Start-ups from the Cambridge technology consultancies

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Start-ups from the Cambridge technology consultancies

• Has something happened?

• Why does the start-up culture help make our technology consultancies a centre of excellence for the world?

• How is it good for individuals?

• Will it be for you?
Has something happened?

Yes!
Spin-outs I witnessed succeeding

Domino =>
  Prelude
  Signal Processors
    DCS
    CPS, CMS, Kore
    Xaar =>
    Elmjet

Cambridge Silicon Radio => £1bn
Alphamosaic => £130M
Inca Digital =>
Pelikon
  Vectura
  Roundpoint
  Cyan
Spin-outs continue as part of Cambridge culture

Meridica developed a world-class inhaler which was sold for $125M to Pfizer.

UbiNetics became a world leader in 3G test and measurement products. It was sold by PA for $133M.

*aegate* provides drug authentication and safety information, whilst the pharmacist is dispensing to the patient. It is rolling out in several countries, building value.
Why does the start-up culture help make our technology consultancies a centre of excellence for the world?
As a Director at CCL I wanted to re-ignite the spin-out vision because...

- Non-time-based income can bring much more value and credibility in the long term - creating awareness

- The potential for spin-outs brings more entrepreneurial employees in to add diversity; these individuals learn commercially as well as technically

- Clients aren’t always convinced or bold, and we are in an ideal place to spot good ideas and markets and investors

- Spin-outs let individuals move up to build their own castle
How is it good for individuals?
Starting up within a consultancy is a supported ‘soft start’

- Low risk for individuals
  - Salary tends to be the same, with potential upside
  - Ability to re-integrate if it doesn’t take off and no big decision
  - Ability to focus on content
- Professional support – access to other specialists, tools, processes, contracts
- Physical convenience - in same offices/labs, access to equipment, workshops, food…
Will it be for you?
Personal characteristics?

• Individuals who like variety and are excited by the unknown
• Individuals who like challenge and puzzle-solving
• Sociable people, engaging with a plethora of ‘stakeholders’
• People able to work in teams under pressure to deadlines, budgets, constraints – getting things done
I was hooked at 17 …

Stage 1. Small successes led to significant sales

Age 21

£250k

£1M

£2M

30

37

40

44
I kept having fun

Stage 2. Clients kept coming back

£250k £1M £2M £3M £4M £1M £1M £3M £1M
The sky seemed to be the limit …

Stage 3. Good ideas took off
I’m a Director!!

Spin-outs can be bigger than projects

- CSR = £1bn
- Alphamosaic = £130M
- Pelikon = £?
- Inca = £MM
- Cyan = AIM listed

- £7M
- £4M
- £2M
- £1M
- £3M
- £1M
- £250k
- £1M

21 30 37
But I chose not to spin out?
Moving to PA gave new scope

Stage 5. Having confidence to do bigger deals

A mega-deal – to 2019?
What might your week look like?

- A lab automation development – science and engineering leading to a big royalty stream, negotiated in Brazil
- A household product for Europe that must be more stylish as well as work better than any competitors
- The Oyster card and IT system going to the next phase
- A fast-track retail product for the US, managed from Europe
- Advising the leadership team of a high growth company
- A smart energy system development rolling out
- CEO of Cambridge Network
Cambridge Network is helping Cambridge

Cambridge Network: bringing people together, to collaborate for shared success

- **Events** – sharing specialists and views
- **Training** – peer learning and shared training
- **Recruitment** – bringing recruits to Cambridge
- **Directories** – companies, people, skills, news
- **The network of networks**

Centre for **Entrepreneurial Learning**
Sharing experiences makes a difference
Cambridge will continue to grow and the consultancies will continue to spin-out companies.

We have:

- Diversity, innovation on demand and commercial skills
- Collective learning and networking systems
- Entrepreneurial business community
- Good infrastructure of services, money, experience, board members, generosity, and enthusiasm to succeed