

## **iMMovator Cross Media Network**

### **Speakers:**

Mr. Freek van 't Ooster

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Presentation of the iMMovator network was divided into 2 parts: a formal introduction into the project followed by a tour around the building to visit some of the other companies situated in the incubator. After this tour questions and comments from the stakeholders were entertained.

iMMovator is the convergence of ICT, Telecom and Create Industry enterprises, and aims to fill the gap that has traditionally existed in the broadcasting industry: innovation. Innovation was being delivered to broadcasting from outside – very few broadcasting companies have Research and Development departments. iMMovator looks at ways to improve innovation in the industry by encouraging cooperation within the Netherlands (especially the Province Utrecht) and initiating local projects. It has 4 main components: Knowledge Transfer (iMMovator organizes regular Cross Media Café's – workshops aimed at sharing knowledge), Projects (e.g. Project Digital TV, Broadband Hilversum), Innovation Center (management support, investment fund) and the Students Company (creating a link between media industry and higher education).

'Mediacentrum/MC3' is an incubator/start-up centre, but not in a traditional sense – it is based on competition. Mr. van 't Ooster explained that if companies cannot make it, they have to make way for other companies. There are some safeguards, but the principle is that these start-ups have to compete on the open market. At the same time there is a strong element of cooperation: many of the start-ups support each other in terms of know-how. In 2006, the iMMovator network was expanded to include a bank and an accountancy firm as participants in order to provide the start-ups with their financial support. The network itself is financed through public and private funds. A wide variety of private firms and universities/vocational educational institutes are involved: examples are the local Chamber of Commerce, business universities from across the Netherlands, broadcast facility houses, but also Ernst & Young, Rabobank and Syntens. Public funding is both local (municipality) and regional (province). Mr. van 't Ooster went on to explain that because iMMovator is a networked organization with a small and dedicated coordinating team, it has a strong drive for innovation and the actual power to act and connect. With a relatively small budget and only payroll employees, the network stays flexible and innovative, enabling it to achieve maximum impact and allowing new companies to be created relatively quickly.

After this introduction to the Cross Media Network, stakeholders heard a short presentation on the Learning Company. It is aimed at creating an innovation connection between business and education, and achieves this by offering real business projects to students from different disciplines. This is done through internships, offering minors or simply making the experience part of a course. Some of the stakeholders were surprised with this, but it was explained that in the Netherlands internships are an important part of the educational system and relatively commonplace. In the region, remarked Mr. Krompic, students often have difficulty taking time off from their degree, although placing students in a real business environment is often much more desirable than only learning textbook examples.

Following this presentation, Mr. van 't Ooster gave the Study Visit participants a tour of the premises and a chance to visit some of the companies established here. First was a visit to Avinity, a company involved in creating an interactive form of digital television. After a short demonstration of *Avinity's* product, stakeholder got the chance to ask some questions. When asked whether being involved in iMMovator has paid off for the company, Mr. Brockmann replied that without the help of the network his company would have had to make considerable investments, especially in terms of renting office space. Next was short visit to the *Worldmade Channel*, an interactive website where subscribers from all over the world get the chance to send in short films and videos. *Jet-Stream* is a company that aims to market high-quality video streaming on the internet. This very ambitious venture, explained Mr. van der Ziel, could not have been launched without the support of the iMMovator network. Finally, stakeholders took part in a demonstration of *WunderWorks'* interactive gaming/educational tools – an interesting concrete example of innovation in the broadcasting industry.

### **Outcomes**

During the wrap-up session all stakeholders expressed their interest in iMMovator's activities, and how useful it was to see a business start-up center 'in action'. Although the possibilities for cooperation are very limited, Mr. Krompic noted that a lot of lessons can be learnt from the activities, especially in terms of Dutch internship programs. All stakeholders agreed that initiatives such as the iMMovator Cross Media Network should be replicated in their respective countries (albeit in other 'industries', such as perhaps IT or agriculture).

**Stakeholder Presence:** Mr. Naser Grajcevcic, Mr. Ahmet Jetullahu, Mr. Flamur Keqa, Mr. Darko Konjevic, Mrs. Vesna Kostic, Mr. Djura Krompic, Ms. Tatjana Potezica, Mr. Dimitar Ristovski, Mr. Aleksandar Vujovic

**ATA Representatives:** Mrs. Aleksandra Milenkovic-Bukumirovic, Ms. Laurien Sillevs