

Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Focus:

Saving a Warehouse Business in Russia

Integra Russia demonstrates that the Best Way to Teach is to Do

Integra Russia has found a practical and effective way to show clients that they practice what they preach. In 2007, they purchased a struggling warehouse business in Moscow. As they have worked to get this company back on its feet, they have clearly demonstrated to their Small- and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) clients that it is possible to operate with integrity, be successful, and have a positive impact in their communities.



By turning around a failing warehouse business, Integra Russia demonstrated to clients that biblical business principles can and do work.

Integra Russia staffer Aleksey Klinkov manages the business, which had been established to provide storage for Christian individuals and organizations at a reasonable cost. Clients included Christian printing houses and missionary agencies, and most of them were non-profit. On purchasing the warehouse, Integra inherited not only these clients, but all of the business's problems as well. For example, 40 percent of the clients were behind on their rental payments. As one Integra staff member said, "It's a lot harder when you take over a project or business from someone than it is to start a new one, because you get all of their problems."

Integra's first priority was to motivate clients to pay their debts. They offered incentives and discounts, and postponed due dates, yet nothing seemed to work. On top of the unreliable clientele, the rent on the



warehouse building increased by 50 percent. Hoping to boost their marketing, Integra hired someone to design a website for them. However, the web designer turned out to be a scam artist. He took their prepayment but never created the website.

The first six months were bleak, and at times Integra Russia staff wondered if they were going to be able to salvage the company. Other business owners might have turned to unethical practices in this situation. Yet Integra held fast to biblical principles of business management, just as they train their clients to do. They knew the importance of being an example to their SME clients, and were determined to operate with integrity.

And God honored their choice. Despite the severe financial situation, they managed to keep 90 percent of the clients, pay competitive salaries to their employees, and pay all their taxes. After the first year, the warehouse attracted a new client who sells fireplaces. This business owner rented 40% of the warehouse space, which gave the company the boost it needed to break even.

Aleksey reports that business gets better and better every month. He is now considering expanding to include transportation services for clients. Currently, Aleksey offers logistics for railroad delivery, but hopes to offer truck delivery of clients' goods as well.



God has truly blessed Aleksey and Integra Russia for their integrity and they now have a fully functioning, profitable business. Most important, the warehouse has been a solid example and inspiration for their SME clients.

Business...

...impacting society

...changing communities

...touching lives with the Gospel.