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AIE '96

Malta's position as a Hub

AIESEC



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THE IDEAL CONNECTION

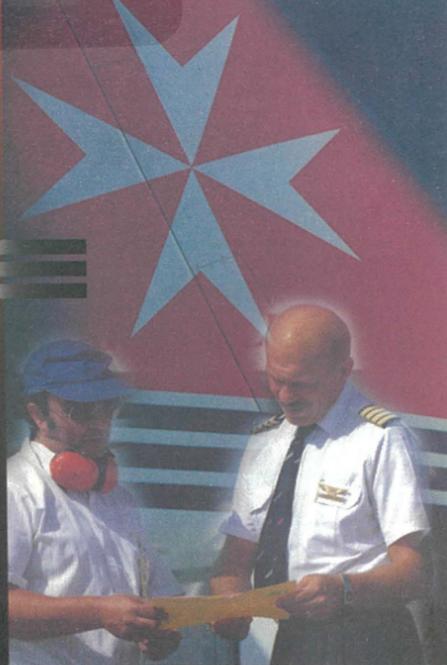
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not only offer variety but the care and professionalism of our staff to make your journey a memorable experience. Catering for cargo and courier services, **Air Malta** is your ideal connection.

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Dear Readers,

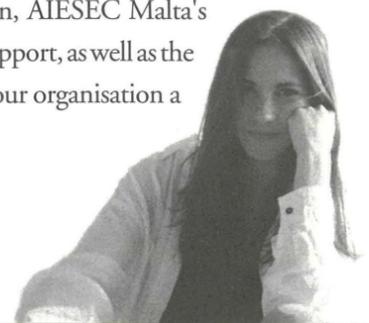
As a member of this year's national committee, I have witnessed AIESEC Malta's active role as a subsidiary of AIESEC International and its successful achievement of AIESEC objectives. The production of this publication serves as further evidence of our commitment to fulfil AIESEC's vision, which focuses on the development of the individual. Judging by the success that the AIESEC economic journal, the Cobweb, has had so far, we do hope that our efforts to produce another publication directly concerned with domestic issues will continue for years to come.

Why did we choose the hub concept? The hub concept seems to form part and parcel of the strategy being used in the quest for our archipelago to establish and sustain itself at a more prominent position in the European Union and consequently in other world markets. The Maltese Islands are historically known to be situated in a geographically strategic location only 95 km South from the southern tip of Europe and 290 km North from northern Africa. In other words, Malta could serve as an ideal service centre linking all those countries that border the Mediterranean Sea.

All the information compiled in the journal was collated from expert central government agencies and parastatal bodies which have effectively adopted the hub concept in their endeavours to market our islands overseas. We hope that this publication will serve as a useful educational tool to university students and also to members of the public who value and are intrigued by the progression of Malta's future in international affairs. We also hope that this journal will be an effective means for non-nationals to find out more about our islands and the opportunities offered.

I would like to thank METCO, Airmalta, Malta Development Corporation, National Tourism Organisation - Malta, Malta Maritime Authority, Telemalta, Malta Freeport Corporation, Management Systems Unit, Bank Of Valletta International and WoodCo Ltd for their collaboration in providing our association with such valuable information. A special thanks goes to Malta Development Corporation, AIESEC Malta's Educational Partner, for their financial support, as well as the Youth Support Programme for offering our organisation a grant in support of this project.

Sandra



REFERENCE ONLY

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Malta, the Hub of the Mediterranean.

MISSION 2000

In the early nineties the interaction of various global megatrends in politics, economics, community development and technology brought about various powerful change processes in the global scenario. The Mediterranean region, because of its global geostrategic position, was greatly effected. These cataclysmic changes could have been identified either as serious threats or perhaps as challenges and opportunities, depending on the perception and value system of the individual.

The end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw pact opened up and created an environment which enabled the explosion of the information technology and telecommunications revolution facilitating the formation and development of regional economies. The development of NAFTA, EU, MERCURSOR are but examples of enormous trading blocks with immense economic and trading power. Our little island immersed in the centre of this global turbulence was not spared. Our options were two: to meet and exploit the challenges and opportunities which would arise, or to face the consequences of the impending threats.

The paradoxical dynamics of maturing peace processes and pockets of instability in different countries surrounding the Mediterranean littoral undoubtedly helped us in identifying that our mission within the region had to be in support of facilitating sustainable peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean. We also believed that coupled with our geostrategic positioning and our ability to absorb technology and apply it, the way forward was to develop Malta as a hub of political, business and infrastructural services in the Mediterranean region.



Tony Percall (NTDM)

Historically, this made sense as Malta since 5,000 years BC, was always used in some form or other as a hub in the Mediterranean. When looking towards the future this also makes sense. The shift from industrial technology-based economies to information technology-based economies, changed our smallness from being a disadvantage to a crucial strategic advantage. John Naissbit in *The Global Paradox* states that the bigger the world economy, the more powerful shall its smaller players be. The production factors in the industrial age were labour, land and capital. Those countries which thrived were the ones which were rich in human, land and financial resources. In the information age the factors of production comprise a high-tech infrastructure and a highly skilled, developed workforce capable of making use of these highly technological resources optimally. Another important element for countries to succeed in the information age is their ability to be sensitive to, and take advantage of, changes in the dynamic environment which they

exist in. Speed of action is imperative; this is where size becomes such an important issue.

In 1992 the Malta Council for Science and Technology, an advisory body set up by government to assist policy makers in matters concerning scientific and technological know-how in national planning, organised a conference called *Vision 2000: Malta the Hub of the Mediterranean through Communications Technology*. It was during this conference that various decisions makers representing government, the academia as well as industrialists came together, discussed and agreed with this vision.

Today that vision is the prime agenda of government and over USD 1.5 billion have been invested in various infrastructural services and business ventures which have helped to turn this vision into a serious national commitment..... a mission for the 2000 and beyond. Air Malta and Malta International Airport

spearheaded this initiative in aviation. The Malta Maritime Authority and the Malta Freeport Corporation championed the maritime activities.

Telemalta Corporation started to build a new telcoms infrastructure and to slowly shift its role from just being a national carrier to a regional player. In 1995, the International Telecommunications Union accepted to develop a regional training centre in Malta. The Malta-Sicily fibre optic link and participation in the Flag 1 projects are very important developments targeting the corporation's new objectives. Telecommunications and Information Technology are very important trends which enhance the development and sustainability of the hubbing concept. In 1994 the Government, acting on advise of the Malta Council for Science & Technology, initiated a project for the drafting of a National Strategy for Information Technology which was completed in 1995.

The establishment of the Malta Financial Services Centre was another important initiative with the setting up of offshore legislation for the establish-

ment of financial services. In fact various companies and institutions were attracted to Malta because of our state-of-the-art offshore legislation and our regional capability.

It is encouraging that the private sector has also started to move towards this same vision; various Maltese entrepreneurs are now prospecting and developing joint ventures in Albania, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine and Tunisia. This argues well as these first pioneers venture into difficult emerging markets building the first bridges.

In 1995 two very important initiatives occurred which, I believe, will contribute enormously towards the development of the momentum needed for such a vision. The decision to host the Crans Montana Forum for Mediterranean countries annually in Malta was one step towards the right direction. These fora will continue to bring political leaders, businessmen, bankers and academics to our islands; Malta will yearly be the host for discussions related to Mediterranean affairs and developments. Another crucial decision was made by the European Union to es-

tablish the Euro Mediterranean space by 2010 with an estimated population size of 800 million people.

Malta's mission towards the coming millennium is now clear. With its investment in the hub concept, its position at the southern tip of Europe and its central position in the Mediterranean, our archipelago will become a major point of fusion between the European and Mediterranean regions. Our islands will have a major role in the global mission to facilitate and empower the development of sustainable peace and prosperity generation in the Mediterranean.

WoodCo Ltd

Joe Woods, through his company WOODCO Ltd., organised, in 1995, a conference: 'Mission 2000: Malta the Hub of the Mediterranean'. He is currently providing consultancy services on the hub concept and technological management to both public and private organisations.



Tony Percall (NTDM)

The Hub Concept.

THE MALTA MARITIME AUTHORITY

While seeking to retain the traditional role of providing port facilities to meet local import and export requirements, the new role would also seek to capitalize on Malta's strategic location in the Mediterranean to attract value-added activities in the leisure as well as niche transshipment activities.

The need for such a role has been prompted by a number of factors. These include the following:

Facilities in the port are largely underutilized due to the small size of the internal market. Hence the need for transshipment activities. Developments within the Mediterranean region may present new opportunities which could be served by the Port of Valletta. The need to optimize and achieve a national use of port facilities and layout.

The Malta Maritime Authority through the Ports Directorate is actively engaged in developing the Port of Valletta as a cruise and ferry hub in the Mediterranean. A lot has been done to ensure that Malta is firmly established,

amongst cruise operators, as a port of call. The long term objective is to attract cruise companies to use Malta as a base for their Mediterranean operators. The advantages for the local economy of using Valletta as a hub rather than a port of call, can be quite substantial, particularly when one considers the fact that the Mediterranean as a whole is quite likely to be the next growth area for cruise lining.

When compared with a port of call, a hub port represents a significant increase in value added activities. Passengers embarking and disembarking on a cruise from Malta are likely to generate more business for the local airline, hotels, inland transportation modes, for example, taxis, self-drive cars and other means of transport, as well as retail outlets and restaurants.

In order for such a business to thrive and prosper, it is imperative that local facilities meet the required international standards. In the case of a port of call, passengers disembark in the morning and leave in the evening. There are no

customs and police formalities while passenger luggage remains on board the ship. Port facilities are mainly restricted to the provision of berths and security within the immediate vicinity of the ship.

The situation is different in the case of a hub port. Here port facilities must be augmented with adequate passenger handling facilities similar to those found in an airport. Apart from the presence of ground handling staff, customs and police officials, there must also be proper baggage handling, sanitary as well as catering facilities.

The existing sea ferry terminal in Valletta, although refurbished by the Malta Maritime Authority, was never meant to handle more than 120 passengers at any one time. On some days during the peak summer season, there may be as many as 800 passengers and more passing through the terminal at any one time. As a result, the Authority has been forced to take drastic measures to ensure the smooth flow of passengers within the terminal and avoid overcrowding.

Niche Transshipment

With Malta Freeport well-established as a container terminal, there is scope for the Port of Valletta in providing complimentary services to enhance the local overall package.

Conscious of certain limitations within the port, the Authority is nonetheless convinced that certain types of transshipment activities can be undertaken from the port. One such area which the Authority is striving to develop is car transshipment.



Chris Mifflaud

Following market research studies carried out by the Authority, a part of the port area has been hived off to cater for this new activity. The construction of the Car Transshipment Centre at Laboratory Wharf was completed late last year.

To inaugurate the Centre, in the coming weeks, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines of Japan will start their car carrier transshipment service from North Europe to Malta. The new service will be unloading cars both for local use and for transshipment every four weeks. After several meetings between Mitsui and the Malta Maritime Authority, the company chose the Valletta Grand Harbour as a hub port for the regular transshipment of cars. Mitsui O.S.K. Lines stated their satisfaction after its representatives visited the Car Transshipment Centre and witnessed its latest technology in operation.

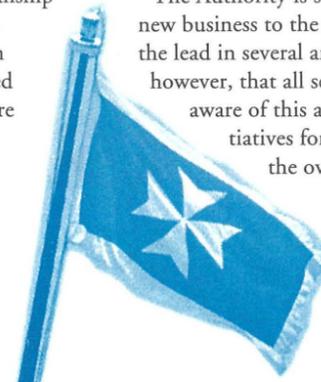
The Centre is equipped amongst others, with a modern security system, a closed circuit television system with 24-hour record facility. Its entrances are monitored by way of an Access Control Card System.

Motor vehicle manufacturers in the Far East are increasingly using Europe as a manufacturing and distribution hub for their vehicles in order to reduce transport costs and transit times. As a result, there has been a significant demand for economical and reliable car carrying capacity from North Europe to the Mediterranean.

The Authority is striving to attract new business to the port and has taken the lead in several areas. It is necessary, however, that all service providers are aware of this and support such initiatives for the well-being of the overall economy.



The Malta Maritime Authority is the autonomous government agency responsible for the organisation and administration of the primary maritime services. Its principle role is the creation of a climate which further enhances Malta's maritime standing and associated business activities. (BOV portfolio - May 1995)



Malta Maritime Authority

Malta As An IT Hub ?

THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS UNIT

The hubbing concept has been a subject of much discussion in countless conferences. These discussions are no strangers to our shores either. Malta has been continuously trying to project an image of itself being a hub in a variety of business and industrial sectors. Terms such as 'Singapore Of the Mediterranean', 'Switzerland Of the Mediterranean' and 'Clapham Junction Of the Air' are just some of the terms bandied about.

However, information technology has been a recent addition to the hubbing activities that Malta is attempting to establish itself in. The information industry here, is still very young. After a long period of self denial and self imposed exile from contact and involvement in what is practically one of the largest industries on earth, we are seeing the signs of an 'information renaissance'.

The issue is no longer 'if Malta' is to become an IT hub but rather a question of 'when and how'. Historically, we are told, Malta has by virtue of its geographical position always been at the centre of 'hubbing-style' activities in our region, be it of a trading nature or a military one. In the last few years, with the dawning of the global village concept, geography does not play as significant a role as it used to, therefore the need to avoid letting Malta

fade into an economic backwater becomes even more urgent and important.

What is hubbing ? Hubbing is all about providing a service quicker, better and cheaper than one's competitors and being able to provide the associated services in the same manner to the complete satisfaction of the customer.

Currently Malta has been reasonably successful in providing hubbing services in the air travel and cargo arena as well as the shipping and trans-shipment industry. Geography has played a small part of this but so has history and politics. Our proximity to the North African region has been a deciding factor is revenues generated by hubbing. The political situation in Libya and its isolation has highlighted Malta as one of the few routes through which traffic of all nature can pass to reach it. This has translated to some degree into significant economic indicators.

What About IT? The present government has been a key contributor to activities in the Information Technology sector here in Malta. Having started late has had both pros and cons. The advantages have been, that compared to other nations, Malta's investment in what are known as 'legacy systems' are minimal thus providing us with the opportunity to conduct a

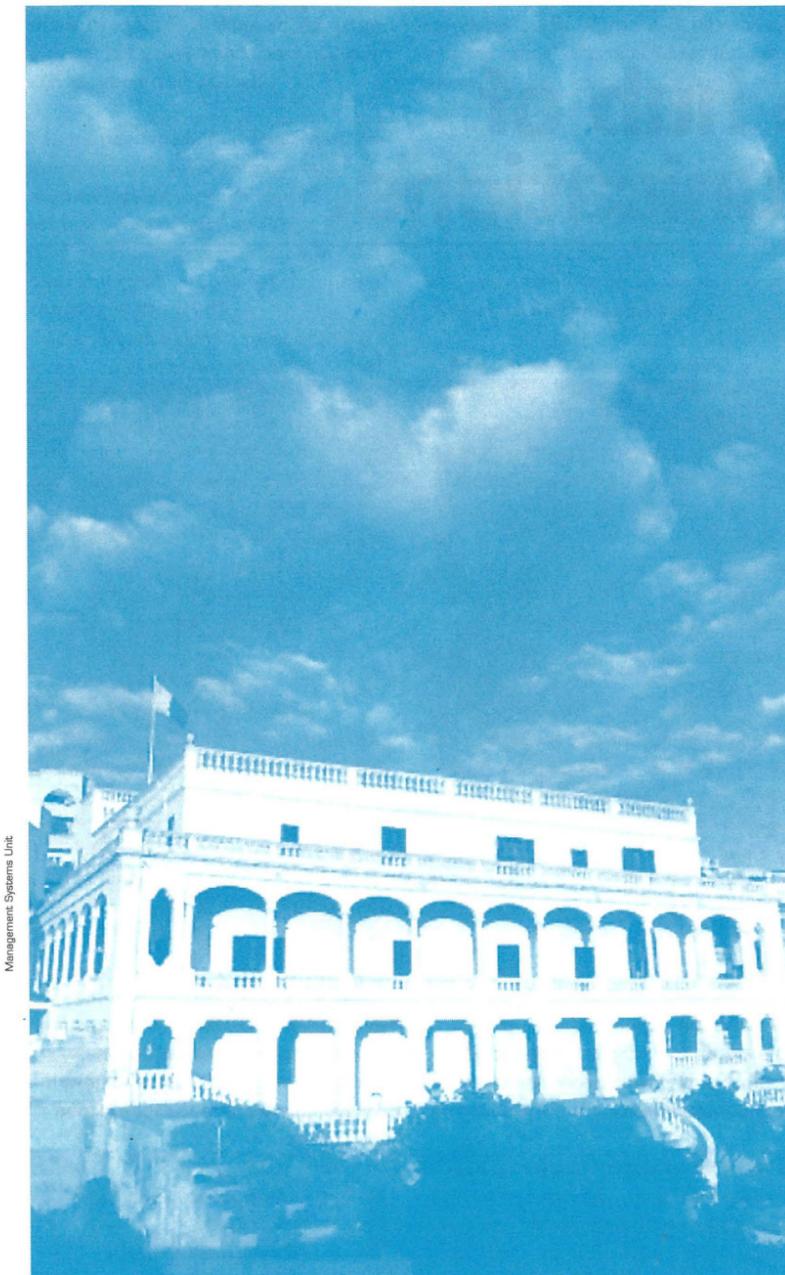
quantum leap in terms of IT. The disadvantages are that, human resources are scant and the infrastructure is immature and needs to be built up, thus obviating the requirement of instant major expenditure which contributes to considerable financial risk for a small island economy. The fact that government has to some degree understood that IT is important for the building up of an information infrastructure, which itself is a requisite of any modern economy is not surprising. This understanding is what has brought about the creation of institutions whose chief role is the application of IT in a variety of sectors, one such institution is the Management Systems Unit. The actual execution is altogether a different matter. Malta is dealing with a herculean task, but, which, if tackled properly, provides an enormous opportunity to expand it's hubbing activities into a global perspective rather than the current regional one.

IT hubbing could consist of a variety of services and activities such as: educational ones in areas of computer aided learning and distance learning by means of IT,

IT based financial services such as financial forecasting, market analysis and investment strategies generated by local analysts who are plugged into the worlds financial markets.



Management Systems Unit



Management Systems Unit

Providing diplomatic brokerage services supported by information technology.

The possibilities are endless, however Malta has a long way to go.

The only way that Malta can truly become an IT hub, is first to become an IT based hub. The difference between these two concepts is that the first step is to ensure that our traditional hubbing sectors are well equipped to survive the ravages of the open market place given the imped-

ing admission of Malta into the European Union. The existing services must ensure that they are faster, better and cheaper than anyone else. This can be done through the re-engineering of business process and the application of IT in the revised picture. Once the revenue required for the breaking into of new niche markets is to some degree available for a sustainable period of time, Malta can start moving into activities higher up the value chain such as IT services.

Pre-requisites. In terms of actually achieving the above there are a number of pre-requisites that must be in place. These are listed below in point form, since the resulting discussion of each and every point would merit an article each at least !

- An enabling legal framework which allows the use of IT to substitute paper bound procedures.
- A re-engineered business process in key areas such as trade, customs and tax.
- An underlying technological infrastructure - notably telecommunications, which is affordable by companies locally and possibly cheaper than overseas equivalents to attract foreign investment. This would support sectoral networks on the island and provide high bandwidth off-shore links.
- A human infrastructure - adequately trained and skilled people particularly in IT and its' practical application and a continual retraining and education system.

These pre-requisites like all the other points discussed, require however, vision and planning. If Malta is at all serious about becoming an IT hub, a plan must be followed and implemented. Malta and the Maltese must take control of their destiny, it is no use depending on third party hand-outs or throwing money at this situation. Careful planning and the tapping of the right resources are clearly what is needed.



The Management Systems Unit (MSU) was established as limited liability company in 1990. The vision of this agency is the transformation of the Public Service into one that provides the character or infrastructure and services which will improve the economic well-being and quality of life of the Maltese citizens, and will enable Malta to participate in the European Union and compete successfully in global markets. (Management Systems Unit Annual Report 1992/3)



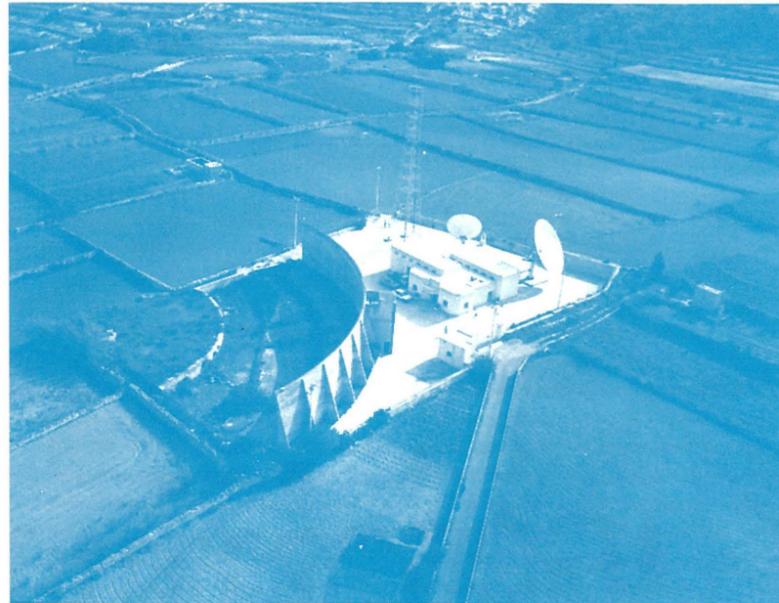
Malta the hub of telecommunications.

TELEMALTA CORPORATION

Geography made Malta the crossroads of the ancient world. Pheonician traders, Arab conquerors and Roman legions all took refuge here. Grand Knights and wicked pirates, Napoleon and Nelson, Victoria and Hitler all fought to capture this treasure of the Mediterranean. Each culture left its imprint on our development, but none served to overcome our intrinsic character and dynamic vision.

At Telemalta Corporation, we believe that success or failure and the ability to achieve competitiveness, does not necessarily depend on size or land area. It is related to the will to succeed, backed by commitment and action.

In no field of endeavour is this philosophy more relevant than in telecommunications development. In this context, Malta has worked hard to position itself as a regional commercial and financial hub, with the support of a sophisticated telecommunications infrastructure.



Tony Perrelli (NTDM)

We have sought for the greater part of the last decade to stimulate our micro-economy through a macro-vision of global telecommunications.

The role of telecommunications is now recognised as bringing increased efficiency to the economic, commercial and administrative activities which are the lifeblood of regional cooperation. The Government of Malta has fully appreciated the need for a highly developed telecommunications sector as a condition for the setting up of the commercial and investment activities which it is seeking to attract, and has given its full support to the Corporation's mission.

In eight years, Malta has emerged from an island investing in a mixture of discarded electromechanical technology to a nation which ranks among its giant European neighbours in offering a completely

digital telecommunications infrastructure. Through our link up to the European mainland through optic fibre, we now have mainline access to the Information Superhighway.

But how did we get here so quickly?

The implementation of the Corporation's projects were placed on a sound professional footing through preparation of a long term unified plan covering the period up to the year 2000 for the expansion and modernisation of the National and International telecommunication system.

Through strategic assistance from international bodies such as International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the Commonwealth Communications Organisation we availed ourselves information, training, consultation and contacts

which have accelerated our ability to implement key projects and to achieve and exceed proposed deadlines.

In particular, Malta is focused on fostering strategic alliances with telecommunications carriers which will serve as bridges between large countries which have their own domestic satellite systems and small nations which cannot compete at this level.

Accepting that development of Malta's international telecommunications was vital national development, we embarked on a series of initiatives including addition of two Satellite Earth Stations operating via the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean Regions, introduction of a modern digital International exchange, linking financial centres to the International S.W.I.F.T. (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications) network and provision of important telecommunication services to News agencies feeding the local media.

1994-95 has been a landmark period in this respect. Telemalta has inaugurated the Sub-marine Optic Fibre Cable between Malta and Sicily which has increased our available circuits by 100 times.

We have purchased rights in the Fibre Optic Link around the Globe (FLAG), signed documents confirming our accession as member of the International Telecommunication Satellite Organisation, Intelsat, became a 15 percent shareholder in I-Co. Global Communications Ltd.,

developer of the Immarsat-P project and entered into a series of alliances and agreements with key telecommunications organisations around the world.

Inauguration of X.25 Packet Switching, Internet services and nationwide paging facilities along with existing mobile telephone services, and cable television further enhanced Malta's ability to serve as a focal point for communications.

With the state-of-the-art switching, transmission, signalling, routing and billing technologies and software systems, Malta is now increasing its role as a switching hub for regional and extra-regional developing country telecommunications traffic.

In the process, we will build on our designation as a role model in telecommunications development, a responsibility we were honoured to accept at the World Telecommunications Development Conference in Buenos Aires last March. It is through such cooperative development that we reaffirm the principle that all nations, all peoples, - big or small, developing or developed - should seek to participate in the Global Information Infrastructure, not only as users or spectators, but as innovators and carriers, grasping an opportunity for worldwide improvement in the quality of life through communications.

Telemalta is also firmly committed to sharing its experience and exchanging information on its development with the international community and making its

contribution to narrowing the gap between the developing and developed telecommunications worlds. We plan to achieve our goal through fostering the synergy between small nations that will allow the economies of scale that will open the technology to developing nations.

Toward this end we have recently hosted training and information gathering teams from as far abroad as Japan and the Philippines. We have received approval for a Regional Training Centre for the ITU which will serve as a central location for telecommunications and management development for the Euro-Mediterranean, Middle East, Gulf States and Eastern Europe.

In 1998 we will host the Second World telecommunications Development Conference of the ITU.

The commitment of Telemalta Corporation to the vision of putting Malta at the centre of communications technology in our Region has been demonstrated by the systematic implementation of the Development Plan for the Island's telecommunications infrastructure.

All the Corporation's activities reflect our long term goals of being equipped to compete in a free-market environment on a European scale, expanding our services while keeping the balance between our business commitment and our social obligations.



In its economic dimension, Telemalta seeks to enhance, on a continuing basis, the potential of the Maltese economy to operate at the highest levels of productivity and efficiency, by putting at its disposal all the communication facilities, and access to information, which developments in telecommunication technology render possible. Written by John Camillieri, The Chairman (Telemalta Corporation Annual Report 1995)



Tony Perrelli (NTDM)

The Hub Concept and The NTOM.

NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION - MALTA

A glance at the NTOM's principal long-term tourism objectives explains why the hubbing concept is in line with the NTOM's objectives.

Malta's tourism goals as originally laid out in the 1989 Master Plan for tourism, and on which the Organisation's marketing plans are based, remain as follows:

- The diversification of Maltese tourism's source markets;
- The improvement in the seasonal arrivals pattern;
- The improvement in the socio-economic profile of the visitor flow.

In addition to the above, our experience in 1994 suggests that long-term sustainability should also form an integral part of tourism policy in future years.

The philosophy behind the hubbing concept as adopted by the national airline, is in perfect consonance with the NTOM's efforts to continue extending the market diversification process which it has pursued with considerable success, in the last eight years.



This process was initially aimed at reducing our dependency on one market by investing in the development of the European core markets, particularly Germany, France, Italy and the Benelux countries. This policy not only led to Malta reducing greatly its dependence on the single market, but also resulted in the crossing of the one million arrivals threshold in 1992, a feat which has been repeated ever since that year. This can definitely be regarded as the completion of a successful phase in the achievement of Malta's medium-term goals and tourism objectives.

Meanwhile, the NTOM is also preparing the groundwork for further extension

of its diversification process, to include marketing efforts in the USA, Scandanavia, the Eastern European and other countries, as well as intensifying Malta's presence in markets like Italy, which fit in perfectly with the national airline's hubbing operations.

The NTOM is looking more and more at long-haul markets such as those of Australia, Japan and North and South America. Hubbing in that direction by Air Malta would naturally increase the possibilities of traffic flows from these core markets, and compliment its efforts elsewhere. When in 1994 Aeroflot, for example, was operating a Moscow to Buenos

Aires flight with a Malta stopover, more than a thousand Argentinian tourists spent a few days in Malta on their way to other European destinations, using our islands as a stepping stone to the Continent. The New York direct connection, once fully developed, stands to offer even more attractive prospects. North and South American tourists can nowadays combine a visit to Malta within an Eastern Mediterranean itinerary.

Besides diversification, hubbing also provides Malta as a destination with greater variety and frequency of scheduled flight connections, a factor which greatly aids the promotion of increasingly popular city breaks and short stays, not to mention the highly lucrative business travel, the conference and incentive travel segment, and visits by special interest groups. A shift to a better quality tourism mix.

Sicilian travellers for example, can take an Air Malta flight from Palermo to Gudja International Airport, spend a couple of days on the island, and hop on to a direct flight bound for New York. Fly-cruise holidays are another extension to the hubbing concept of interest to the NTOM, Malta International Airport, and the Malta Maritime Authority. In 1994, a major German tour operator commenced fly-cruise operations by which the

prospective cruise passengers were flown from all over Germany to Malta, where their ship was waiting to take them on a cruise of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Such operations require a high degree of flexibility in flight schedules and destinations, a requirement which hubbing can service if positively implemented. This case also arises the point of maritime hubbing. In fact the NTOM is also in regular contact with the Malta Maritime Authority on this subject, as the provision of modern and efficient port facilities could give rise to an increase in this kind of tourism. On similar lines, yachting could be considered as another form of hubbing, and one which would be conducive to a sophisticated type of tourism, with all its obvious benefits.

As wide-bodied aircraft reduce the cost of long-haul travel, the Mediterranean is losing some of its appeal in the traditional Northern European markets, to relatively cheaper long-haul resorts. This development also means that the Mediterranean can also be reached cheaper from long-haul markets, particularly from Southern-East Asia, which is the world's fastest developing geographic area.

Whilst supporting the concept of hubbing, NTOM feels that the bulk of

the Maltese tourism product will still come from its core markets in the foreseeable future.

Hubbing is therefore likely to be relatively more important to the national carrier, than to the Maltese tourism industry. Nevertheless, the logic of world aviation demands that airlines carry a critical mass of volume in order to survive. And a viable national carrier is crucial to a thriving tourism industry.



National Tourism Organisation - Malta

National Tourism Organisation - Malta (NTOM): The advertising, publicity and promotion of Malta overseas as a tourist destination is the responsibility of the NTOM. It also acts as an advisory body to the Permanent Secretary on matters relating to the development of the tourist industry in Malta. (The Malta Chamber of Commerce Trade Directory 1996).



Tony Perrelli (NTOM)

The Bridge Between Regions and Continents.

AIR MALTA

Ever since Air Malta was born in 1973, its primary aim has been to establish, maintain, develop and operate air transport services to and from Malta which, by the carriage of passengers, freight and mail, serve the national interest of the Maltese Islands. Besides successfully carrying out its obligation to actively develop and promote Malta's tourism industry, it has also been a useful instrument in the country's industrialism and modernisation efforts, thereby assisting in the achievement of a healthy balance of payments.

The Maltese national airline has long since firmly established itself as a forward-looking company whose continued expansion has bridged the Mediterranean Sea, first between the North and South and later between West and East. Early in its third decade of operations the spans of that bridge were further extended into the Middle East.

One year after it was formally set up, Air Malta started flying operations on 1st April 1974. Its schedule now serves 38 destinations in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East: Brussels, Cairo, Casablanca, Catania, Damascus, Dubai, Dublin, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Geneva, Glasgow, Hamburg, Istanbul, Larnaca, Marseille, Milan, Munich, Oslo, Palermo, Paris, Rome, Stockholm, Tel Aviv, Tunis, Vienna and Zurich.

In November 1995 Air Malta ventured into long-haul operations, starting with New York in collaboration with another airline. Besides its scheduled destinations it also has some 30 charter points almost equally divided between the United Kingdom and mainland Europe.

The airline operates a young fleet of modern, well-maintained aircraft: four

RJ70 Avroliner regional aircraft, two Boeing 737-200 Advanced, Three Boeing 737-300 and two Airbus 320 which are all fully owned. The average age of the fleet is just over three years, making it one of the youngest in the entire air transport industry. Other aircraft are leased in as necessary to help meet the demand for the seats at the busiest times of the year.

The Maltese national airline has thus developed into what is arguably the most

important single strength of Malta's tourist infrastructure, providing the right network for leisure - as well as business - traffic to and from the small archipelago in the middle of the Mediterranean. What is even more praiseworthy is that it has managed to do all this by itself, with absolutely no protection, subsidy or special privileges.

Air Malta's primary objective as a company is sustained growth, without which



Chris Mifsud



Air Malta

it cannot maintain its social responsibilities. At the same time be it in turnover, the carriage of passengers, the size of the fleet or staff levels, growth is meaningless unless it is profitable.

And profitable, Air Malta certainly is. It is one of the very few airlines in the world with the bottom line in perennial black ink. It has been profitable in all but its first year of operation - and that was the year of the oil crisis.

The airline feels it can continue to achieve profitable growth through the judicious expansion of its network. With saturation already on the horizon for point-to-point tourist traffic, in 1992 it started to supplement the linear route system with a hub-and-spoke network. Hundreds of city-pair combinations via Malta are already available, with the most of them having a transit time for less than four hours at Malta International Airport. This calling to make its island home the cross-roads of air travel in the Mediterranean has been ever-present in the Air Malta's plans and strategies. The north-south link came on line in April 1974 - the very



first week of operations - with Tripoli, extended in July 1977 to Cairo and further strengthened in January 1988 with Benghazi (incidentally both routes to Tripoli and Benghazi are temporarily in view of the UN sanctions). The latest step south was in December 1992 with Tunis, not to mention the seasonal destination of Monastir in August 1993.

In the meantime, in March 1989, Air Malta had started operations to Athens, and in June 1990 inaugurated services to Madrid, establishing the west-east connection which was later strengthened with Barcelona and Lisbon.

With its scheduled network showing 23 destinations on all of the Mediterranean, in 1992 Air Malta decided it was time to take another good look at the prospects in the Middle East. Dubai came on line in June 1993 and Tel Aviv the following month. Damascus came on line in November 1993, followed by Bahrain in March 1994. In Summer 1994 it was awarded fifth-freedom rights to fly between Bahrain and Dubai.

In parallel with its efforts on passenger traffic, the airline has been making huge strides forward on the cargo front. Air Malta Cargosystems is aggressively exploring a number of avenues in order to accord to cargo a greater part of the airline's turnover. The old passenger terminal at Malta International Airport has been transformed into a state-of-the-art

cargo centre. Another service, Aerospeed Courier Express, has been introduced to consolidate the business of local courier companies on board.

Be it on the passenger or cargo fronts, customer service is seen as being of vital importance, since goodwill in a service industry is the single most important asset. Air Malta's image must portray that it is a modern, forward-looking, caring airline with a young and efficient fleet and high standards of safety: an image of professionalism at all levels.

In short, all that one would expect to see in a strong, trustworthy airbridge spanning regions and continents.



AIR MALTA

Air Malta was set up by the Resolution of Malta's House of Representatives in 1973. The Company's primary aim is to establish, maintain, develop and operate passenger, cargo and mail air transport services to and from Malta in the best national interest. (Air Malta - Twenty Years of Service 1973-1993.

International Banking in Malta.

BANK OF VALLETTA INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

Bank of Valletta International Limited (BOVI) is the offshore international banking subsidiary of Bank of Valletta Limited, Malta's Leading Banking Group. Inaugurated in 1992, BOVI was Malta's first offshore bank, oriented purely at international business. BOVI's business activities originally formed part of the parent bank's Foreign Currency Accounts Centre which pioneered such services way back in 1977. The Bank is now well set up as a wholly autonomous, efficient and dynamic operation. Its operational activities are well diversified and it now has a wide spectrum of clients and a fast growing number of accounts.

BOVI is bound by the stringent confidentiality clauses applicable to all companies registered, under the Malta Financial

Services Act 1994. BOVI manages its own internal accounting and reporting systems and procedures, effects its own Treasury transactions and its staff is bound by a professional code of secrecy. In addition to this, customers can discuss their personal financial requirements with an Account Executive in complete confidentiality and discretion. In fact, BOVI is characterised by a high degree of personalised service and has extensive experience in dealing with customers on a wide variety of banking services. These banking services and investment products, which suit a broad base of private and professional users, include:-

Current And Deposit Account Facilities
Principal Features,
-Deposits are accepted in all major international currencies

- Multi-currency cheque drawing facilities
- High competitive interest linked to international money market rates and paid free of tax
- No maximum deposits and no minimum withdrawals
- Complete confidentiality and security

Current Accounts

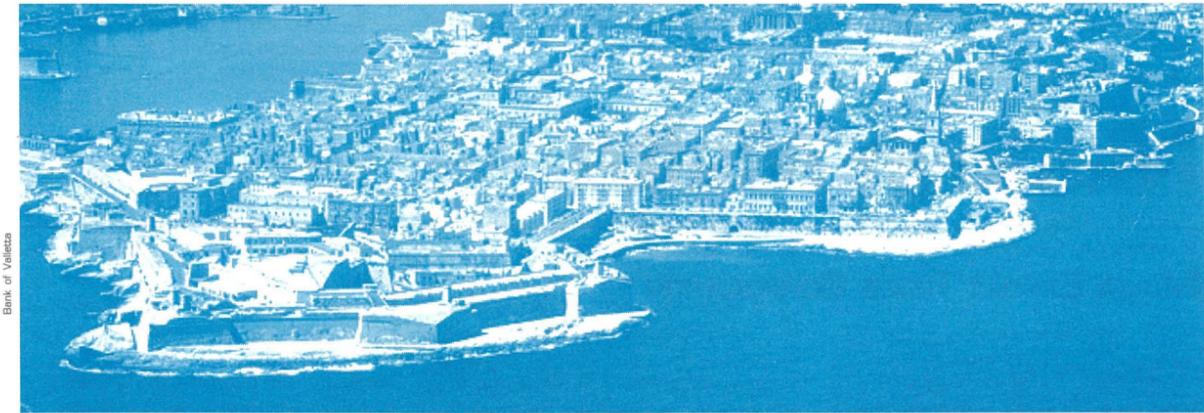
This account offers multi-currency flexibility enabling cheques to be drawn in any major currency. Regular transaction statements are despatched to the customer, or retained in Malta, according to the customer's wishes. There is no minimum balance requirement, and there are no ledger fees while the account remains in credit.

Call Deposit Accounts

The minimum balance required to earn interest on a 48 hour notice call deposit account is currently USD 2,000 or the equivalent in any other major currency. Interest paid on these accounts is determined by the prevailing market rates applicable to the deposited currency, with premium rates payable on larger deposits. Interest may be remitted to the customer or credited quarterly to this account, which provides long-term holders the possibility of earning interest on the interest earned, thereby maximising their return.

Savings Accounts

An account which may be opened in all major currencies specifically designed for the modest investor. A minimum initial deposit of USD 100 or the equivalent is required. Interest is paid at a nominal rate and does not reflect market fluctuations. An attractive feature of these accounts is that the account holder has immediate access to cleared funds.



Bank of Valletta

AIIESEC

Term Deposit Accounts

The minimum balance required to open a term, or fixed deposit account depends on the currency of the account. Funds on term deposit can be placed for fixed time periods up to one year earning premium international market rates payable upon maturity. The customer may leave disposal instructions for payment of principal and interest, but of course, the Bank operates an automatic reinvestment facility whereby, in the absence of any specific instructions from the account holder, deposit funds plus interest earned are renewed for a further similar term, at the rate of interest prevailing upon the recent maturity. Such a service may be particularly useful where customers cannot regularly correspond with the Bank.

Premier Deposit Accounts

Bank of Valletta International can also offer its non-resident customers term accounts which are available for periods ranging from one year to five years. Interest is paid every quarter.

BOVI can offer its international customers the following additional services and facilities:-

- Safe Custody Services,
- Borrowing Facilities,
- Trade Finance,
- International Funds Transfer,
- Foreign Exchange,
- Telephone Banking,
- Corporate electronic cash management,
- Executive credit/cash withdrawal cards,
- Documentary/clean collections,
- Portfolio Management,
- Private Banking.

The revised legal framework which regulates investment services, insurance, banking and international trading activities positions Malta as an even safer, more secure option for high net worth banking customers. Coupled with favourable tax provisions, it forms an integrated structure for international business and financial services. This has been an important milestone for the financial services sector and has provided the backdrop for Malta's success in developing an efficient and effective mechanism for international operations and investment. Amid the stiff competition from other offshore financial centres, Malta's role as a leading offshore financial and business hub is developing at an accelerating pace.

BOVI is both able and determined to continue positioning itself creatively and effectively in the international private banking market. It is actively developing its capabilities on an ongoing basis whilst pursuing a well defined marketing plan. BOVI is also actively enlarging and diversifying its product range to ensure that its service responds to customers' needs and expectations and to enable it to compete at an international level. It sees new strategic opportunities in the way Malta is developing as an international financial centre and is determined to continue to play a leading role in this evolving scenario.

BOVI is committed to the development of its human resources and provides all opportunities to ensure that its staff remains current with the latest international marketing, financial and legislative trends and requirements.

BOVI maintains liaison with its clients on three continents through the network of BOV representative offices in Europe, North America and Australia. By means of this liaison, these representative offices continue to serve customers in these continents to further internationalise BOVI's business.

The advantages available to international customers carrying out their banking requirements in Malta are various. The most common are:-
-A high proportion of qualified banking personnel (multi-lingual).
-Concentration of Banks & professionals.
-All banking documentation is in English.
-Availability of all modern technology tools (including Swift and Telebanking).

Combined with all this, Malta offers the pleasant environment and facilities of an established tourist destination.



Bank of Valletta International Ltd. (BOVI) is Bank of Valletta's offshore subsidiary. It is characterised by a high degree of personal service and has extensive experience in advising clients about a wide variety of banking services and investment products. (BOV portfolio - May 1995)



Bank of Valletta

Made in Malta.

MALTA EXPORT TRADE CORPORATION

In the space of a few short decades, Malta has made a truly remarkable transition from an economy based on servicing the British Mediterranean fleet to one that is balanced and increasingly outward looking towards tourism, international services and manufacturing for export. Malta is a small nation with a local manufacturing base that is relatively young. It now needs to mature and expand and it can only do so by penetrating export markets within our reach. In this context, both the local business community and METCO collectively have a highly relevant and important role to play in order to gain a foothold in the international market place.

Manufacturing now accounts for 21% of employment and is the leading contributor to gross domestic products. Total manufacturing between January and September of 1994 amounted to around Lm502.4 million - an increase of 11.3% over the same period of 1993. A good number of Maltese goods and services make their way into practically every country of Europe and also into North Africa and the Middle East. However the European Union consistently take the lion's share of Malta's exports - approximately 76% in 1994. This pattern is favoured by a long-standing Association Agreement which gives the majority of Maltese exports duty-free access to markets within the EU.

However the success reaped by Maltese companies in such an array of different markets is due to quality and reliability in delivering goods and services in good time. Maltese companies tend to be large enough to cope with substantial orders yet small and flexible enough to care for their clients and to respond to their requirements. There are several hundred manu-

facturers and exporters in Malta who are able to supply a remarkable broad selection of goods and services. Some of the products categories exported from Malta include food and beverages, clothing and footwear, paper and stationery products, plastic and metal products/components, electronic and electrical equipment/parts, and building materials.

To assist further the efforts of these manufacturers and exporters, government set up the Malta Export Trade Corporation (METCO) in January 1989. The Corporation is a partnership between government and the private sector, represented by the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Industry. This form of partnership gives the commercial community the right to have a member on METCO'S Board. This Director is elected by those Maltese companies who make use of METCO'S services and are recognised as Registered Users with the Corporation. Today Register Users with METCO amount to 470 companies, an increase of 31% over the past two years, thus showing the trust that the commercial community is putting in METCO as an organisation who support and assists local companies in promoting Maltese goods and services overseas.

The Corporation believes that trade information is essential in order for Maltese companies to be made aware of what is happening in the international

arena. For this purpose METCO has available a comprehensive trade library which not only houses a large collection of trade directory and other trade information publications, but is also supplemented by on-line and CD-ROM facilities. Other services based on the active use of information are also offered such as Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), international tenders and co-operation opportunities. Advise and assistance is also given in relation to the export from Malta of products under the Association Agreement with the European Union as well as under the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) of countries within EFTA as well as USA and Canada.

Another service which is very popular among the local business community is related to the participation of Maltese companies in overseas trade fairs and exhibitions as well as the organisation of trade missions.

Maltese companies who have participated at an international event in a group organised by METCO have all been successful in acquiring a good number of orders. By the end of this year METCO would have organised the participation of



around 150 Maltese companies in 12 trade fairs, exhibitions and trade missions in Europe, the Middle East and North America.

The steady increase of participants on a METCO stand stems from the fact that Maltese companies are determined to take up the challenge that international markets offer as aggressively as their foreign competitors. After each event a meeting is held with the companies concerned to analyse the results achieved and to discuss with the participants themselves the success of the event. In this way METCO would be able to increase and constantly improve the services that it offers in this sector.

Another important service that was introduced early this year with the collaboration of Bank of Valletta was the Trade Fairs Support Scheme. This addition to METCO'S well established range of export promotion services available to the local business community is designed to enable companies to participate in specialised trade fairs or exhibitions that are best suited to their individual needs.

METCO also offers a number of free services to overseas buyers and international traders through a buyer enquiry service. Enquiries that are generated from overseas are passed directly to companies who are able to supply the goods/services required. METCO normally forwards well over 1,500 foreign enquiries annually to Maltese companies, and meetings/factory visits are also arranged for those buyers and traders interested in visiting Malta. METCO also offers interested parties comfortable conference and meeting facilities where business meetings between Maltese companies and prospective clients can take place.

METCO issues an annual directory of Maltese manufacturers and exporters which is specifically aimed at international traders. This directory has a circulation of 10,000 copies the bulk of which is distributed overseas.

To further attract businessmen to Malta, the Corporation issued a new publication sponsored by Mid-Med, early this year entitled the Executive Pocket Guide to

Malta. This publication gives a brief outline of the different business opportunities available in Malta.

METCO also plays an active role in the area of trade facilitation. It is keeping abreast of the many international agreements and technological developments that are being created to facilitate trade. Today communication technology is seen as the solution to trade facilitation and indeed in other areas. Speed and efficiency in communication are vital if projected trading increases are to be realised. METCO has also been officially appointed as Malta's laboratory to create a Trade Point in Malta under the auspices of UNCTAD. This concept is a highly advanced communication and trade opportunity network spanning the globe involving various participants like exporters, importers, customs, banks, freight operators and insurance companies. Establishment of a National Trade Point will give business on-line access to international trade information and ease the marketing of Malta's goods and services abroad by creating direct links with other Trade Points abroad and hence potential customers, partners and suppliers all over the world. This will enable Malta to continue to build on its reputation as a centre of business and trade brokerage in the Mediterranean.

Another area METCO has been deeply involved in is that of controlling and running the Malta Export Credit Guarantee Co. Ltd. (MECGC). MECGC has over the past four years offered Maltese exporters the facility of insuring their overseas credit transactions against the risk of non-payment. Once issued, the policy may be offered as good quality collateral to the banks in order to obtain export finance.

Another important development has been the setting up of the Euro Info Correspondence Centre (EICC), another instrument which the EU extended to Malta and of which METCO became a host in September '94. The EICC is a centre of information, support and active help for Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) engaged in business and industry of whatever

nature. The Centre in Malta is linked to the Euro Info Centre network in the EU and other EICCs in non-member states, chiefly EFTA, Mediterranean and East European countries, thus making it an invaluable tool for all those engaged in some form of business activity with enterprises within the network. The Centre will also serve as a national contact point for EU related matters.

Exporting is by no means easy. Those Maltese firms and METCO Users who have become successful exporters today have only managed to do so through years of commitment, effort and at considerable expense. Exporting in general and the business of export promotion require a single minded commitment. However the local business community and METCO can, by working together as a team, make a meaningful and lasting contribution to the further development and survival of Malta's export manufacturing and service base.

In the future METCO is aiming to continue to build on the achievements of its first six years. It has plans to launch new initiatives in its trade information, in its trade promotion services and generally to continue to lay down strategies intended to provide the required technical, financial and marketing expertise so as to motivate Maltese industrialists not only to consolidate and strengthen their position in existing export markets, but also to help them seek new ones.



MALTA EXPORT TRADE CORPORATION (METCO)

The Malta Export Trade Corporation (METCO) is Malta's national trade promotion organisation. It acts as a trade intermediary linking exporters and importers, by putting local companies in touch with foreign buyers and by helping foreign buyers contact local suppliers and manufacturers. (BOV portfolio - May 1995)

The Hub Concept In Manufacturing.

THE MALTA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

In a world where technological change is blurring boundaries of employment, the Malta Development Corporation (MDC) faces continuing international challenge in the achievement of its objective to attract qualitative foreign direct investment to Malta, thus benefiting the local labour force with flexibility in skills and work organisation. The primary objective of the Malta Development Corporation is to attract advanced technology, high value added yielding projects in the manufacturing and the services sectors. It is through the achievement of this objective that interlinkages and support facilities can be established, thus facilitating the promotion of transfer of technologies and know-how between the international business community and the Maltese owned companies. These interlinkages help to promote sustained industrial growth and keep Malta globally competitive.

The 'Hub' Concept.

Malta shares the advantages of many key, small Island economies around the world which generally have the advantages of location and a long tradition of business dealing with many nations. The one odd difference is that Malta shares on further ambitious aspiration - that of becoming an important manufacturing, financial and trading gateway to Europe and beyond. The Maltese are born traders, with an old reputation of trading dating back as far as the Phoenicians and the Roman Empire. For centuries Malta served as a hub for commercial activities and an entrepot centre for trade and the provision of supplies and services in the Mediterranean.

The idea nowadays is to restore Malta to its vocational role as an international market niche and certainly no stones are being left unturned in Malta's effort to

achieve its goal. Investing on sound basis to receive in return higher yields is the key issue; and in this sense the need is felt to enhance trade and industrial cooperation with developed economies, particularly those of the European Union, sharing and participating in their entrepreneurial spirit.

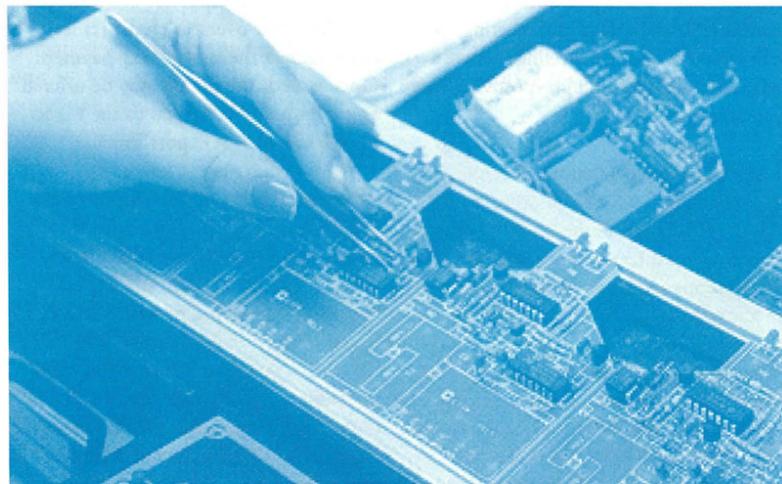
No doubt Malta's strategic location at the crossroads of the Mediterranean between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East can put it in a position to become a leading international business and financial centre. The drive to promote Malta in this direction focuses primarily on export-oriented manufacturing industry, tourism, financial and off-shore business. It is for this reason that after careful studies incentive oriented legislation to encourage both inward investment and offshore financial services were enacted, and later revised to encapsulate the growing needs of an expanding services sector.

The increased awareness everywhere of the fundamental importance of foreign direct investment, the emergence

of new business opportunities in Eastern Europe and the Far East are crucial factors that have triggered the Malta Development Corporation to consolidate efforts already made to restructure those areas of the local manufacturing sector which have yet to adapt to the exigencies of more open market conditions. With this thought in mind, the Corporation must seek to stay ahead of its competitors. Given that international business is becoming increasingly borderless, MDC must avoid growing lethargic. It must identify and anticipate investors' needs, ensure it has the right legislation and policy framework in place, and work closely to the concept of a 'one stop agency' that provides an efficient service to potential investors it seeks to attract.

To this end MDC will continue to:

- promote Malta as an ideal location for the manufacture of 'niche products' and the provision of services for target customers;
- promote Malta as a location that offers human and intellectual resources that are



MDC

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adaptable to change and operate effectively in a high technology market-oriented society;

- establish a network of a well-functioning infrastructure that supports efficient production and a good quality of life;
- strengthen the internal ongoing process of an information technology strategy to improve the quality of service to the business community;
- potentiate its human resources in order to be fully capable of meeting the challenges ahead.

Mission Statement.

'By incentive to stimulate international competitiveness and productivity of selected existing and start-up manufacturing and service industries operating in the Maltese Islands thereby upgrading the human and technological resources of Malta'.

Responding to Challenges Ahead.

Given competition on the world markets, post organisations, particularly manufacturing and services companies are shifting their mass production techniques built on economies of scale and output cost reduction to niche market production. The harsh competitive realities of the global economy point clearly to small and medium sized business units (SME's) as major industrial players, since the development of new manufacturing technologies dictate that production efficiencies and

flexibility, not economies of scale are the key factors in the international competitive equation.

This reality is being fuelled by the continuous flow of non-core out sourcing of products, technologies and services that are migrating from the domain of the large firms into the small business sector. The immigration is creating industrial clusters of small business activity around larger operations. In addition, competition in product innovation and technological change has led to a move from standardised price competitive production to customised quality competitive production.

The small medium sized enterprise has been recognised by the Malta Development Corporation as the backbone of economic development for Malta. Indeed, an overview of our manufacturing sector clearly indicates that there are few firms that fall into the European definition of large enterprises. The bulk of local and export oriented manufacturing activity is concentrated in the hands of small, medium sized micro enterprises.

The MDC's response to rapid developments on the international economic and industrial scenario is to develop a marketing strategy designed to attract international companies having the same characteristics of those companies successfully

operating in Malta - building on success. Secondly, maximise the advantages Malta offers as a productive location for highly specialised, semi-customised relatively small batch, fast product manufacturing companies. Thirdly, remain on the course in the direction of the self-set target, namely to develop the Island into a regional hub serving countries on the Mediterranean rim, the European mainland and beyond.

The aim remains ultimately that of upgrading the importance of Malta as a financial, transshipment and an investment location hub served by state-of-the-art communications technology.



MALTA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

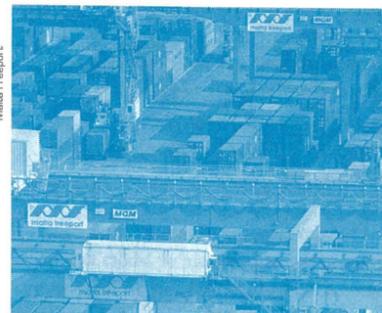
The Malta Development Corporation (MDC) is a Government one-stop agency, whose aim is to promote and support direct manufacturing investment in Malta. Its expertise is available free of charge and tailored to the need of the industry. (The Malta Chamber of Commerce Trade Directory 1996)

A Hub in the Centre of the Mediterranean.

THE MALTA FREEPORT CORPORATION LTD.

Malta's distinct position on the main trade route in the Mediterranean between Gibraltar and the Suez Canal has given Malta Freeport a commercially strategic advantage for distribution to the Eastern and Western markets, North Africa as well as an entry point to North Europe with minimum diversions on the sea routes.

Since start up of operations in 1988, Malta Freeport has established itself as a major maritime transshipment logistic centre in the Mediterranean.



The three main stream of activities that have been established since its inception are all functioning and have amply proved their worth. The container terminal, the oil products terminal and industrial warehousing facilities complement each other and enhance Malta Freeport's role as a premier distribution base in the Mediterranean. The existing set up offers clients unique opportunities resulting from the port's strategic position, excellent shipping links with over 56 international ports worldwide and round the clock operations.

Malta Freeport focuses on the 'hub' concept, whereby cargo is discharged from large mother vessels and relayed to a network of regional ports by regular and frequent feeder vessels. Fortunately, the advent of information technology and real-time communications enabling dissemination of data helped tremendously in making the hub a superbly viable form of transshipment. Some 90 per

cent of Malta Freeport container traffic is transshipment business.

The logistic concept offers several gains for Malta Freeport's clients, including fewer mainline port calls, reduced voyage times through minimal diversions and shorter transit times by switching east-and-west-bound services over at our port facility. As a result, this would enable them to concentrate on profitable voyage legs. Malta Freeport users could then access North European and North African markets using relay services by feeder vessels.

In the span of a few years the container facilities developed into a well equipped prime terminal in the region and has succeeded in expanding its throughputs from 7,782 TEUs in 1988 to a throughput equivalent to 514,767 TEUs in 1995. This year, Terminal One is expected to reach a throughput figure close to its operating capacity necessitating additional facilities.

Works on the construction of a second container terminal are well under way. Once completed in 1998 Terminal Two will double the current annual handling capacity to 1.25 million TEUs. The first phase of Terminal Two with an annual handling capacity of 250,000 TEUs will be operational next year.

The industrial storage facilities available at Malta Freeport support logistics providers in their efforts to enhance the regional distribution of goods. These facilities provide extensive opportunities for strategic storage and related activities, including light assembly and elements of processing within a customs free zone with fiscal benefits.

Since the present multi-purpose warehousing units currently in operation are operating at a high occupancy rate, Malta Freeport has devised a strategy to develop the hinterland making the service more customer specific.

The oil terminal also fits perfectly in the distribution centre concept around which multiplier functions are realised. It has attracted the investment of Oiltanking GmbH of Germany. Presently, the capacity of the oil terminal is 360,000 cubic metres covering a wide range of mineral oil products. The oil terminal's principal activity is the storage and blending of oil products. However, it provides other services such as butanizing, injection of additives, circulation, tank to tank transfer, ship to ship transfer and leading. Additionally, the oil terminal facilities are in accordance with the latest safety standards and operations comply with ISO standards. The oil terminal is set to expand its activities in the coming years in response to growing world demand for the free zone transshipment of oil-based products.

The key factors behind Malta Freeport's success have been professionalism, efficiency, reliability, and cost effectiveness, all qualities that the Freeport is always striving to optimise. Focus has been maintained on facilitation and trained human resource in order to give the best service to customers. The business growth speaks for itself. With the on-going expansion of its facilities, Malta Freeport looks forward to handle its annual throughput of one million TEU containers by the turn of the century.



The Malta Freeport Corporation Ltd. was set up by the Maltese Government in 1988 with the specific scope of developing the Port of Marsaxlokk into the commercially viable hub port of international standard. (The Malta Chamber of Commerce Trade Directory 1996)

How Norasia made a molehill out of a mountain



Since moving its Mediterranean Hub operations to Malta in 1990, Norasia

has been offering Maltese customers a weekly container service connecting Malta directly with Europe, the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and Arab Gulf, the Subcontinent, South East Asia and the Far East.

With newly delivered state-of-the-art 2800 teu ships, travelling at an average speed of 22 knots, Norasia can operate with a 30% reduction

on transit times (Singapore to Malta now only takes 14 days instead of the

previous 21 days). But at Norasia we don't just consider transit times important, complete customer service handled by competent, well trained staff ensures that cargo and shipments leave on time from the right place and arrive on time... in the right place.

So when you think shipping, think Norasia.



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