

When you watch the Olympics, think in AEQ!



Institution: AEQ. Aplicaciones Electrónicas Quasar
Country: Spain, Madrid
Type of partnership: HEI-SME collaboration
Website: <http://www.aeq.es>

Background

AEQ was founded in 1983 by a group of students who identified a niche market in radio and television broadcast

AEQ maintains its position as a leader in its sector thanks to its constant commitment to innovation, with more than 7,000 clients in 100 different countries.

It is a clear example of the importance of innovation, investing almost 15% of its annual turnover in R&D.

Since 1992 it has been present at the biggest sporting events (Olympics, World Cup) on a global scale, supplying broadcast equipment.

Story

AEQ has been developing, manufacturing and marketing equipment, automation systems and production systems for radio, television and multimedia for more than 35 year

At that time, it was pioneer as high tech company in Spain, collaborating closely with CDTI (Spanish Centre for Industrial Technology Development). Through time, several innovation projects has been co-financed at European, national and Regional level.

Stakeholders

In the beginning, AEQ was very much involved in launching industrial networks in order to articulated and organized the new generation of tech-based companies searching for collaboration, partnership or lobbying. The more relevant is AMETIC.

In this century, AEQ focuses on universities and research centers, recognizing their capacity for knowledge generation, which they integrate into their technology.

Other important linkages that AEQ develops are: Technological platforms; audiovisual companies and institutions networks; companies and/or institutions dedicated to entertainment and/or sports networks; digital enablers.

"All these years I've been involved in pro-bono industrial associative activities which, over time, have turned into a good investment for AEQ"
(Rogelio de la Fuente, AEQ co-Founder)

"University-AEQ collaboration is an opportunity to keep their company at the forefront of innovation"

Resource needs

Over all, highly qualified students to be employed

Currently, the speed at which technological advances are produced, and the speed at which these advances break into the AEQ sector are fast and furious.

It seems very difficult to attract talent from universities with the appropriate training to be productive at the moment of their insertion in the company. Thus, it is the company itself the one that must allocate part of its time and human resources to carry out training in a personalized way.

This is a quick process with UC3M students since they have excellent academic records, but still, for a SME it is very time demanding and cost consuming.

Outputs

- Its **international expansion** strategy has been driven from its Madrid offices where its headquarters and research and innovation centre are located.
- **International support** thanks to its offices in Miami, Portugal, Catalonia and New Delhi.
- **Strong integration** in its regional, national and international ecosystem.
- A **large commercial network** strategically supported thanks to agreements with local partners in each country.
- A **commercial portfolio** of more than seven thousand customers worldwide.
- "Present in **50% of the world's countries**"

"Awarded 'Innovative SME' 2020 by FEI (Foro de Empresas Innovadoras)"



AEQ technology (credit: AEQ)

Motivations

1. AEQ recognizes the research and knowledge capacities of universities and how, together (university-business), cutting-edge lines of research can be created from which both parties can benefit.
2. To understand university/company collaboration as an opportunity to be at the forefront of innovation thanks to the sharing of talent and knowledge.
3. Universidad Knowledge from engineering research group and SME's marketing system would represent a perfect synergy in the search for funding and the achievement of good research results.



Intercom system, with IP technology(credit: AEQ)

Barriers

1. Communication: there is a great mutual ignorance between the needs of business and the academic world.
2. There is a lack of a business awareness of the competitive and differential advantages out of the collaboration with the University.
3. Current bureaucratic procedures require a considerable investment of time.
4. AEQ's sector achieves small number of patents; this might discourage researches as knowledge transfer or UBC is not relevant in their career while patents are.
5. The mechanisms for seeking joint funding for university/company projects need to be refined
6. Lack of alignment between the needs of companies with regard to the training of new professionals and the education students obtain at universities. Policy changes might be needed

AEQ ALIO audiococecs at the XXV World Women's Handball Championship (credit: AEQ)



Key success factors

1

Technology at the service of people's needs

Elements embedded in equal work processes: people, innovation and technology.

2

Change of mind

An approach between the company and the university must be brought about common objectives and implies a common language.

3

Future

Constant commitment to innovation and collaboration.

*“Where your interest goes,
our technology goes”*

Author: María José Herrero-Villa; Ester Martínez Ros; José Luis G. Sacristán. (Uc3m team project)

Interviewee9: Iván Olmeda. CEO AEQ

