

REBASING Research-based Competence Brokering

WP 5 – Performing the Innovation Audits

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INNOVATION BROKERING in Treviso Tecnologia...

Treviso Tecnologia “Innovation Projects Development” department

Specifically dedicated to provide support actions to companies in the frame of the Open Innovation concept:

- Projects preparation to participate to EU/national/regional call for proposals (access to public funds)
- Technology auditing
- Innovation auditing

Human resources involved:

- DAVE Anilkumar: degree in Computer Science; Senior Broker and department’s manager
- GALANTI Marco: degree in Economics; Junior Broker
- RAGAZZON Andrea: degree in Social Psychology; Junior Broker
- BATTISTELLA Marco: degree in Economics; Junior Broker

INNOVATION BROKERING in Treviso Tecnologia...

Other internal services provided to companies:

Neroluce Laboratory

- co-design
- virtual prototyping
- augmented reality
- usability/ergonomics
- technical manuals preparation

"Training and counselling services" area

Managerial training about Innovation Management

"IP protection services"

INNOVATION BROKERING in Treviso Tecnologia...

MAIN OBJECTIVES

A continuous development and sustainment of a network (Triple Helix) able to give effective answers to the companies' needs, in terms of (Open) Innovation.

"Activating" the right nets of the network, providing information and favouring an effective contact between companies and third (selected!) parties.

Building a strong relationship with the companies, based on trust and customer retention (enterprises' perception of the service's value provided by Treviso Tecnologia, as a due)

The Broker position in the local OI network

All kind of companies (ie industrial sector and size) are targeted in the services delivery, unless the main focus is towards SMEs:

- SMEs: support in rising the awareness about the Innovation issues and in finding funding tools to implement Innovation projects (SMEs usually don't have enough financial capacity to launch and manage R&D projects by their own)
- Large companies: providing professional services for specific projects where the company has the financial capacity (and a dedicated budget) to sustain them

Treviso Tecnologia acts in all three OI scenarios:

- 1. Methodology** (finalized to sustain a network development)
- 2. Network**
- 3. Transfer of technology** (mostly in big companies)

The Broker position in the local OI network

Objectives of Treviso Tecnologia, in the frame of the Innovation Audit expected by the Rebasing Project:

1.to validate the Broker Profile

1.to strengthen the relationship with a company already involved in some services provision, in terms of defining a path/project in the frame of the OI issue (~~a Broker~~ mainly focused on the Network)

1.to explore the possibility to involve a service company, usually not targeted by our services managed by the "Innovation Project Development" department (~~a Broker~~ mainly focused on the Methodology)

INNOVATION AUDIT: the Brokers and companies choice

Broker mainly focused on the Methodology: Company 1

KA0. Identification of the strategy

KA1. Firm's innovation needs identification

CA0. Identification of the company's business strategy

CA1. Realisation of organisational audit

Junior Broker used to have relations with service companies, who knows the peculiarities of this type of organization

Broker mainly focused on the Network: Company 2

KA5. Exploitation and protection

KA6. Networking

CA5. Innovation exploitation and patent protection

CA6. Building, maintaining and expanding networks among R&D providers and users

Junior Broker already used to provide specific (internal) services to companies in the frame of OI

Innovation Audit in Company 1

Company 1

Funded in 1957 as design and installation of heating and hydraulic equipment company, nowadays its core business is focused on wiring systems' realization and to other subsidiary activities about heating and hydraulic equipment, in order to provide turnkey services. Second generation company currently managed by the original funder's son, company 1 has now employees.

- Previous and current company's involvement in training activities provided by Treviso Tecnologia, specifically focused on employees' upgrading
- Brief presentation of the Rebasing project, asking for cooperation (Innovation Audit)
- Coaching activities provided to the Junior Broker by an internal coach (Senior Broker), manager of the "Innovation Projects Development" department
- Meeting with the company and Innovation Audit realization (Junior Broker and Coach, together)
- Innovation Audit report writing
- Innovation Audit first results provision, to the company

IA in Company 1: relevant elements

- Company pull approach: preliminary visit to analyze company needs and to collect and provide preliminary information
- Company 1 focused on turnkey services provision: it sells competences to provide a specific service, by a professional mixing of "hard" products available in the market, constantly monitored (innovation driven by third parties, the suppliers, creating a waterfall innovation environment) to be able to give a compliant answer suitable to the customers' requirements in the shorter time
- Low awareness about Innovation (the company hasn't effectively thought about innovation since now, but they're looking for something new to face the current market), so part of the IA has been dedicated to explain and deepen the Open Innovation issue

SWOT analysis

S: having at disposal a wide range of products suppliers, constantly monitored by dedicated and professional/skilled staff

W: innovation driven by third parts (suppliers, but any type of co-engineering)

O: other interesting sectors to widen the market, internationalization possibility

T: investments are required, customers' characteristics (mainly public sector) create some constraints

IA in Company 1: relevant elements

- The company acts as a “quick responder” to provide an effective answer to the customers’ needs (already defined) in a compliant and not creative way (as it is not required!)
- Particular attention dedicated to the human resources training and upgrading (the company’s business is “selling competencies”!)
- Any kind of systematic knowledge capitalization and any specific methodology for know-how management (use of an internal database about the products available in the market)
- Exploring opportunities to be innovative (and more competitive): to implement a new and innovative service (building automation, system integrator); to follow the internationalization path; to strategically manage and capitalize the internal knowledge and know-how
- Deepening funding opportunities

IA in Company 1: comments from the J. Broker

- It was clear, from the beginning, that part of the IA must be dedicated to make clearness about the Innovation (and OI) concept
- Particular attention in catching the openness, propensity and potentiality levels to Innovation, in order to be able to provide "acceptable" proposals
- Attention in setting a positive attitude in the company, basis for a trustful relationship
- The audit has indeed shown that the company has the competencies, resources and potentialities to plan and manage an innovation strategy/project

Some comments from the owner:

- The company pays a lot of attention to the market and economy signals, as a ship looking for the right wind, BUT the problem is when it is not possible to perceive any type of wind!!
- Since "yesterday" it was enough to capture and follow the wind (professionalism and flexibility), but now we need "innovation" to survive
- If there is no wind, it is necessary to use oars, but how?

Innovation Audit in Company 2

Company 2

Set up in 1972, the Group has been a leader in the plastic injection moulding for 40 years. Now it is a manufacturing and commercial group with a diversified presence in the international market through five companies.

Company 2 designs, produces and sells items for furnishing and organizing home and work space and containers for disposing of special hospital waste.

It operates in Europe and internationally, exporting its products in more than 80 countries. It has three commercial branches in EU (France, Spain and Germany) and a production unit in Canada; currently 250 employees.

- Previous and current company's involvement in training activities (about Innovation Management) and professional services (Nero Luce Laboratories) provided by Treviso Tecnologia
- Brief presentation of the Rebasing project, asking for cooperation (Innovation Audit)

Innovation Audit in Company 2

- Coaching activities provided to the Junior Broker by an internal coach (Senior Broker), manager of the “Innovation Projects Development” department
- Meeting with the company and Innovation Audit realization (Junior Broker and Coach, together)
- Innovation Audit report writing
- Innovation Audit first results provision, to the company

IA in Company 2: relevant elements

- Both company pull and company push (the company already knows Treviso Tecnologia, as they took part to training initiatives focused on Innovation issues and they used the services of virtual prototyping provided by Neroluce laboratory)
- Strong focus on the end users as basic element to create new (innovative) products (incremental innovation driven by customers)
- Quite recent attention to (product) innovation as part of the company's strategy for competitiveness (still not structured and quite weak)
- (Too) small team dedicated to manage the innovation process (five people)
- Very expensive production process, which is a limit to pursue a disruptive innovation
- Searching for external professional support to improve the internal competencies about innovation (use of techniques as brainstorming, focus groups, multitasking groups, cross contamination groups) and to outsource critical steps
- Recent use of some web tools and channels to collect specific information about the end user (possible area of improvement)
- Relationships with Research centers and institutions present but still low and not well structured (possible area of intervention)

IA in Company 2: comments from the J. Broker

- Previous relations with the company, in providing professional services about virtual prototyping, have been important to perform the IA in a positive and open environment, being able to directly focus on critical issues about OI Innovation within the company
- A previous knowledge about the company makes possible to directly investigate the possible areas in intervention
- It's important to have some basis about the company's sector, type of production process, market, technologies, etc. BUT just some basis, in order to use the same language and to identify possible areas of intervention (a broker is not a consultant!)
- If there is trust from the company, built through positive experiences (professional service provision), there are the right basis to involve it in more structured/advanced projects (major focus on the network development or on specific ToI actions)