

CISTRANA Conference: SME Day

One SME Point of View

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Alterface

- Vision

- To facilitate man-machine interactions with multi-sensory devices
- Focus on the fields of edutainment (entertainment and education) and information at first

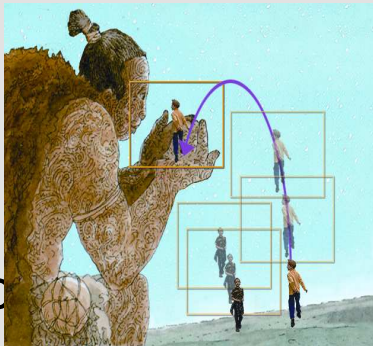
- Business

- From Ad hoc projects for museums
- To solutions for the edutainment industry (science centers, museums...)
- To products for the entertainment market (attraction and theme parks)

Key point: advanced interactivity -> **permanent innovation** -> **research**

Alterface – Research Projects

- **FOUNDED** thanks to research project
IST *art.live* project (FP5, EU)
2 years
8 institutions (5 countries); 18 researchers
4 people at Université catholique de Louvain (UCL, Belgium)
Prolongation thanks to success for 4 months up to April 2002



Research project
exploitation and market (art & culture)

No consortium Agreement !

Alterface – Research Projects

- **Regional Research Support** (« avance récupérable »)
 - ARENA project
 - 4 persons for 2 years
 - Product-oriented -> led to the prototype version of « Desperados »
 - Use of consultant « permitted », but ideally regional ones
- **Celtic (EUREKA) Research project**
 - TIFANIS project
 - 8 partners
 - 2 persons for 2 years
 - EU Eureka label but national/regional funding
- **CRAFT (FP6, EU) project**
 - U-CREATE project
 - 7 partners
 - 1 person for 1,5 year
 - Coordinator, as leader among the 3 initiating SME
- **Integrated Project (IP in FP6, EU)**
 - INSCAPE project
 - 13 partners
 - 2 persons for 4 years

Interest for SMEs

EU projects allow to:

- Access additional knowledge which is not available regionally
- Federate more « support » on a large problem
- Get a broader view/perspective on problems/issues
- Receive visibility / quality label

Problems/Threats for SMEs

- Timeframe
 - 4 years is long for an SME
 - What if project orientations change/evolve differently?
- Sharing Knowledge
 - Not always easy, esp. if this is your one idea...
 - But CA are done for that
- Administrative Layer
 - Already for preparing the proposal
 - Ips: overkill!
- Investment
 - Proposals = lottery ? RoI is extremely low!

Personal View

- 3 Layers for SME Research
 1. Investigation/Prospection
 - Hook up on a (large) IST project
 - STREP OK
 - IP: (almost) spend more time in reporting than research!
 - No specific expectations, open mind
 - Pbm if pre-product is expected
 2. Feasibility/Proof of concept
 - Team up to reach a specific objective/prototype
 - CRAFT ideal, but for the fact that you are not supposed to do research yourself

Personal View

- 3 Layers for SME Research (cont'd)
 3. Applicative Research & Development/Proproduct
 - SMEs must keep it internal
 - National/Regional funding are more appropriate
 - Individual « grants » is any at EU level (?)

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Additional Aspects

- Ideal Partners?
 - Depends to phase (1, 2 or 3)
 - Depends who is the project leader and what is his/her vision
 - Team with people you already know (some of them)
- IPR
 - Pay attention to the Consortium Agreement, from the proposal up
- RoI
 - Pbm of number of proposals vs acceptance rate
 - Successfully preparing a proposal is a full-time job for 3 to 6 months!
 - > 2-steps evaluation
 - > Pbm of expertise during reviews... Criteria for the 3 reviewers?