

MCI Management presents Everest awards for the eleventh time

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On 21 November 2013, the eleventh annual Everest 2013 gala was organized by MCI Management SA. During the ceremony, the fund presented awards for the best performing portfolio companies: Morele.net and Travelata.ru

As every year, MCI Management presented awards to the most effectively developing companies belonging to the fund. The 11th edition honored the companies **Travelata.ru**, the leading company on the Russian online travel market and **Morele.net**, Poland's leading online seller of IT equipment.

The annual gala is one of the most important events in the Private Equity industry in our country. The program of the event featured in addition to the awarding ceremony four discussion panels. The most brilliant representatives of the PE/VC industry, the world of finance, as well as representatives of leading European and global online companies took part in the discussions preceding the presentation of the awards.

The first discussion panel titled "Going Global" pondered on the recipe for overcoming the barriers hindering foreign expansion and the creation of a global leader. The moderator of the discussion was Krzysztof Rybiński, former VP of NBP, currently the Dean of Vistula University. The panel discussion, which included Jens Hilgers- -- Geewa, Jose Marin - IG Expansion, Piotr Pietrzak - IBM Poland and Nenad Marovac - DN Capital, jointly concluded that the key to building a global business is the quality of personnel and the mentality of the owners, allowing them to think on a broader scale than just the local or regional market. In order to compete successfully on the international arena the companies also need market differentiators. The panel participants have emphasized that an entity may only become a global player, if it has unique features and is competitive in its industry.

The second panel concerned the emerging markets. The discussion was led by Tomasz

Danis, Investment Director of MCI Management. The participants thoroughly analyzed the reasons behind the attractiveness of the emerging markets. They also debated on how to make individual growth easier for young companies, at the same time securing them against being sold to global corporations. The panel members included Erol Bilecik, founder of Index Group, Alex Zaretsky, President of Travelata.ru, Claire Scott Priestley, Partner in the London branch of Squire & Sanders. According to the guests, the emerging markets although often referred to as one group followed different paths to achieve growth. Turkey is now on the threshold of an economic boom, which stems from demographic factors - more than half of the nation counting 70 million people is less than 28 years old. In turn, Russian companies prefer to build value in stages, starting by obtaining the leading position on the local market by incorporating best practices from the West, to strengthening the global business model by a strong local team.

The third debate concerned entrepreneurship. The attendees who included some of the top managers in the world wondered about what determines success. The host, Krzysztof Rybiński also asked what features an ambitious entrepreneur should have. The discussion included Luis Amaral, President of Eurocasch, Thor Bjorgolfsson, Managing Partner of Novator, Tomasz Czechowicz, Managing Partner of MCI Management, Marek Witkowski, President of Copernicus Securities and Michał Hucal, VP of Alior Bank. They concluded that a successful entrepreneur should have vision, optimism, determination, courage, the ability to take decisions and risk, the ability to act quickly and take on competition. Guests also emphasized that every entrepreneur should find his individual action model, which will be his ideal mix of his vision and inspiration coming from proven ideas and solutions of other companies.

The last, fourth discussion concerned innovation. The participants included Zbigniew Jagiełło, President of PKO BP, Piotr Czarnecki, President of Raiffeisen Bank, Marek Kapuściński, VP of Procter & Gamble Central Europe, Maciej Filipkowski, VP of Samsung Electronics Polska and Paweł Graniewski, VP of WSE. The prevailing factor in the debate was that every industry needs innovation. However, behind every innovation there are always people, that is why the most important thing for companies is to invest in people and knowledge, motivating their employees to think creatively.

This year's gala took place in the SOHO Factory in Warsaw. The postindustrial premises ideally composed with the topics being discussed that oscillated around new technologies and innovation. The partners of the gala included ABC Data, Colorovo, IBM, Na Powiślu, Copernicus Securities, Squire & Sanders, Próchnik, Deloitte and

Frisco. Media patronage of the event by Forbes, Puls Biznesu, ISB News, Bankier.pl and PAP Biznes.