

## RKM plans focus on banking industry - Venezuela

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Venezuelan tech firm RKM IT Solutions, a division of US systems integration company NewMarket Technology, plans to target the local banking industry with volume licensing contracts from Microsoft (Nasdaq: MSFT), CEO Samuel Gamarra told BNAmericas.

In October 2007, RKM was awarded with the Microsoft Large Account Reseller and Enterprise Software Advisor (LAR/ESA) partner status from Gold Partner, which allows the company to sell volume licensing.

According to Gamarra, RKM plans to target the banking industry with Microsoft licensing programs, an area where there are plenty of opportunities because, due to international regulations, banks need to open tenders for almost all their processes, and the new partner status gives RKM a competitive advantage in those tenders.

RKM expects sales to reach US\$4mn this year, up 43.5% on the US\$3.5mn seen in 2007, with Microsoft licenses being the driver.

The training area was the largest growing segment in 2007, increasing sales 79% compared to 2006. The overall services area, including training, projects and outsourcing represent 80% of total RKM revenues, with the remainder coming from licenses sales for Microsoft and CA (NYSE: CA). Microsoft represents 90% of this area.

With over nine years of presence in the Venezuelan market, RKM offers helpdesk and manpower outsourcing services. It also develops projects over Microsoft's platforms and consultancy services over Microsoft and CA software.

As a division of NewMarket, RKM plans to take advantage of NewMarket's network in Latin America and is already in negotiations with NewMarket's Brazilian unit UniOne to offer in Venezuela their products or replicate some commercial experiences.

Commenting on the overall environment in Venezuela, Gamarra said this will be a year of uncertainty . "In order to survive you need to focus on short-term planning. Luckily, there is a very positive scenario economically speaking, because there is plenty of money around thanks to [high international] oil prices, so I believe this will be a year of growth," he said.

According to international tech consultancy IDC statistics, the Venezuelan IT market is expected to grow 20% this year, representing one of the highest growth rates in all Latin America, from the US\$1.8bn recorded in 2007, IDC Venezuela general director Judith Gil told BNAmericas.

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Business News Americas

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