

News from Sòphia High Tech S.r.l (Naples-Italy): how things have changed in the past few months



Antonio, in January 2014 you have released an interview to HTxA Blog. Things have changed quite a bit since then and Sòphia High Tech S.r.l has celebrated its 2nd year of life just a few days ago.

Angela Incampo: Could you please describe your customer satisfaction regarding your product/service and the success of the business in the European market?

Antonio Caraviello: Sòphia High Tech, "born" in July 2013, has been classified by the Ministry of Economic Development (Italy) as an innovative start-up. This company classification identifies a company that has as its sole goal the development and production of products and services with highly technological value, and whose founding members are at least PhD students.

The idea, behind the establishment of the company, was to design and sell standard fixtures (according to UNI, EN, ISO, ASTM, DIN, BS, AF, etc.) and special fixtures to perform mechanical tests on innovative materials, as composite materials. The approach to the market requirements has been very flexible because Sòphia, over assisting clients in the testing phase, ensures total support in engineering with high technological value, especially in R&D. Then the growth of Sòphia, evaluated relative to the market, has a high performance index since its birth (about half a year ago) has enriched the core business of all the skills of PhDs and university professors, in the shareholder structure.

Sòphia has started from the realization of testing equipment and now realizes, for example, an appropriate customized equipment for a customer, to perform the tests of friction welding titanium. For this reason the company is undergoing a spin off accreditation at the University of Naples Federico II .



A.I.: Please describe the achievements of your growth strategy over the past 2 years.

A.C.: Below the goals for business growth, achieved in the past 18 months of activity:

- Purchase of certified FEM software with high technological potential (MSC PATRAN, NASTRAN, ADAMS, MARC)
- Purchase of CAD design software (CATIA, ENOVIA, 3D VIA COMPOSER)
- Quality Certification: ISO 9001
- Spacious and professional Headquarters, adjacent to a manufacturing company (Mek Euro)
- Creating jobs: No. 10
- Creating internship: No. 1
- Creating university internships: No. 3
- Professional training for employees (from University Professors)
- Partnerships with manufacturing companies (MP, Mek Euro, Zito) for a valid supply chain
- Partnership with the University of Naples Federico II for technology transfer
- Admission to Smart & Start financing (Start & Smart, an initiative of Invitalia and the Ministry of Economic Development, finances innovative start-ups which have an innovation project characterized by a significant technology content)
- Sòphia has been named by the Ministry of Economic Development: National Success case
- Creating a solid network of customers in Italy (Fincantieri, FIAT, University of Naples Federico II, Alenia Aeronautica, ENEL, DE WALT, Ansaldo, National Institute of Nuclear Physics, Magnaghi Aeronautica)
- Access to internationalization programs with the Italian Trade Agency through managerial training
- Creation of a Marketing Strategy (stickers, brochures, website, trade fairs, business card, business ties, social networks, interviews)
- Writing a research program
- Awareness for the return of the brains

- Writing an academic paper, still in validation

A.I.: What are the key strategies that allow you to be innovative?

A.C.: The key strategies that led TBiz results, are summarized below:



1. To train technical team and management.

Sòphia is a company with limited liability, but the people who work for it have the typical approach of a joint stock company, maintaining the flexibility that distinguishes SMEs. Each of the young PhDs who founded Sòphia has a management role and therefore is training day by day in order to improve the overall business performance.

Engineers have been trained to act ad hoc in order to gain a highly critical skill on engineering problems. Because the company's core business is focused on research projects it is necessary for the human resources to have an eclectic expertise on technical problems as well.

2. To involve human resources in the company's mission.

Sòphia considers its employees the main stakeholders of the company. The founders were able to transmit to each employee the corporate vision, spending time to plan their personal growth. The partners have therefore decided to support themselves economically not perceiving gains or a fixed salary from the company, despite working actively in Sòphia. Sophia believes enormously that the managerial sector meets continually technical field, generating the necessary knowledge exchange. This because we strongly believe that the technicians of today will be the managers of tomorrow.

3. To find the right partnerships.

Innovation is pursued offering to customers a complete package which includes not only the digital prototyping but also the physical mock up and testing. For this reason, the first partner of Sòphia is Mek Euro, a manufacturing company, which operates in the field of precision engineering. Both companies are located in the same building, so each market request is processed through both for -design, for production and industrial automation.

4. To involve the University.

Sòphia is the bridge between research and company (business) since it was founded by researchers who gained high industrial skills. Sòphia is waiting to receive the spin off accreditation from the University of Naples Federico II, and it actively works in close

collaboration with the DICMAPI - Department of chemical engineering, material and industrial production of this university.

5. To make an appropriate business communication.

The web now defines Sophia "the team of red ties". The idea is always to introduce ourselves as a compact team, inspired by TEAM of Formula One or football TEAM: All united and ready to solve a problem, or to answer a need.

6. To study.

The managerial areas of Sòphia are all driven by PhDs. They look deep at everyday issues related to their work and make strategic choices increasingly innovative. Even in this sense, the approach to customers is highly technical, involving them from the outset, in the technical and operational choices.

7. To join the national financing.

Sophia stood out in Italy for its uniqueness and therefore had access to funding programs promoted by the Ministry of Economic Development. As a innovative start up Sòphia received funding from INVITALIA, with 70% of the grant. This allows to accelerate exponentially its business investments, focusing constantly on business growth. The TEAM, highly motivated, sees the professional challenges as the solution to a continuous growth in order to become LEADER in the field of Engineering

We are also very proud to announce that we have been chosen for the [European Business Awards](#) amongst 24,000 companies.

Antonio, many thanks again for making us aware of the developments occurred in the past months.

Eingestellt von [Angela Incampo](#) um 7/23/2015