

A Danish Family-Owned Business

If you cross the border from Germany into Denmark by the city of Flensburg you will bump into Kurt Olesen's single family home after only the second traffic light on the left side of the two-lane highway. You won't find a company sign either. As it turns out, that isn't even necessary since SmartWi uses modern communications technology to market their products. "We use mostly Skype", explains Kurt Olesen, founder and owner of SmartWi, "and naturally also e-mail and text messaging."

Kurt has been in this business since 1999. Back then he sold standard satellite equipment such as dishes, LNBs and receivers. He also became involved with selling Smart Cards that he acquired from Singapore, but then in 2004, with his electrical engineering background and with help from an engineering friend, Kurt came upon the idea of a wireless Smart Card reader, or SmartWi. Simply insert a Smart Card in the SmartWi to have its contents transferred wirelessly to three additional cards.

His partners in Singapore helped him find a production company in Taiwan. Now it looks like production will be outsourced in Malaysia. "Up to the end of 2006 we were able to sell roughly 30,000 SmartWi's", explains Kurt, "and for 2007 we expect to sell about 5000 SmartWi's a month." His customers are primarily dealers for which he has found a partner

in almost every country in Europe and also in many other Asian and African countries. "Every dealer pays the same price, regardless of how many are ordered." In this way Kurt is able to treat every dealer the same way and every dealer has the opportunity to realize similar profits.

Much of the SmartWi market is in Sweden: "20% of our deliveries go there while an additional 10% each goes to Greece, France and Poland", comments Kurt, and then continues, "Two thirds of our SmartWi orders are sent to Europe with the remaining third going to Asia and Africa." With the exception of TELE-satellite Magazine, Mr. Olesen does not advertise anywhere else: "All of the important players in the satellite industry read TELE-satellite, plus a stand at a satellite trade show would be too expensive", reveals Kurt as he explains

his marketing plan; a plan that we could only agree with!

The SmartWi's are packed for delivery in a small building adjacent to the family's home: His son Jens is responsible for packing and distribution while his wife Mona handles the incoming telephone calls as well as takes care of the books. Kurt has demonstrated that even a small family business can have great success and above all a worldwide customer base!



The Olesen Family home; SmartWi's headquarters.

The truck to the right is delivering a new version 8 SmartWi shipment to be stored in the building behind the house.



Kurt Olesen, SmartWi's owner, standing on the roof of his storage building next to the professional mast of his satellite dish.



Mona Olesen carries the Skype telephone set and handles all the incoming orders together with taking care of the books.



Jens Olesen packs and ships the SmartWi's and also randomly tests for functionality. Repairs are no longer part of the business plan: instead, defective units are exchanged and then returned to the manufacturer.