

## **Success Story: SaM Solutions** <sup>[1]</sup>

**Headings:** • Hall of Fame

The IT industry in Belarus is developing steadily and steadily. The high-tech park is replenished with new residents, the growing level of foreign exchange earnings that IT specialists provide to the country makes us keep quiet ... and dream of the profession of a programmer <sup>[2]</sup>. Who are the top managers of Belarusian IT companies, how did those who, without exaggeration, the HTP is proud of today, get on their feet?

With questions and sweets, we dropped in for tea with Marat Ebzeev, director of SaM Solutions.



**- Marat Anzorovich, how was the company founded? Who and under what circumstances came up with the idea of creating a company? Who stood at the origins?**

- The company was founded in 1993 by a team of graduates of the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics.

The founder of the company, Andrey Vladimirovich Bakhirev, graduated from the RTI (Department of Computer Engineering, specializing in computers). After graduation, he remained to work at the department as an assistant, defended his thesis. Subsequently, he worked at RTI as an associate professor and head of the department of economic informatics.

In 1992, he received an annual scholarship from the German Exchange Academy (DAAD), trained at the University of Kassel (Germany). In 1993, he first came to CeBIT as a visitor, where he met his first customer - the director of Quantum Helmut Ludwigs. In August 1993, Helmut came to Minsk to select the first employees from among the candidates who were initially selected by Andrei Vladimirovich (it was originally planned that the Minsk structure would become the Minsk division of Quantum). And so the first team of the company was formed, consisting of: Andrey Bakhirev, Mikhail Vinogradov, Valery Grushev, Alexander Deev, Orest Mikhailyuk, Igor Repinetsky, Oleg Sukach, Pavel Khovrenkov. Alexander Zhukovets joined a little later.

**What did you have to go through on the way to success? Were there any funny stories?**

- Anyone who is familiar with at least part of that first group can easily imagine how much fun it was to work. Many anecdotal stories were associated with those first months, which can now be remembered with pleasure. To convey the spirit and mood of that company, I can only briefly describe how, when loading their luggage on the train from Dortmund to Minsk (they transported computers to the Minsk office), they managed to forget the most expensive system unit on the platform. Fortunately, everything worked out. And the system unit reached Minsk.

Hellmuth was not the only one who greatly contributed to the formation of the firm. Huge support in the development of the company was provided by the then RTI rector Viktor Makarovich Ilyin, one of the Siemens managers Peter Winkler and, especially, Reinhard Jung. Reinhard (more precisely, his company CAF) became not only one of our major customers, but also joined the company as a partner.

**- Which "Star" led you to cooperate with Germany?**

- One of our employees in 1994 saw an advertisement in a newspaper that Siemens was looking for software developers in Belarus <sup>[3]</sup>. The announcement itself was unusual, but even more unusual was the choice of newspaper - I think it was Zvezda. Approximately six months later, three representatives of Siemens arrived in Minsk, who also visited us. They

liked our German-speaking team (primarily Oleg Sukach and Pavel Khovrenkov), we especially showed ourselves during a joint dinner in a restaurant. This, apparently, was one of the most significant feasts - for many years after that, our German guests left indelible impressions .

**- Who were you before becoming the director of the company? Maybe dreamed of something completely different?**

- In 1989 he graduated from the Belarusian State University with a degree in jurisprudence. Prior to joining the company, he worked at a large Belarusian plant in various positions, then, since 1995, as a legal adviser at one of the Belarusian enterprises. In 2002, he began working in the same position at SaM Solutions. In principle, I was a good lawyer and a person very passionate about extreme sports. I did not think about a career as a manager then. But in September 2005, I received an offer to become the director of Samsolutions Minsk, which, to be honest, was somewhat unexpected for me. It is important to note that relations built on mutual understanding and trust have developed between the management of the Minsk office and the founders of the company from the very beginning. Working in such conditions is interesting and exciting.



Therefore, having the trust of the founders and a team of professional deputies, I had no doubts about our prospects. And so it happened. We look forward only with optimism!

**- I would like to ask with a quote from a famous film: “What is the strength, brother?” So what is the strength of SaM Solutions ?**

- Sociability, friendliness, the ability of our employees to speak the same language with clients and maintain excellent relationships (including informal ones), the desire to complete the project in the best possible way - this is what made it possible for our company to become one of the leading IT companies in Republic of Belarus.



Now we are already a group of companies under the common brand SaM Solutions, a large enterprise with a large number of customers and projects, with a streamlined production process, with vast experience. At the same time, SaM Solutions is still a friendly environment, both for customers and for the employees themselves. Clients come to us because it is comfortable to work with us and we can be trusted.

**For reference:**

Marat Ebzeev - participant of the First record of the Republic of Belarus in parachuting in the class of large formations 12way (2009). Number of parachute jumps: 558. He also enjoys playing hockey (a participant in the championship of the Association of Hockey Fans).



**Victor Mankin**

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Published by: [Alice\\_Karpenko](#)<sup>[4]</sup>, July 23, 2015 - 13:16

**Source:** <https://www.kv.by/node/11776>

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