



## Stratex Network tells us...

### A host of arguments!

Claude Echahamian studied in Marseille, then later moved to Singapore for France Télécom and then the United States for Corning, before taking up his present position in Aix-en-Provence as Stratex General Manager for Southern and Central Europe at the end of 2001! He knows what he is talking about !...

This telecoms engineer will take the opportunity offered by the planned 2005 GSM World Congress to be held in Cannes from February 14 to 17 that he will visit with some of the group's management, to tell us about this successful return to home and the welcome received from Provence Promotion on this occasion!

#### > Why set up the European Regional Management of the American Stratex group in Aix-en-Provence ?

Claude Echahamian : There were several reasons for this choice. Firstly, the region offered attractive real estate costs, and is on the crossroads between countries in which I carry out my activities. For example, Paris would not have been a good choice because it is badly located for our business.

Besides, I studied at Thiers High School in Marseille and then at Sup Telecom (Higher Telecom School), so in a way the Bouches-du-Rhône is my own country which is why I was very familiar with the region in which high technologies are developing very significantly.

Finally, the local life style was an important element in the choice of where to set up a company. Even if airport links at Marseille could be better and unfortunately we don't get much benefit from the TGV, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages at the moment.

#### > Therefore a quickly growing telecom activity ?

Claude Echahamian : Our business has become more active with the arrival of the mobile telephone, which is the reason for this deployment. It is important to realise that mobile telephony is organised into cells distributed around the country and each telephone is in contact with one of these cells, which have to be interconnected with the central network for global communication.

This is why Stratex proposes radio links. Radio links take over when fibre installations are too expensive, or impossible for configuration reasons. This is the case particularly for motorways, large cities and countryside with very low population density. Therefore, all traffic is routed from cells to the central network through radio links.

#### > A very large market, isn't it ?

Claude Echahamian : Operators such as Bouygues and SFR in France, and Orange and Vodafone elsewhere in Europe, have deployed thousands of radio links to make their network. Therefore, this is a large coverage, but the UMTS standard should change it. Although UMTS is slow in getting started, there is a huge market for new equipment and for equipment replacement in the short term.

We are all expecting continued growth, which is the reason for our large number of new outlets in Europe. Our main competitors that could also be our customers are integrators such as Motorola, Nortel, Alcatel and Nokia, etc., to give you an idea of the size of the market!

#### > Is this the first time that Stratex has set up in the South ?

Claude Echahamian : All European operations were organised from England until 2002, when the Aix head office was opened. We now have six employees (salesmen, technicians, project leaders) in Aix, and this number will undoubtedly increase in the next few years. Our growth is steady with a regular increase in the number of customers.

We have opened offices in Lisbon and branches in Madrid, Munich, Zagreb, Bratislava and Athens, from this Aix base. We are thinking of setting up in North Africa where there is already an office, but this will be an independent outlet.

#### > How did Provence Promotion help you ?

Claude Echahamian : Provence Promotion acted mainly as a host, since we did not need any special financing or subsidies to set up. We discovered them on the Internet, and their team drew the attention of the group's General Management to the region. We have also been encouraged by the Pays d'Aix Développement team that paved the way in terms of office space. In short, we were welcomed by a group of very active and convincing persons!



Claude Echahamian, General Director of Stratex - South and Central Europe

#### What does the Stratex group do?

Stratex Network manufactures wireless radio links (point to point link). It is an American company quoted on the NASDAQ stock exchange, which is one of the world leaders in this sector.

Instead of using optical fibres or copper wire, Stratex installs radio links equipped with directional antennas that enable data transmission by radio waves. Our radio links are capable of connecting sites almost 50 kilometres apart.

This technology is useful for mobile telecommunication operators and operators of high-speed accesses to connect heavy traffic areas or remote areas to central areas, at minimum cost. Since cable engineering is very expensive, this already old technique can be used to create a perfect communication grid over a country.

Web site: [www.stratexnet.com](http://www.stratexnet.com)