

ACCURO

Coming back for more – the pull of ITEA

ACCURO Tecnologías de la Información is part of the altim® group, which has more than 20 years of experience in the market of new technologies. It was born out of a need to integrate projects of different typology to the SAP Core projects of altim® within the Middleware field. The goal of ACCURO is to create solutions characterised by innovation, creativity and quality that allow customers to improve their business processes. An important feature of the company is a social commitment to its environment and to values that are as valid for society as for the company: transparency, commitment and effort, and ensuring that the needs of customers are the needs of ACCURO.

Picking up the baton

Emilio Mulet, head of Digital Innovation at ACCURO and European Funding Associate Professor at ESADE Business School, is joined by colleague Irene Torrego Moreno, technical analyst, to outline the landscape in which ACCURO has recently been active, especially in an ITEA context. And it is here that Emilio begins. "In 2018, we embarked on our first publicly funded research project, which was POLDER. The idea to participate came about during the ITEA PO Days in Germany in 2017. It proved to be an odd participation because the promotor of the project, the Dutch research institute TNO, pulled out along with some other consortium partners due to funding issues and we found ourselves having to take responsibility for coordinating our very first ITEA project." POLDER, which recently underwent its final review, targeted

data reusability in the smart city. "So, we took up the baton and pushed ahead, supported by our Turkish, Finnish and Romanian consortium partners, and backed up by the ITEA organisation. Fortunately, we managed to involve several Spanish companies, and this ensured that we were able to fulfil the ambitions of the project. It was a tough task and a very good lesson for us."

Baptism of fire

An interesting development that Emilio alludes to is that during the POLDER project, the funding situation changed. "At the beginning, the Spanish funding was 50% but in 2019 this was reduced and replaced with funding plus loan. But having experienced the benefits of international cooperation, we feel it is still worth the investment since collaborative projects bring us a lot of knowledge and ideas that we would

otherwise not acquire on our own.

Furthermore, the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) in ITEA is high. This is important for us because our innovation strategy is based on mid-term impact, two to three years, so that we can get the innovation to our clients. This is where ITEA and Eureka projects pay dividends for us." So, while ACCURO's introduction to the ITEA Community might be considered a baptism of fire, it has certainly proved a very positive one, judging from the success of POLDER and lessons learned.

Lessons learned

So, what are the lessons learned by ACCURO? "We learned about efficient support systems and IoT platforms, and this has become the pillar of our innovation strategy. The good thing about the project is that it is based on software in relation to hardware. It gave

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us a lot of knowledge on hardware that we didn't have before. Now that we have gained expertise in this and in IoT platforms, we are able to build a bridge between hardware and software. This has brought about a massive change in our philosophy as a company because we didn't have a connection to hardware before." Not only this but also the very positive lessons learned translated to a desire to continue in more ITEA projects. One of which is that ACCURO is continuing as lead with the same partners as in POLDER. "We developed such a positive relationship with our consortium colleagues that it was almost a no-brainer to pool our resources in another project." This latest project aims to improve productivity with proactive maintenance, automated decisions and reduced downtimes, thereby cutting the planning process by some 60% and costs by 10%.

Coming back for more

"The original idea came from Türkiye," Emilio explains. "We have a great relationship now with our Turkish, Finnish and Portuguese partners. Along with Spain, we see a big commitment from these countries in ITEA projects. The Public Authority funding schemes seem to be well in place and you can see a bit of a shift in the axis in terms of country participation. For us the rewards of international collaboration in the ITEA Cluster are huge, much more than in other Clusters or programmes. We keep coming back."

At this point, Emilio's colleague, Irene, interjects. "The communication and coordination with ITEA is something we value greatly. Like the interim reviews where we discuss projects issues, get constructive comments and advice on how to improve, how to get more value from the cooperation and, very importantly, develop a project so that it reaches the market. These are all very useful, especially from a business perspective."

Strength in numbers

One point of concern for Emilio is the funding issue that seems to be affecting the participation of companies from certain countries. He cannot see a solution other than Eureka as a whole trying to exert its influence to help achieve some kind of compromise on public funding. "The big well known players of Eureka, like Germany and France, are less prominent nowadays. I know that German companies really want to participate but they come up against funding issues. That's a pity because they have so much to offer. On the other hand, the growing involvement of countries like South Korea and Canada in Eureka Clusters is a reason for optimism. I think it's a real gain getting these very mature economies on board, and I'm sure that we will reap the benefits from their involvement. They will make ITEA stronger as a community, and us more competitive as a company."

More information

<http://accuro.es>