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## UNIT 4 Agresso ERP

Simon Joe Portal reports

**Unit 4 Agresso:** José Miguel Sánchez Jiménez, country manager Spain; Ab van Marion, CEO business software; Ton Dobbe, vice president product marketing; João Capitolino, country manager Portugal; and Antonio Urbano Rogel, business software manager Madrid



**U**nit 4 Agresso provides Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). This is back-office software that enables a clear division and overview of costs of all the activities involved in a project. These are then easily comparable to profits, allowing a company to administer its projects much more efficiently. The company is run by João Capitolino, former head of Intelligent Business, Agresso's distributor here, which Agresso bought in 2006.

Agresso was founded in the Netherlands in 1980 and has since branched out across Europe, in Canada and the USA. It has been quoted on the Euronext Amsterdam stock exchange since 1998, and at the end of 2005 the market capitalisation was 313 million euros. That same year it obtained its biggest order ever, worth 17.3 million euros, from the British government. The firm has two divisions: one focuses on the development, sale, implementation and support of business software. The other offers internet security solutions and provides services for implementation and maintenance of data security.

In this market Agresso competes with the likes of Oracle, SAP and Microsoft. According to Ton Dobbe,

vice president for product marketing, Agresso adds value by providing 'post-implementation agility'. He goes on to explain: "All companies that sell ERP software offer post-implementation services of maintenance and updating, but the client relies on specialised staff for this process. Agresso takes a different approach: we install customised packages and then maintain, update and change the software according to the company's needs, without the need for too many extra staff, saving on costs."

"Agresso has expanded into Portugal for three main reasons," says João Capitolino. "Firstly, to have a base to serve our multinational clients here; secondly, to take advantage of unused potential in Portugal for our slant on ERP; and thirdly, to expand into other lusophone countries." João has travelled to most of these countries, and he relishes the prospect of revisiting them: "Mozambique, Angola and others where culture change slaps you in the face are the places that attract me the most," he says.

"Buying Agresso solutions," adds João, "is like buying a printer that does not need ink refills. Although the initial cost is the same, the maintenance costs are far less. Our longer standing clients can confirm that."