

Bowne Global Solutions



1. Company description

This case study presents a Polish branch of Bowne Global Solutions (BGS). Formerly, the company used to be a member of the Berlitz GlobalNET but it was acquired by BGS in 2002.

Bowne Global Solutions is the leader in the domain of written and oral translations, localisation and creation of multi-language technical documentation. It helps its customers to introduce products and services adapted to local markets. Firms from all over the whole world use BGS's services while developing their activities in Americas, Europe and Asia.

Complex and flexible BGS's solutions allow its customers to accelerate the introduction of their products and services into the market augmenting their quality and conciseness. BGS's clients are the largest companies from IT, motor, internet training, pharmaceutical, entertainment, telecommunication, air, mechanical and power sectors.

Two thousand BGS specialists work in over 40 offices spanned over 24 countries, co-operating with a world-wide network of 15,000 qualified translators and editors of over 60 languages and dialects.

2. Type of telework applied

The Polish branch of BGS employs 107 persons. Within this number there are 25 teleworkers (of which 10 are employed on a full-time basis and 15 on part-time contracts being remunerated according to their tasks). The teleworkers usually live far from the company's headquarters. They are scattered over mazowieckie, zachodniopomorskie and warmińsko-mazurskie voivodships. As teleworkers BGS employs:

- translators and editors (both part-time or full-time),
- project managers (full-time),
- engineers (full-time).

The teleworkers regularly visit the office. There is a requirement to spend at least one workday a week at the company's premises. The project manager and engineers are present in the enterprise two days a week.

3. Information Management in BGS

The main trump in BGS's activity is an own procedure of management of projects that has been elaborated on the basis of many years' experience and of thousands customers served. Application of that method enables finishing projects timely, in accordance with the planned budget and with the highest quality. A system of the information management used by BGS is based on e-mail and on the (Microsoft's) Project Central module. The latter allows to manage orders and to account tasks.

Effective project management is considered by BGS as a key to efficient operation of the enterprise. The well-done management is reached through using of new telecommunication and IT technologies as well as through adequate training of persons collaborating with one another in a project.

In order to allow clients to track projects at each stage of their execution, BGS has worked out an on-line support system. Whole responsibility for a timely execution of the project is borne by project managers who are responsible for planning, preparing of project schedules, file management, supervision of file versions, co-ordination of work verification process done by clients, quality control, reporting and financial management.

Activity of BGS is based on a method of planning called Balanced Scorecard® that helps to create effective planning procedures resulting in well and measurable progress of the projects. The method Balanced Scorecard® is used by the majority of large companies all over the world.

4. Advantages and Disadvantages Resulting from Applied Telework

The main advantage of introduction of a telework system in the enterprise is a significant reduction of costs of office activities. It has been calculated that a rent of the office space for one employee per year in BGS's headquarters in Poland is few times more expensive than providing a worker with a remote access to company's LAN. The employees are also glad of opportunity to work remotely. Only 2 out of 25 teleworkers returned to the traditional model of work in office. Their decision was brought about by difficulties to work at home while small children were present.

In Poland there are no dedicated legal regulations concerning the telework. That is why BGS had to work out an internal model to solve or prevent eventual problems, which might occur when an employee does his duties remotely. Issues that require separate regulations include e.g. an insurance of a teleworker and his home office, an adaptation of remote workplace to BHP¹ regulations etc. These problems have been solved in BGS by adding an annex to a contract with an employee who starts teleworking. The enterprise is not going to control time of work, to monitor teleworkers or to perform control visits in home offices. Such an approach has to be unavoidably associated with efficient management procedures, and with focusing on results of the work rather than on the work itself). BGS does not grant to teleworkers any subsidies or remunerations for use of their homes for professional purposes or for extra power consumption.

It is not unlikely that the enterprise will widen the formula of telework to other employees in the future. Now it would be too difficult due to several obstacles such as underdeveloped telecommunications infrastructure, difficulties with internet access in smaller cities and rural areas, high prices for telecommunications services, and problems with availability of some additional services like call divert, voice mail etc.

¹ Bezpieczeństwo i Higiena Pracy — safety and hygiene of work

5. Technologies Used for Flexible Working

Table 1 presents ITC technologies which are used by teleworkers at BGS.

Table 1. Technologies used by teleworkers.

	Used	Planned to be used	Heard of
Access Technologies			
Modem	Yes		
ISDN	Yes		
ADSL	Yes		
CATV	Yes		
LMDS			Yes
WLAN			Yes
Way of Communication			
Fixed Telephony (+ Fax)	Yes		
Mobile Telephony	Yes		
Teleconference		Yes	
E-mail	Yes		
Communication Services			
LAN	Yes		
Application Service Provider ASP (e.g. WWW Hosting)			Yes
Virtual Private Network VPN	Yes		
Leased Line	Yes		
Software			
Word Processor	Yes		
Spreadsheet	Yes		
Graphic Programs	Yes		
E-mail Clients	Yes		
Information Management Programs	Yes		
Employee Management Programs	Yes		
Financial and Cash Flow Programs	Yes		
Network Security	Yes		