: Russia, Ukraine, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia, UK

GRANDEG Ltd. is a metalworking company, since its establishment specialised in the design and manufacture of modern automated wood pellet boilers. Its production engineers have designed new, unique wood pellet burners and have tailored the water boilers and furnaces for use with this fuel material. The capacity of boilers manufactured by the company is sufficient for heating family homes, cottages, apartment buildings, public facilities and industrial premises and even entire villages.

The company employs professionals with high creative potential, enthusiasts in their trade: the team is assembled from candidates, that demonstrate creative thinking and a desire to succeed and gain fulfilment in their profession.

„The core motivation to develop the GD TURBO pellet boiler was not just to improve an existing process, but to achieve an excellent new result.”

While developing and marketing this product both on the home market and foreign ones, the company has come to a number of conclusions: the boilers must meet specific local requirements; customers must be offered a comprehensive product range; market trends must be considered continuously, and the product must correspondingly be improved using the newest available technological solutions: both the company’s internal resources and the discoveries of researchers abroad must be used to create an environmentally friendly, ergonomic boiler, produced to a high standard.

„An idea is worth implementing if it will achieve several goals: the product will become more convenient to use, „greener” (i.e., improve its eco-technology features), financially more attractive to customers, and promote better production technologies. If the answer to these questions is “yes”, the new idea proceeds to experimental production.”

The greatest myth about innovation and business here is the belief that everyone else in the world is capable of innovation, but not we in Latvia.

Participation in the Export and Innovation Award 2011 contest gave GRANDEG Ltd. a sense of satisfaction with what it has achieved and the confidence that the company is valued and needed in this country.





Firm BF-ESSE Ltd.

Dietary supplement Fitesten



Juris Rubens, Dr. med, BF-ESSE Ltd. Chairman of the Board

„We have been working with innovative products already for 20 years. Each component is a new innovation. An innovation that is not applicable in practice is not an innovation! The greatest benefit from participating in the competition is that our product is demanded on the market and offers practical aid to people, as well as the realisation that our work has not been in vain.”

Website: www.fitesten.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 611,600

Number of employees (2011): 43

Export countries: Lithuania, Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Ukraine

The Latvian medical and biotechnology company BF-ESSE Ltd. started operating in 1991. One of its main business activities is the development, research and organisation of the production and marketing of new generation natural preparations on the medication and biologically-active supplements market.

The first noteworthy result of the company’s efforts and resources is Fitesten – a fully-developed, clinically-tested dietary supplement that is already being produced and sold on the market.

Fitesten is a natural product made on the basis of pine needle extract. The preparation helps to improve the condition of the stomach, stimulates secretion of mucus, facilitates regeneration of gastric mucosa, helps to heal damaged gastric mucosa and the mucous membrane of the duodenum, also helps to fight heartburn.

„Fitesten is a universal product, necessary and useful to every individual.”

Work on the concept of the product began already 20 years ago. Now BF-ESSE is preparing to implement new ideas, for instance, develop a number of preparations for improving liver function, immune modulators, and antibacterials made of plants that are in great demand with the public.

„When entering a new market we offer discounts on our products, distribute our brochures and place information at various outlets. We offer active training to our foreign partners, and support their marketing campaigns. In every such country, however, the specific procedure for introducing new products has to be taken into consideration.”

The company’s team is built on the basis of competition, and only the best candidates are selected to work at the company. BF-ESSE Ltd. continues its development by implementing scientific projects – technologies and regulations for production and quality management, later upgrading the technological process and conducting clinical studies. The company co-operates with JSC Biolats, Riga Stradiņš University and the food safety, animal health and environment scientific institute Bior.





Rišon Inter Ltd.

Passenger platform of fibreglass composites



Zamuels Zalmansons,
Rišon Inter Ltd.
Chairman of the Board

„Our company’s products are distinctly innovative. Such Latvian-produced commodities are well regarded worldwide. Hopefully, people in Latvia too appreciate talent in generating ideas and successfully entering world markets, and that in the future, along with a healthier economy, we will have more local orders.”

Website: www.rishon-inter.lv
Turnover (2011): LVL 515,000
Number of employees (2011): 17
Export countries: EU, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Turkmenistan

Rišon Inter Ltd., established in 1997, produces fibreglass composite beams and various protective glass products, even bullet-proof glass. The largest segment of the company’s customers are Latvian and foreign banks, embassies, as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other authorities of Latvia.

Rišon Inter started to produce fibreglass composite materials in 2005. The company’s production facility in Salaspils is 3,000 square metres in area and equipped with special production lines where various fibreglass composite beams are produced. Fibreglass composites are used extensively in the construction of port facilities and bridges, road construction, railway infrastructure, energy, and others. A warehouse for the company’s end-products is also located on the plant’s territory.

„We do not spare funds for marketing in the development of our brand.”

For the purpose of drawing new clients, the company participates in the key industry fairs, offering visitors various advertising materials and samples. Prospective customers – company managers and heads – on a regular basis are invited to visit the company and become acquainted with facilities and structures built using the company’s products.

Rišon Inter products have been used in the construction of bridge constructions and wharves at the Freeport of Riga, passenger platforms of the Latvijas Dzelzceļš railway company, pedestrian bridges in Riga’s Ķengarags neighbourhood, and others. Abroad, Rišon Inter products have been used in the construction of railway platforms in Moscow, mobile telephony towers in Tajikistan, lighting towers in Uzbekistan, and more.

„In marketing a product, it is important to develop good relations with at least a couple of similar companies that may provide valuable advice regarding the specifics of a given market. Once we know them, we open a representation office in the country. Rišon Inter has its own dealership networks in Russia – Moscow and Saint Peterburg.”

Participation in the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia-organised competition „Export and Innovation Award 2011” not only generated publicity for the company, but thanks to the competition, it also received several new offers.



Getliņi EKO Ltd.

Electricity and heat from landfill gas



**Imants Stirāns, Getliņi EKO Ltd.
Chairman of the Board**

„Targeted investment in research and effective daily operations in accordance with the objectives set have brought optimal results.”

Website: www.getlini.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 7.5 million

Number of employees (2011): 83

Export countries: None

Getliņi EKO Ltd. is a technologically-advanced and environmentally-friendly ecological waste management company. It sets an example in the production of energy from renewable resources, organic farming and environmental management.

Getliņi EKO Ltd. ecological landfill takes care of ecological waste management in Riga region. It is a unique example of implementation of compatible courses of action. The energy produced is used for heating, water treatment equipment, growing tomatoes in greenhouses and other activities. The company also cares about the environment and provides the energy necessary for economic development.

„Ideas are generated in the process of work and collectively assessed from the financial and technological point of view in the company. The company has limited staff turnover and new employees are recruited on the basis of their professional knowledge.”

Developing and improving products, Getliņi EKO Ltd. assesses the best internationally available technologies conservatively, and new products are being integrated into existing operations. The company deals with ecological waste management since 1998, but electricity and heat production has become one of the core sectors in recent years. The idea has developed gradually on the background of technological developments in the industry. Getliņi EKO Ltd. produces 30 to 35 thousand megawatt hours of electricity per year.

„Regarding the biggest myths about innovation and entrepreneurship in Latvia, it is clear that the word “innovation” is mostly associated with information and similar technologies.”

By participating in the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011, the company has gained positive publicity.





INOVATIVAS KONSTRUKCIJAS



Inovativās konstrukcijas Ltd.

Reusable mobile cardboard potty for children Pipin



Līga Brasliņa,
Inovativās konstrukcijas Ltd. Head
„Export and Innovation Award 2011 was public appreciation for us, which is crucial for promoting products on the market and the inner conviction of the promotion of other new products on the market. Inner assurance is particularly important in creating new products.”

Website: www.pipin.lv
Turnover (2011): LVL 2,000
Employees (2011): 1
Export countries: USA, Ireland, Italy, Germany

The personal experience of the head of the company Inovativās konstrukcijas, in raising her children, helped create an innovative product – a mobile child potty Pipin. A product that simplifies the active lifestyle of young parents now successfully conquers various markets, as evidenced by the good sales figures.

„We started with the mentally and geographically-closer countries, but the export experience in the last half year has shown that southern countries are more open to this innovation. Anyway, it is food for thought for the export strategy of our future products.”

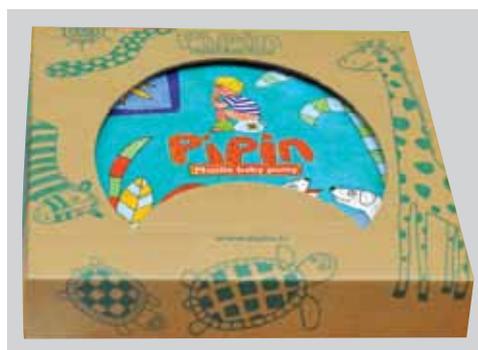
Creators of the idea continue to work on new products. For the present, the company works with outsourcing, but in the future there could be a permanent team. Any idea appears by joining non-traditional views on traditional things with a constructive market analysis. The investment needed for implementation of an idea is reviewed further, and the idea is tested in a target group.

„Any idea matures for at least two years, and only 10 % of the created and conceptually-developed ideas experience implementation. There have been cases where we see our conceptual idea after some time – it has been developed by a third party.”

The main conclusion that can be drawn by working on innovative products is that innovation requires significant investment in marketing.

„The myth of entrepreneurship and innovation in Latvia is that there are myths. As every nation, also Latvia has remarkably creative, enterprising and constructive businessmen. And vice versa. Referring to any other myths or stereotypes is one’s own individual interpretation, an individual opinion.”

The company continues to search for new markets by participating in international exhibitions, and seeking personal contacts.





Tieto Latvia Ltd.

Software Card Suite



**Māris Ozoliņš, Tieto Latvia Ltd.
Member of the Board**

„We continuously follow the growth of our customers and listen to their needs. It is important to deliver modern, high quality solutions with advanced usability. We follow the market and technology trends of time and implement our customers’ future aspirations in our products, even before the clients have thought of them.”

Website: www.tieto.com/cards

Turnover (2011): LVL 21.2 million

Employees (2011): 613

Export countries: CIS countries, Western Region and Scandinavia, Lithuania, Estonia

Tieto is the leading information technology (IT) service company in Northern Europe, Tieto Latvia Ltd. – in the Baltics. It specializes in the development, implementation and maintenance of complex and large-scale information systems that are crucial for companies in their daily operations. Tieto Latvia provides IT solutions for various sectors of the economy, including finance, retail and logistics, power industry and infrastructure, as well as the public sector.

The product developed by Tieto Latvia specialists and proposed for the competition, Card Suite, is a payment card solution for issuing, acquiring, switching, clearing, settlement and fraud management. It is used by more than 400 banks and large payment card transaction processing centres in 30 countries worldwide.

„Card Suite is acknowledged by industry analysts as one of the world leading multinational card management systems.”

20 years since the initiation of the development of software for payment cards, the company has accumulated wide experience in dealing with financial institutions throughout the world. Knowing the trends of the market and technologies, customer expectations and requirements of international payment cards, Tieto Latvia wanted to create a better solution that would help operate more efficiently.

„The biggest benefit of developing our product is the confidence that we are capable to create world-standard solutions that are demanded in the market. We can grow with our customers. We are the pioneers in the field of payment cards – the first Eastern European company that has developed software certified by MasterCard and VISA.”

The biggest myth about entrepreneurship and innovation in Latvia is that only something completely new and unique to the world is innovative, and it requires huge investments and the ability to tolerate failure, which is hard for such a small country. In fact, innovation can also be very small, for example, a new service, a process or a business model. Any company must be innovative.

Participation in the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011 gave confidence that our performance can be appreciated not only by customers all over the world, but also by the Latvian community.





Unda Ltd.

Canned fish Smokets in Oil



Juris Bubišs, Unda Ltd. Chairman of the Board

„Initially, the sale of the product started on the Russian market with great success, but in 2009, we adapted it to distribution in Germany. We created a special design for the packaging with gold stamping technique. Although expensive, it is exquisite, and it allows for the product to be retailed in the „premium“ category in Germany.

Website: www.cannedfish.lv,
www.tastytins.ru

Turnover (2011): LVL 5.82 million

Employees (2011): 306

Export countries: Russia, Germany, USA, Kazakhstan, Australia, Finland

Unda Ltd. was founded in 1992 in Engure, and it employs mostly local inhabitants. The company produces more than 50 types of canned fish from the Baltic Sea – Baltic herring, sprat, smelt and cod, as well as from ocean waters – herring, pilchard, sardine and mackerel. The company also owns a fishing vessel that provides fresh and quality raw material.

Smokets in Oil were created in 2008 as an alternative to Riga Sprats in Oil. The idea of the product was born at a time when the issue of the existence of canned Riga Sprats in Oil became topical after the claims from the European Union about supposedly too high levels of benzopyrene in smoked fish.

„Herring strips are used instead of Baltic herring and sprat in the production of Smokets. They are smoked in electric steamers, compressed in a box and coated with vegetable oil.“

No chemical preservatives, colourings or flavour enhancers or boosters are used. The topicality of the product could increase due to local raw materials – quotas for Baltic herring and sprat fishing in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga.

Until 2011, semi-done Smokets were produced by smoking fish in a chamber acquired in 2004. However, its power was insufficient, and in 2010 Unda began to purposefully explore options for the purchase of a new furnace. The company submitted a project to the Rural Support Service on investment of LVL 18 035 870 for the purchase of such a furnace in 2011. Already installed, a variety of smoking programs are being tested.

Unda's products are considered ecologically pure, which is important to today's consumer.

„One thing is to manufacture something new, the other – to find a market. We export to both Russia and Germany – two different markets. This product has even managed to be named as „the 21st century sprats“ in Russia.“

The company's approach to conquer new markets – to be stable in existing target markets, evaluate the size of a market, the traditions in the use of canned fish, and participate in exhibitions.



Category

Import Substitute Product



1st place – **Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta** Ltd. for system JS GPS Tracking

2nd place – **NP Foods** Ltd. for Laima Juice Candies

3rd place – **Rotons** Ltd. for thermo-insulated water gauge wells PM400 and PM500

Recognition –

New Rosme Ltd. for lingerie and corsetry

Rauzas kompānija Ltd. for furniture collection MINT Light Living



Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta Ltd.

System JS GPS Tracking



Jānis Turlajs,
Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta Ltd.
Chairman of the Board

„Jāņa sēta has been publishing maps since 1992. The company's development has been very dynamic, and by now it has become a modern company and a leader on the Baltic map-making market. This was achieved thanks to the ever-expanding range of services offered by Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta, from original ideas and quality printing to services in geographical information systems and programming areas.”

Website: www.kartes.lv, www.seko.lv
Turnover (2011): LVL 1.06 million
Number of employees (2011): 36
Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Belarus, Germany, Netherlands, Poland

The team of Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta has been built over a period of 20 years – most staff members have been working at the company for at least ten years. The customer has always been the company's main advisor in product development.

„We generate ideas in dialogue with customers and during company meetings. Then the ideas are compiled and market analysis performed. Whether an idea is worth implementing is initially determined by the company's management relying on, so to speak, its intuition based on experience and know-how. The final evaluation is provided by customers.”

The system JS GPS Tracking, winner of the Export and Innovation Award 2011, provides remote control of vehicles or any other objects on the map, and greatly facilitates a company's operational planning, offering stop locations to drivers and accounting reports to be submitted to the State Revenue Service, ensuring information for company heads on where employees are located, economizing on fuel. It has come about in 12 years, and continues to develop. Initially, global positioning system services relied on SMS messages. As mobile technologies continued development, the tracking service also evolved, and is now available to everyone.

The company's top and medium-level managers regularly upgrade their knowledge and information about market trends by attending industry-related seminars and fairs.

„We believe that the greatest myth about innovations in Latvia is the assumption that they are very complicated and expensive to use. Innovations are all around us, they make our day-to-day life easier and the world a smaller place. Anything you imagine is possible – if not, it is the basis for an innovation.”

Winning the Export and Innovations Award 2011 and knowing that the company's achievements are appreciated, encourages the staff of Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta to continue work on new products and innovations.



NP Foods Ltd.

Laima Juice Candies



Rolands Gulbis,
NP Foods Ltd.
Chairman of the Board

„I expect that in 2012, „economy flagships“ will be slowly floating about looking for new ways to pick up speed on both local and export markets. In 2012, export is a priority at NP Foods Group companies, which is not an easy task. We hope to be successful by competing with product quality. Laima’s corporate symbols have been received very well in China, but the main argument on all markets will be the uniqueness of Laima chocolates – we in Latvia have preserved the tradition of processing cocoa beans, making cocoa butter and preparing chocolate that may safely be considered 100% home-made.”

Website: www.laima.lv,
www.npfoods.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 39.75 million

Number of employees (2011): 600

Export countries: Germany, UK, Scandinavia, USA, Israel, Australia, Japan, Mongolia, Russia

Management, marketing and logistics services company NP Foods Ltd. ensures uniform management and production development for Latvia’s leading confectioneries – JSC Laima and JSC Staburadze, juice and beverage producer JSC Gutta, as well as Staburadzes konditoreja Ltd., Saldumu tirdznieciba Ltd. and logistics services company NP Logistics.

In product development and upgrades, the companies first of all strive to preserve and develop their classic values and traditions. But in the development of new products, innovative methods are the main precondition.

Both these principles are reflected in the latest product – juice candies. For the first time, synergy of two companies, JSC Laima and JSC Gutta, has been used to create an innovative product entirely from natural ingredients and without preservatives, furthermore, the juice candies fully meet basic healthy food principles.

„The new product was created in order to expand our offer of natural products for our smallest customers – children.”

Thanks to such strategy, the company has hit the spot – consumers have a high opinion of the product that meets basic healthy food principles and is top quality. Whereas the recognition of the new product as a Import Substitute Product has first of all increased the company’s competitiveness on the local market, positioning JSC Laima juice candies as a successful product for the local market. Second, the product is also becoming increasingly popular on export markets.

Generation of new ideas at the company is based on consumer wishes, market studies and cooperation with consumers. Development of every product goes through a certain life cycle: from idea to solution, followed by tests, analysis, necessary improvements, and so on – until the final end-product. On the other hand, the company’s team is motivated to strive for ever better results, orienting themselves toward development and new opportunities.

„The greatest stereotype about innovations is the belief that they have to be something huge. No! The most profitable innovations in the world are little things. Innovations in our business deal with the introduction of a new product. ”

Expanding into new markets, NP Foods analyzes competition, market traditions and consumer habits, as well as cooperates with local distributors.



Rotons Ltd.

Thermo-insulated water gauge wells PM400 and PM500



Armands Mucenieks,
Rotons Ltd. Director

„In order to expand into new markets, we start by collecting information. In every country we try to establish and maintain contacts with one or two professional enterprises that know local market requirements well. We have also participated in relevant fairs in Lithuania, Estonia, Germany. The development of exports is a gradual process: first there have to be products good enough to be exported, then markets must be sought.”

Website: www.rotons.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 770,000

Number of employees (2011): 9

Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Romania

Rotons Ltd. was established in 2005, the company's offices are located in Ādaži Region. It manufactures large-size plastic products using two types of technology: manual welding in making non-standard plastic parts and a rotating formation facility for serial manufacture.

The basis of the company's manufacturing process includes rotating formation facilities for the production of polyethylene and polypropylene parts and a polyurethane foam dosage facility. A combination of these technologies makes it possible for the company to manufacture plastic tanks with unique heat insulation characteristics.

The company's end-products include industrially manufactured sewage pumping stations, flow meter and gate valve pits, individual water meter connection pits with thermal insulation, plastic tanks, pallets and roadblocks.

„In the development and marketing of isothermal wells, our main conclusion is that a new product needs time. Previously we learned that products with such functionality could be bought abroad, and they were being offered to Latvian water management companies, while no one was manufacturing such products in Latvia. After an analysis of local climatic conditions, we decided to develop an alternative product.”

The goal of Rotons Ltd. is to develop, start manufacturing and release on the market at least two new products every year. The functionality and design of the new products are developed by a task force that includes members of the sales and production departments.

This year's novelty is the mass manufacture of two types of monolithic plastic tanks. The tanks – 3,000 and 5,000 liters in capacity, are designed for installation underground. The tanks may be used either as collectors or, if properly equipped, as septic tanks or biological water treatment facilities.

„During the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011, we received moral support and encouragement from our friends and partners.”





New Rosme Ltd.

Lingerie and corsetry



Edgars Štelmahers, New Rosme Ltd. Member of the Board

„New Rosme Ltd. is closer to the old European manufacturers than China, while for the Russian market, we are the manufacturer with a very competitive price, innovative design and high quality.”

Website: www.rosme.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 6.61 million

Number of employees (2011): 333

Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Czech Republic, UK, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Israel

Lingerie, corsetry, nightwear and swimwear company New Rosme Ltd. is one of the leading such manufacturers in the Baltics. New Rosme Ltd. was founded in 1952 when the company started sewing in Riga. In 1963, it became part of the company Rīgas Apģērbs, but in 1991 it regained independence. That year, cooperation began with the Swedish company – Swegmark of Sweden, whose line is lingerie design and sewing. It was a success, so in two years New Rosme Ltd. became a part of the holding company Swegmark Invest AB, which is a sole owner of New Rosme.

„New Rosme Ltd. is fast-developing and expanding. Investments and advanced technologies have a positive impact on the company that strives to be competitive in conquering new markets.”

The production capacity of New Rosme Ltd. enables it to make hundreds of thousands of production sets each month, and this number is growing.

Designs proposed to customers are fashionable. Collections successfully combine sophisticated design with functionality. Diverse materials are used – from exquisite lace to cotton simplicity that caters to every taste. Every detail is carefully thought over to ensure compliance with fashion trends and provide comfort. Bra designs by New Rosme are so diverse that any woman, regardless of her body’s characteristics, can find a suitable solution. The products of New Rosme are offered in a wide range of sizes. New Rosme offers also corsets, lingerie for expectant mothers, sleepwear, swimwear, singlets and bodices.

„To achieve creative inspiration for new collections, the company’s designers attend international exhibitions.”

Since May 2011, designers at New Rosme Ltd. gain new knowledge in modeling, trends in lingerie, colour combinations, materials and technology in the framework of the project of Association of Textile and Clothing Industry „Partnership Training of Companies of Light Industry and Related Industries”. The Association has signed an agreement with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia for the implementation of this project and receiving financing from the European Union structural funds.



Rauzas kompānija Ltd.

Furniture collection MINT Light Living



**Jānis Rauza, Rauzas kompānija Ltd.
Chairman of the Board**

„We follow the style trends and latest developments in the design field to make and improve our products. We attract designers, architects, we work a lot on the development of new products, we take into account customer needs, suggestions and feedback – we keep our finger on the pulse, assess the market situation and requirements, the latest trends – colours, textures, lines.”

Website: www.mintfurniture.lv,
www.rauzas.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 337,000

Number of employees (2011): 19

Export countries: Sweden, Germany, Austria, France, UK

Rauzas kompānija was founded in 1997, and it manufactures stylish furniture, interior items and accessories of high quality. The company makes furniture using century-old traditions, carpentry skill, high-quality materials and advanced technological equipment.

Defining criteria according to the company’s goals and philosophy, Rauzas kompānija carefully selects candidates for its team. New promising ideas appear in the company, thanks to the professional and creative team. In order to understand whether the idea is worth implementing, the demand in the market and style trends are assessed. The viability of an idea is considered over a longer period of time.

The key lesson learned from advancing a product on the market – one must work, work and again – work!

Participation in the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011 has helped Rauzas kompānija to realize that they are surrounded by many other companies with a strong and creative business potential.

„It was pleasing to see a lot of companies working actively and successfully in Latvia together in one place. It is the realisation that you are not alone!”

The company is currently using all possible methods to conquer new markets, and tries not to miss any opportunity. The company actively participates in international exhibitions, works on brand awareness and image building.

„Which market we are let into, there we export – there is no use in knocking at a closed door for a long time.”

The goal of Rauzas kompānija is to become one of the leading furniture manufacturers in Latvia and beyond.



Category

Industrial Design



1st place – **Computer Hardware Design** Ltd.
for CHD electronic cash register

2nd place – **AMERI** Ltd. for school uniform collections

3rd place – **Dizaina papīrlietas** Ltd. for candlestick Signs of Light

Recognition –

Wood & Textile Factory Ltd. (during competition – Annushkanu
Factory Ltd.) for wooden ironing board

Latvijas Biokosmētikas institūts Ltd. for beauty product line
Anna Liepa

Narciss Ltd. for women's clothing collection ZIZE

OT Stils Ltd. for collections by fashion designer Natālija Jansone,
Irina Koshakova and Anna Led



Computer Hardware Design SIA



Computer Hardware Design Ltd.

CHD electronic cash register



Olafs Blukis,
Computer Hardware Design Ltd.
Member of the Board

„We are working to become the leaders among automation system suppliers in trade. With persistent work, we have achieved our goal. However, we do not intend to stop. Each day, we raise our client service standards, providing faster and better services.”

Website: www.chd.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 1.8 million

Number of employees (2011): 35

Export countries: Lithuania, Switzerland, Ireland, Czech Republic, Malta, Greece, Denmark, Poland, Asian countries

Computer Hardware Design Ltd. was established in 1991. Since then the company has been operating in automation system trade, selling POS systems, barcode scanners or printers, digital scales, electronic cash registers, weighing, packaging and labeling equipment, computers and software. In 1994, in cooperation with Japanese partners, the company started to offer a new line of cash registers and POS systems under the brand CHD.

„Today, we are Latvia’s largest supplier of sales equipment to supermarket chains and professional retailers.”

In collaboration with Latvian software developers, the company has created an opportunity to ensure a connection between its products and the most popular financial accounting, manufacturing and distributing software in Latvia.

„We are constantly looking around to offer our clients the latest, best and most suitable solutions, making their work easier, more efficient and profitable.”

By competing on an international scale, the company has concluded that design is particularly important. Therefore its solution is always integrated in the overall production development process. Computer Hardware Design products are not mass consumption goods. Thus, when developing their design, it is necessary to take into account industry specifics and various other aspects, for example – the common trends of interior development, shapes and prevalent color shades, so that the products would blend in with company or store design concepts.

At the same time, it is also required to ensure the product’s functionality, ergonomics and convenient use, helping to be more successful when organizing client service. Moreover, beneath the product’s design, it is necessary to hide all the required technology and electronic components in such a way that any company worldwide would find the product convenient.





AMERI Ltd.

School Uniform Collections



Ginta Amerika,
AMERI Ltd. Director

„Export is highly important to AMERI as it accounts for the bulk of the company’s turnover. This means that we have to follow the trends and keep an eye on various novelties regarding materials, technologies, ecology and fashion. Export also ensures that we are constantly in good shape, offering top quality, management and competitiveness.”

Website: www.ameri.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 206,000

Number of employees (2011): 13

Export countries: Norway, Denmark, Germany

AMERI Ltd. was established in 2006 with the aim to produce exclusive knitwear with high added design value, made of environment-friendly and natural materials.

„The mission of AMERI is to renew the tradition of knitwear production in Latvia in a new quality. Export partners are offered collections designed by the company, and AMERI also makes garments as per customer desires.”

AMERI offers the following collections: Daudzpunkte (Ellipsis), Putni (Birds), Skapis (Wardrobe), a collection for young mothers called Ameri Mama’s, collection jointly developed by Norwegian designer Natalia Leikis and AMERI called Ameri by Leikis, as well as a collection of school uniforms that competed for the Export and Innovation Award 2011, entirely made of quality natural materials: 100 % merino wool, rayon, cashmere, linen and cotton.

„We had the idea of school uniforms after a visit to Japan, where children enjoy wearing them.”

AMERI designs two collections every year. The company’s council participates in the creative process by rating whether patterns are in tune with current fashion trends. A collection to be offered on the market is further shaped and finalised at presentations.

Participation in the Export and Innovation Award competition in 2010 and 2011 has consolidated the company’s position on the market, increased the company’s profile and made it more recognisable with customers.

Selling the company’s products on local and foreign markets has led to higher turnover, new experience, and realisation of the importance of added design value and ecological products.

In entering export markets, AMERI makes use of export promotion tools offered by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia as well as co-operates with companies providing marketing services. The bulk of the company’s products are exported to Scandinavian countries, as it has been established through a market survey that the company’s designs and quality products meet the wants and needs of Scandinavian customers.



Dizaina papīrlietas Ltd.

Candlestick Signs of Light



Ginta Šmite,
Dizaina papīrlietas Ltd. Member of the Board and Creative Director

„We salute our customers with Purpurs' goods. We encourage the desire to elevate everyday consciousness and express oneself. We strive to give dignity to Purpurs' goods, combining delicate aestheticism with rational functionality. We maintain cultural traditions in them, where the practically simple and contemporary come together, creating a sense of perfection in the world.”

Website: www.purpurs.com

Turnover (2011): EUR 118,000

Employees (2011): 9

Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia

The company Dizaina papīrlietas was founded in 2010, its product brand is Purpurs. Here are high-quality items made of paper with original design.

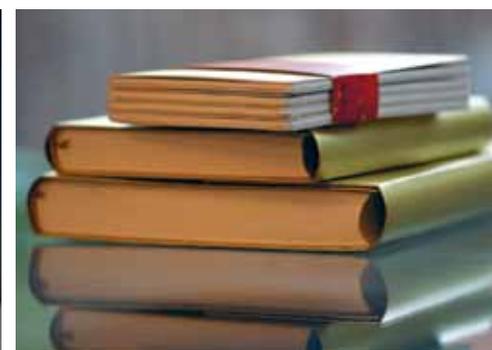
The company's portfolio includes several collections with a special design: Something/Nothing special and Papīrs ar 9 dzīvībām (Paper with 9 Lives), made from recycled material, diary series fLUXbook, series Mantojums (Heritage) with elements of Latvian ethnographic symbols, Vintage series of products, and candlesticks Gaismas stāsti (Tales of Light). The company also manufactures folders, photo albums, guest books, menus and other paper goods as brand products and as corporate gifts for customers.

„A very important part of the design is material used in production – they match the function of the product. Everything is important – paper colour, printing, weight, the type of material. All of these factors affect the final result of the product – the process experienced by the customer while using it.”

The biggest myth about innovation and entrepreneurship in Latvia, Dizaina papīrlietas argues, is the belief that new ideas require large financial resources. The company creates new products itself or involves artists from different fields of art – it enables to find a fresh perspective and creative solutions in the process.

„The main criterion for hiring a new employee are his personal qualities and attitude towards life. It is important that they match the company's philosophy and values.”

By participating in international exhibitions and searching for partners with assistance from the foreign representations of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the first steps towards export have been taken. Currently, stable export exists to the Baltic countries – the closest and easiest to come to terms with.





Wood & Textile Factory Ltd.

Wooden Ironing Board



Ivita Krastiņa,
Wood & Textile Factory Ltd. Head
„There are good development opportunities for small business in Latvia, however, the beautiful slogan „We Support Start-ups!“ is actually only just a slogan. Participation in the competition, organized by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia brought not only recognition but also many positive emotions and publicity in the press, which is very important for a new company just entering the market.”

Website: www.gludinamaiskoks.lv
Turnover (2011): LVL 18,000
Number of employees (2011): 3
Export countries: none

The company's basic product – the ironing board – evolved in September 2010 at Annushkanu Factory Ltd. At the start, the plant also manufactured wood frame homes. Through designer product development connected to coupling fabric and wood, Wood & Textile Factory Ltd. was established in May this year to augment variety and conquer export markets.

Its products are not exported yet, but negotiations are already under way with representatives of several chain stores. The company keeps a close watch on export markets by following stock exchange reports and visiting international textile fairs.

The company's head got an idea about the product after a lengthy search for a quality ironing board for her own needs. Metal ironing boards are not comfortable as they are unstable, and quite often there is a metal bar under the board cover, creating an imprint in the piece of clothing being ironed. Finally, there is no convenient way to iron sleeves.

„We do not doubt the quality of metal ironing boards, however, they cost at least LVL 100, and not every woman can afford that. Hence the spontaneous – yet very logical – question, why is no one making the good old wooden ironing board? In designing the company's basic product, we kept in mind that what's old is new again, and that the true beauty of things is in their simplicity.”

Using the time-tested design as the basis, the company designed a new product, improving its functionality by adding adjustable height of the ironing board, as well as making slight improvements to the design of the wooden parts and the overall look of the product.

„Ironing boards Ironing Wood are not only practical but also serve as a fine element of interior design.”

The cloth board covering may be removed and washed or replaced. The designers of Ironing Wood also use various visual solutions, making every ironing board an exclusive product. Reserved elegance, unpretentious Latvian touch, flowery romantics, joie de vivre, are but a few of the motifs in the line of Ironing Wood products.





Latvijas Biokosmētikas institūts Ltd.

Beauty product line Anna Liepa



Ivonna Grīnvalde, Latvijas Biokosmētikas institūts Ltd. Director

„The key difference in our products is natural ingredients – certified raw materials in tandem with exquisite packaging. Another aspect making us unique is the facial and body care preparation recipes handed down from generation to generation. They have withstood the test of time, plus chemical testing and state inspections.”

Website: www.annaliepa.com
Turnover (2011): LVL 11,000
Employees: 3
Export countries: None

The company was founded in 2008 in Riga, and it manufactures products under the brand name Anna Liepa. The product line includes products for face and body care – eye and lip masks, bath sachets of herbs, bath milk and salt, body butters and gels enriched with floral herbs and natural essential oils.

Latvijas Biokosmētikas institūts is one of the companies of the Medical and Engineering Innovation Centre of Riga Stradiņš University. It helped to get financial support for various business consultations, and provided office and industrial premises in the early years. An important contribution was the opportunity to meet with industry professionals and make analyses of pilot products.

90% of raw materials for the product are supplied by the Latvian organic farms Mauriņi, Upmaļi, Bites. Quality of raw materials is certified by corresponding certificates. Linen, woollen yarn, silk and satin ribbons, designer paper and tissue paper are used for the production of packaging. Anna Liepa consists of an ancient symbol – the Tree of Austra or Sun, considered to be a model of mankind’s knowledge and concepts in Latvian ethnography.

„The brand name is created on the basis of an old family tradition, where the knowledge of herbs in beauty was inherited from great-grandmother and grandmother – their names were Anna; while Liepa (linden) has long been regarded as the tree of female energy.”

One of the biggest challenges was adapting age-old recipes to modern requirements, for example, to change all the antiquated units of measurement to grams, as well as to take into account the defined procedures of harvesting and preparing the herbs.

The company takes part in the annual Arts & Crafts Fair at the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum, and the Midsummer Flowers & Herbs Market on Dome Square in order to hear public opinion and suggestions, and draw new clientele.

„In order to develop export, the enterprise in cooperation with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, took part in London’s *Natural & Organic Products Europe 2012*. It is also seeking partners in Sweden, Norway and Japan.”





Narciss Ltd.

Women's clothing collection ZIZE



Alise Trautmane, Narciss Ltd. Head

„Healthy competition is highly motivational. By participating in the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011, organized by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, we found out about many successful, exporting Latvian companies. In the competition, we met creative, determined and enterprising people who can inspire others as well.”

Website: www.narcissfashion.com

Turnover (2011): LVL 22,000

Employees (2011): 5

Export countries: Russia, UK, Kuwait, Belgium, United Arab Emirates

Fashion brand Narciss was founded in February 2009. The company designs and manufactures women's garments, producing two collections per year that are systematically supplemented during the season. Narciss manufactures dresses, skirts, pants, shorts, blouses, tops, jackets and coats.

In the manufacturing process, the company uses woven fabrics of natural fibres, purchased from Italian fabric manufacturers recognized in the textile industry.

In 2011 and 2012, Narciss was designated The Brand of the Year at the Fashion and Style Awards ceremony organized by the Baltic Fashion Federation.

In order to promote brand awareness, Narciss' representatives regularly visit textile fashion shows and the world's largest fashion weeks that showcase new collections, and explore the trends in fashion and sewing technique.

„The company also uses outsourcing of a globally recognized fashion trends agency that analyses and determines the trends for next season. This is a very important source as they provide information not only on colour palette, fabrics, and cuts for the coming season, but also on the latest manufacturing technology, fashion marketing etc.”

Clothes are sold in Latvia as well as exported to Russia, the UK, Kuwait, Belgium and the United Arab Emirates.

To conquer new markets outside Latvia, Narciss has chosen the annual Paris Fashion Week as a key platform for the sale of its collections. The price-quality ratio is becoming increasingly important, as well as the ability to be flexible in the production process by enabling buyers to make corrections in orders.

„The biggest myth about business in Latvia is that nothing can develop successfully here. It is possible anywhere, but one has to be very enterprising, persistent and confident about one's product. An effective team that is aware of the common goal is also important. Regular, planned and systematic action pays off sooner or later.”



OT Stils Ltd.

Collections by fashion designer Natalija Jansone, Irina Koshakova and Anna Led



**Margarita Jeršova, OT Stils Ltd.
Chairman of the Board**

„We want to put into practice the traditions and quality with which our brand was known not only in Latvia, but also across the borders.”

Website: www.otstils.lv

Turnover (2011): LVL 941,000

Employees (2011): 59

Export countries: Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Belarus, Italy, Germany

OT Stils Ltd. is the official distributor of Latvian knitwear manufacturer Ogres Trikotāža on Latvian and foreign markets. Knitted clothes of the highest quality for the whole family are available in OT Ogres Trikotāža retail stores. Collections are created according to the latest fashion trends and with quality materials – the latest types of yarn, imported from several countries.

The company systematically determines and analyses customer demand – sellers record wishes expressed by customers, then marketing and design departments of OT Stils get busy on them.

When starting a new project, those colleagues are selected whose knowledge, experience and skills are most appropriate for achieving the objective. The company employs people of various age – the younger generation, and those with multi-year experience. This allows one to look at situations from different angles and choose the best solution.

Exclusive knitwear collection created in cooperation with Latvian fashion designers has led to the conclusion that OT Stils’ offer meets consumer needs and desires. It is up-to-date outfitting – based on fashion trends, of high-quality, from high-quality materials, with a permanent customer base already beginning to form. It is easier to work on further development plans with such assurance.

„Creation of new ideas involves everyone in the company. A variety of ideas reaches discussion – both conservative and the highly unusual.”

However, the right „gold vein” of any businessman is the right moment for the implementation of an idea.

„OT Stils is truly pleased that by participating in the competition Export and Innovation Award 2011 we could feel the interest and support from public institutions for the work done by the company. No doubt, it was also an opportunity to see ourselves as others see us.”

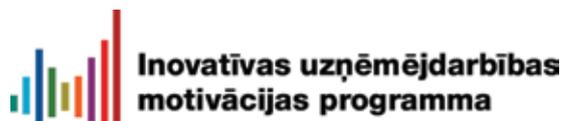
To conquer new markets, the company attends international exhibitions, works with the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia and use databases. Up to now, OT Stils mainly exported their products to neighbouring countries, but they have started to expand the export market this year.







Investment and Development Agency of Latvia
Address: Pērses iela 2, Rīga, LV-1442, Latvia
Phone: +371 67039499, fax: +371 67039401
E-mail: liao@liao.gov.lv
www.liao.gov.lv
www.exim.lv
www.polarisprocess.com



The mission of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA) is to promote growth of the economy of Latvia. Accordingly, the objective of LIAA is to promote business development by facilitating increased foreign investment, while elevating the competitiveness of Latvian entrepreneurs in both domestic and foreign markets.

With almost 20 years of experience in attracting of foreign direct investment to Latvia and promoting foreign trade, the Agency has worked continually to improve the business environment and provide services appropriate to the needs of business.

Following Latvia's accession to the EU in 2004, the Agency needed to adopt new methods and tools, including the effective utilisation of resources from EU Structural funds. Today, LIAA offers an integrated solution – it supports companies in Latvia trading internationally as well as overseas businesses seeking partners or locations in Latvia and administers state support programmes for entrepreneurs co-financed from EU Structural funds.

To ensure high quality communications with customers the Agency has representative offices in Minsk (Belarus), Beijing (China), Copenhagen (Denmark), Paris (France), Berlin (Germany), Tokyo (Japan), Vilnius (Lithuania), the Hague (the Netherlands), Oslo (Norway), Warsaw (Poland), Moscow (Russia), Stockholm (Sweden), London (UK) and Kiev (Ukraine).

An ability to anticipate the rapidly changing needs of businesses and markets by offering new services characterises the Agency's own competitiveness, built on the knowledge and competencies of our experienced specialists. LIAA pays close attention to the quality of its own performance, comparing it with world best practices, and subsequently introducing new services and solutions for our customers.

In recognition of LIAA's competitive and high quality services, the Agency was recently named one of the top 10 performing national Investment Promotion Intermediaries (IPIs) in the world, according to the *Global Investment Promotion Benchmarking* published by the World Bank. LIAA finished 7th in a fierce competition of 213 investment promotion agencies.

We look forward to helping your company succeed in Latvia!



IEGULDĪJUMS TAVĀ NĀKOTNĒ!





IEGULDĪJUMS TAVĀ NĀKOTNĒ!



**Inovācijas uzņēmējdarbības
motivācijas programma**