

# THE PLACE PLACE TO BE



# THE PLACE TO BE OUR VISION

Success is a story with many dimensions. As the number-one supplier of Information Technology in the Nordic and Baltic regions, we could confidently tell you Atea's story just by focusing squarely on our corporate size, our market reach and our consistent ability to deliver on our pledge to achieve solid results in terms of revenue and profitability. On its own, that is an impressive story.

With 90 offices in seven European countries, staffed by over 7,300 professionals with a passion for what they do, our footprint on IT in the markets we serve is unmistakable. Our impact is lasting and significant. And the impression we leave with our customers, vendors and shareholders is indelibly positive. Indeed, what we are achieving together is important.

However, our story is just as much about how we have sustained growth and fostered deep loyalty in this highly competitive industry. Understanding this journey is how you get to know the reasons behind our ongoing success, why we do what we do as a business and why—remaining true to that Norwegian proverb—our focus remains fixed on the horizon. "Do not look to the ground for your next step; greatness lies with those who look to the horizon."

-Norwegian Proverb



# **HISTORY AND CULTURE HAND IN HAND**

Trusting people to make decisions on the ground and knowing that the company will stand by those decisions—it's a choice that delivers benefits twofold. Sønsteby sums it up; "There's no perfect model, but we believe that in the end we get more out of everything—from people to capital, from decisions to processes—when we trust people who are close to the action to exercise dynamic decision-making skills in their work."

Decentralized decision making and an empowered workforce does more than help build Atea's strong corporate culture. It also makes the company incredibly resilient in the marketplace. "Because of the way we work—locally focused, decentralized and driven by our culture—we are exceptionally robust in our ability to adapt to shifts in technology and market conditions. We are not as vulnerable to the risk of missing market changes that one might see in a more rigid, top-down organization."

### Creating a purpose and a vision

At Atea, we believe that information technology, combined with knowledge and creativity, can transform productivity and living standards across society. It is with this purpose that we set out to build a company to be the market leader in Information Technology in the Nordic and Baltic regions. Modern-day Atea began in 2006 (the company was founded in 1968) with the merger of the leading IT infrastructure providers in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Since then, the trajectory continued with the acquisition of over 50 companies, including the leading IT infrastructure provider in the Baltic region.

With ambition and purpose, we expanded Atea's product and service offering to provide the broadest range of Information Technology solutions and system integration competence in the industry. We built an office network to reach all major municipalities throughout the Nordic and Baltic regions. And we established internal systems to achieve scale efficiencies in purchasing, logistics, customer care and administration.

Finally, to bind together the combined resources of over 7,300 Atea employees across the regions, we have established a clear vision for Atea and direction for our culture - a method of collaboration and problem solving that helps achieve top performance.

#### This vision for Atea is - The Place to Be.

As the product of many years of consultation, and reflecting more than just a deep conviction about who we are as a company, The Place to Be underlines the important **choices** that went into building and growing Atea. As our CEO Steinar Sønsteby explains: "We wanted to build Atea with as few rules as possible, adhering to a structure while letting culture thrive. While structure is essential to running a large organization, it is determined and owned by the company and its management." He adds: "Culture, on the other hand, is owned by Atea employees. Making the choice to embrace that culture is what empowers our people. Fewer fixed rules means that we trust our employees to diagnose and solve problems to the satisfaction of our customers."

Who we choose to be, why we exercise the choices that matter most to us, how we achieve our goals, where we thrive, knowing what matters most, these are as much a part of Atea's story as are our financial achievements.

## Creating a sense of place

Just as the earliest origins of the word culture in many languages finds its roots in the cultivation of land—from which the growth of people and ideas can flourish—defining a sense of place was pivotal in bringing everyone together.

Today, Atea has 90 offices in nearly every place in the markets we serve, and has steadily expanded its competence from selling hardware to delivering complete IT solutions with system integration and managed services. As Sønsteby explains: "Business in this region is very decentralized. To be able to grow as fast as we want, we needed to be local. That means having offices in each of the markets we serve."

Bringing together regions that are as diverse as they are expansive— Atea has created a place greater than the sum of its parts. Out of many places emerges a single, greater sense of place.

Atea has created a working, learning and partnership experience that is different from anything else in the Nordic and Baltic IT marketplace. This is by design. As our company grew in size and in market presence, it was vital to find ways to instill in people in each region and in every city a sense of belonging when working for and with Atea.

At Atea, being The Place to Be is as much an invitation to our technology partners and our customers as it is to our employees and investors. Our culture encourages great ideas to grow and gives them the opportunity to propagate.

### Creating a center of gravity

Atea's vision is really to establish the company as a center of gravity for the wider community of IT professionals, customers and investors.

Interactions between employees, customers and partners occur with Atea at the hub.

For employees, this means we provide a dynamic workplace where talented professionals can learn and grow. For customers, this means we are at the hub of creative problem solving for the most complex IT requirements. And for our partners, it means we provide a unique environment that both connects people, ideas and business opportunities across the IT landscape.

Together with its customers and partners, Atea is committed to pursue its mission: **We Build the Future with IT.** Atea aims to positively influence society through building critical infrastructure for the public and private sector.

We support government agencies and businesses to expand their service offering through digitalization. We work together with national and local governments to build innovative new digital solutions for educating for our young people and for delivering healthcare and social services to the elderly. We design and implement networks which allow multinational companies to grow and enable governments to provide essential public services such as defense and police.

We are proud of the positive role we play in the development of our society and of the many recognitions we have received within corporate social responsibility and sustainability.

## Trust in our employees

Our vision and mission are rooted in our trust in the leadership of Atea. We have made important organizational choices based on this trust, including the choice of: how we continue to develop the company with a strong local presence; how we entrust teams to make decisions independently and learn from their experiences; how we stand up for each other; and how we empower regional managers and employees solve problems that are specific to where they live and work.

At Atea, leadership is more than what's exercised in a boardroom, it's what's practiced every day by our people across the company. With more autonomy comes greater responsibility. Atea employees know that they are trusted to make good decisions and with this comes ownership of the choices they make. The outcome is vibrant collaboration that enables us to achieve goals both large and small.

This is why Atea invests more in on-the-job coaching than in business reviews. The alternative would just be more non-customer time, and we don't want that. Our goal instead is to learn from every experience - that's the path to generating new business and to fostering deep loyalty.

# **LOOKING TO THE HORIZON**

Our track record to date underlines that we have been successful in growing Atea while meeting the needs of customers in a quickly changing industry. But just as that Norwegian proverb counsels, we keep our focus on the horizon. Just as technologies will continue to evolve, we know the needs of people will change. Atea's deep sense of culture—powered by the choices we make every day—is why we are ready to greet the future—and to thrive in it—together with our partners, customers and investors.

We combine the power of our local presence across 90 offices with the strength of Atea's centralized business development and international scale. We bring together the best technology partners, empower the best leaders and attract the best talent—united in solving the unique business problems of customers in every region we serve.

Ours is a smart culture, creating winning conditions for intelligent, creative problem solving. You can't copy culture - it goes to the heart of the values that makes Atea unique. That is why in summarizing our vision as The Place to Be, we can look with pride at what we have created at Atea and look with confidence toward the future – toward ONE Atea.



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