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Francis Cadin's Pursuit of Happiness

By Rita Stange ConnectPress Staff Writer

Datakit CEO Francis Cadin has been around. He's travelled the world as an engineer and teacher in places like Brazil, India and the French Guiana.

After his travels, Cadin returned to his homeland, France, and studied computer graphic engineering. He is a postgraduate mechanical engineer. He spent some time working in CAM and was introduced to the field of CAD data exchange while working at GOSet, an organization dedicated to the French CAD data exchange standard format SET (Standard d'Échange et de Transfert). This was around the late 80's, where Cadin also learned about the STEP format and its capability. "It was the very beginning of CAD data exchange development and I was enthusiastic to take part in such an adventure," declared Cadin.

In 1994, Cadin started Datakit, a private French CAD data exchange company in hopes of developing and promoting his own solutions.

The France native finally settled in Santa Barbara, California, recently, where he launched Datakit Inc. The size of the American market and the interest expressed by the vendor community in Datakit's technology were two main reasons for the move. "I felt that I had to move to the States to build a strong communication channel with our main customers, the software developers and to heighten Datakit's visibility, and deliver better support to our customers," said Cadin.

"Currently, the success of Datakit, a regularly consolidated niche business, is a real accomplishment," added Cadin. "I belong to the pioneers of this activity and began when there was no real business market, neither experienced nor expertise. We are now starting to operate on a market where customers are upgrading existing solutions. This means that the market has become more mature and customers know more about what they expect to recover."

The 55-year-old Cadin, has been in the CAD data exchange field for 17 years now. Cadin feels, to become a successful vendor one must embrace a multi-cultural and international environment. "You must feel comfortable being in the middle of different software companies," assured Cadin. "Of course sometimes, it is indeed difficult to manage pressures from vendors and to keep up with the demands of the vendor's pace of new releases."

"However, I'm proud to have been able to become, step by step, as one of the major component suppliers."

Besides being the man with the strategy for Datakit, he also handles marketing and sales.

Cadin is married with two young children, Valentin and Capucine and enjoys endurance activities, such as biking and playing tennis. He also likes driving his SUV with his family along the California roads and getting away to Africa to ride dirt bikes with friends. Cadin savors having lunch with friends or family, especially cuisine from Lyon, Alaskan King Crab and African dishes such as tieboudienne and chicken yassa or maffé. The worldly traveler embraces rock and roll and enjoys listening to Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, The Rolling Stones and AC/DC.

Rita Stange is a reporter with ConnectPress and holds a BA in Journalism and Art Studio from the University of New Mexico. She is a music and arts enthusiast.