“It Is Crucial to Invest Resources for Continued Improvement and Innovation”
Being firmly committed to innovation and capable of quickly adapting oneself to customers’ needs are two key pillars of the Microsoft business strategy Microsoft. According to Patrick de Smedt, chairman of Microsoft Europe, Middle East and Africa, it is about knowing how to turn research into economic value and understanding the importance of innovation.

The Redmond-based company, which has 19 research and development centers in the EMEA area, last year invested $6.1 billion in R&D throughout the world. This figure amounts to 15% of the total R&D investment by the world’s top 25 software companies.

The Microsoft executive stressed the fact that the goal of his company is to consider the customers’ needs in order to obtain the necessary feedback for their innovation and development activities. He also said that to be competitive with innovation, it is necessary to have an optimistic attitude and be able to “dream up something that you think can change the world for the world better.” He also said that he considers it crucial to know how to lure the top talents to Europe and perform detailed follow-up on the innovations. De Smedt also mentioned that his company holds dialogues with the Spanish government in an effort to achieve an increase in broadband speed and lower prices for Internet access in Spain, which currently ranks among the most expensive in Europe. On the subject of open-source software, De Smedt said that Microsoft does not perceive this as a threat. “Both models must coexist,” he insisted.