

Europlatform 2017 introductory speech – Małgorzata Felicka

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen

My name is Małgorzata Felicka and I have the honour to be the president of the Polish Rental Association - the P.R.A.

As the conference is held in Warsaw I would like to say a few words about the development of the rental industry in Poland.

Well, the beginnings were quite tough.

John Monaghan, my Scottish partner, and I started Atut Rental, in 1990 - the first proper rental company in Poland, and coincidentally, during the time of the transformation of the economic system.

The appearance of such a rental service, caused a deep disbelief among building companies. At that time nearly all were state owned and the tools and machines were being exchanged on the basis of friendship and favor and not on a commercial basis ...therefore "rental" for which you pay for was not really appreciated.

By the way, it is worth to note that under the communist system even such obvious terms as business, profit or costs were not familiar to managers and of no consequence to them.

Managers were accountable for achieving production plans and getting on well with the local party secretaries.

But that's history.

THANKFULLY

Today in 2017, almost all the European big players are here, in Poland. The market is growing at a good pace and attracting investors. I feel privileged to have participated in and witnessed these positive changes. If I were to point out the most important one, I would name the shift in the mentality of the Polish people.

Polish people have been absorbing the rules of the free economy and democracy from every possible available source. An important one was the path shown by foreign business which came here. As a result, today's managers in Poland are highly trained and perfectly capable of doing business in a competitive environment.

Now I would like to tell you about our association.

The P.R.A. is a young organization.

It was officially established in January 2016, has 14 members and about 40% of the Polish rental market. Most of the members, are big multi-national rental companies. Only three are national. Amongst our members are companies which rent mainly access equipment such as CityRent which is a golden sponsor of this conference, Riwal, whose country manager will be the next speaker, Mateco, Gizo and BAC.

Others like Boels, Cramo, Gam, Kiloutou Ramirent, Boels, and my company, Atut Rental, are general rental stores and have access equipment in their range.

Aggreco on the other hand rent mainly generators, Touax rent containers and

Clipper rent portable toilets and fencing.

Forming the association was an important step because it has become a forum which allows rental companies to work together to achieve common aims, while still competing with each other on a daily basis.

The P.R.A are striving to build something very precious which is called trust. It is in fact trust which enables people and Business to co-operate for the sake of mutual benefit. Trust is also the core concept of rental. It is also recognized that a low level of trust has been the most significant obstacle - apart from the lack of local capital –

to the growth of the Polish economy. There are historical reasons which caused it and in the P.R.A. we are trying to actively counteract them.

Speaking about trust I would like to share a small concern. There is a temptation all over the world to think that a less developed market is a place for making quick money and an outlet to distribute inferior, outdated or overused goods and low quality service. I think that anybody who is tempted in this way should be warned. Eventually it will be found out that actions presented on the surface as help, were in fact disguised attempts to take advantage of a weaker partner. This in turn will cause loss of trust which - as we in Poland know - is very hard to restore.

So let us, in the rental industry, be aware that such a shortsighted attitude is unwise and let us actively avoid this pitfall.

Thank you for your attention.

And now please welcome Wojciech Lisicki, member of the board of the PRA