

NORWAY | ASIA BUSINESS REVIEW

The **M**agazine of the **N**orwegian **B**usiness **A**ssociations in **S**outh and **S**outheast **A**sia



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SPECIAL REVIEW

Norway-Asia Business Summit 2019

clients. We can help and consult actively during the engagement. Our goal is to deliver the best possible solution where everyone is happy with the result. This is something we are passionate about," Mr Aksnes explains.

From Bergen to Bangkok

From the snow-covered mountains of Bergen to the skyscrapers of Bangkok, the two locations could not be more different. And while 7 Peaks has found success with its services in both markets, the differences have meant the company had to adapt.

"One key difference between Thailand and Norway or other western countries is where they are at from a technological standpoint. A lot of firms in Thailand are now going through digital transformations, where cloud providers are an important piece of the solution. Physical, on-premises applications versus cloud applications is still a real debate for businesses in Asia, while in the west more companies are more used to and comfortable with building cloud solutions. This is an area we can really help local businesses in Asia with," Mr Aksnes states.

"Most software projects in Southeast Asia are run in an old fashion way based on waterfall methodology. We find ourselves needing to convince here of the benefits running software projects in a lean and agile way with rapid deployment and shorter iterations," Mr Aksnes explains. "A lot of clients in Thailand and Asia want agile development, but their organisations are usually not ready for it. This creates a lack of understanding about agile between the executive management and

working teams."

7 Peaks takes pride in offering high-quality services and is always working hard to improve their processes to ensure the quality and efficiency of their services.

But this is something potential clients don't always see. Mr Aksnes notes you start off with this type of trust in Norway, but in Thailand you start with no trust and have to build it up. Ultimately, the quality of 7 Peaks has been recognised by firms in Thailand and this has played a key role in the company's growth.

Scaling up

After finding success with Norwegian clients, 7 Peaks Software gained a foothold in Thailand by establishing collaboration with leading management consulting companies that would bring the company several big enterprise projects.

"The expansion of 7 Peaks in Thailand came mostly from repeat business and referrals along with inbound requests. Working with big management consulting companies allowed us to work with large, publicly traded clients in Singapore and Malaysia in addition to Thailand," Mr Aksnes says.

The organic growth of 7 Peaks meant the firm needed a team capable of handling the extra work. Proper strategies, additional exposure and the scaling up of a local, Thai team with skilled designers and project managers were just a few items the firm had to address.

"Building our team was a very important part of this. But it was not easy. Finding and retaining talent is a challenge. You can't just hire people.

You have to build a culture where people want to come to work every day," Mr Aksnes details. "It was necessary to create a foundation that could help us scale up. It was only then that we could grow the business."

With a solid infrastructure in place, 7 Peaks has been able to take on even bigger, more complex projects. For example, the firm recently completed a project for a major oil and gas company that wasn't feasible in the past. Mr Aksnes adds the company finished a successful project for Telenor as well where a product was delivered and deployed in 13 countries.

"In our first three years, we worked exclusively with Norwegian clients. However, we have scaled that up. We now speak more than 15 languages and have employees from around the world which allows us to serve a very diverse clientele," Mr Aksnes points out.

But Norway remains an important part of the company's business and the same owners of 7 Peaks are running one of the leading software development agencies in Scandinavia, Apphuset.

"We provide the best of both local development as well as outsource development for our Scandinavian clients. This means having local UX designers, project managers, software architects and key account managers that work closely with the clients locally while carrying out production work at 7 Peaks in Bangkok," Mr Aksnes reports.

He continues, "The local team in Bergen provides a personal touch for the company's outsourced services in Norway which allows us to provide clients there with a model we have found to work very well."

The ascent to the top is a long journey and Mr Aksnes understands 7 Peaks is still scaling up. It is all part of the company's desire to take 7 Peaks to the next level. ■



PHOTO: 7PEAKS SOFTWARE

Above left: 7 Peaks CEO and Founder Jostein Aksnes with partner Roy Ivar Moe. Above: 7 Peaks has built an international team capable of working with clients from anywhere.

Facts

- 7 Peaks was founded in 2014 by Mr Roy Ivar Moe, Mr Jostein Aksnes and Mr Leiv Fasmer
- The company offers outsourced software development for global companies, focusing mostly on Norwegian and Thai clients
- UI/UX design, native mobile application development, web development services and cloud solutions are all offered by 7 Peaks
- During its first three years in business, 7 Peaks worked exclusively with clients in Norway
- Firms in the telecom, banking, insurance, retail, oil and gas and property sectors have worked with the company
- The majority of 7 Peaks' Thai business has come through repeat clients and referrals along with inbound requests