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ChIMERA

Innovative cultural and creative clusters in MED area

P.A. 1: Promoting Mediterranean innovation capacity to develop smart and sustainable growth

Obj. 1.1: To increase transnational activity of innovative clusters and networks of key sectors of the MED area

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D.3.4.2 Comparative analysis

WP 3. Studying

act. 3.4 Capacity building of innovation key actors for the cultural and creative industries

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INNOVATIVE CULTURAL
AND CREATIVE CLUSTERS
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Promálaga, Malaga City Council

Project co-financed by the European
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CONTEXT

On Wednesday, 25th October 2017, the training workshop for the main public and private players within Malaga´s cultural and creative industries was held at the Digital Content Centre at the Malaga Town Hall.

Out of the total 20 participants, three were companies from the audio-visual sector, two companies in the video game sector, three visual arts companies, two companies in the advertising sector, four representatives from administrations and collectives who support entrepreneurship and the creation of clusters. The rest were university people and project partners.

The session included the participation of the Malaga Jam Cluster from the video game sector and representatives from the Andalusian audio-visual sector. The differences and recommendations of all sectors **regard this video game sector as a benchmark** and its incipient Malaga cluster.

GAPS

G1: Innovation comes from the user (from the bottom up) and continuous reinvention.

In the video game sector, the user can modify the products and adapt them to their tastes, which is why innovation being generated from the market has to be collected and channelled by the company to adapt its products in order to take them to market. In other cultural sectors the user does not have this concern or permanent contact with the artistic product, so it is more difficult to produce these innovations or new trends and even more difficult for companies to respond quickly.

G2: The four innovation agents coexist in the same environments.

In Malaga, the Digital Content Centre has been created by the Malaga Town Hall, giving space to all digital based companies. This space has the support of the public and private sectors and has a direct link with the university. This presence of all innovation agents facilitates the rapid adaptation of products and services to the demands of the market and users.

G3: Professionalisation of the sector.

Passion for creation is given in all cultural and creative sectors, but it is very difficult in most of them to make a living out of this art. In the video game sector, the user starts off as an amateur with some training and in order to become a professional, he needs money (which comes from a private source), so they have to learn quickly how to manage not only art but also a company.

G4: Existence of a broad motivated demand with changing tastes.

Video games are an attraction for many audiences of all ages. Demand is guaranteed, albeit changing, and very fast changing. The key is to get the idea and the format right and to develop it faster than the competition. This does not happen in other sectors, where the consumption of artistic products is not a necessity, nor a habitual demand of any specific audience.

G5: High technological component in all products and processes.

One of the keys in the video game sector is the intensive application of new technologies and, also, those of the latest generation. In most cultural and creative sectors it adds value, but it is not the key component of its existence.

G6: Work planning is almost more important than the creative process.

Given the changing nature of the demand for video games and rapid technological evolution, most of the time planning the work to be done is much more important than the previous creative process that it requires. In other creative sectors this first step is more important, sometimes even losing entrepreneurs at this first stage of creation.

G7: The lack of a role as a client in the public sector and as a generator of synergies with other actors.

In the audio-visual or scenic sectors, the public sector and its support (through subsidies or grants, assignment of spaces, campaigns and dissemination, etc.) is a fundamental part in the very existence of the sector's businesses. Without their support it would not be possible to generate products available to the wider public. However, in the video game sector, this reality does not exist with the public sector being replaced by financing and private capital.

G8: There isn´t a need for adapted physical spaces.

Some sectors of cultural and creative industries require large spaces to carry out their activity, often being public sector spaces supported by its maintenance and construction. The video game sector does not require a specific space, although it might be favourable, as it is the case with the co-working spaces or the aforementioned Digital Centre.

G9: The products are usable, at affordable prices and generate immediate profitability.

In general terms, it is a given that art and its creative process require high prices to somehow compensate for the time and effort devoted to its production. In addition, it usually relates to exclusive products and not all markets are prepared to acquire them. In the case of video games, there is such a large and motivated market, that demand itself increases supply and reduces prices. In addition, the user seeks an immediate return on what he buys, via fun and leisure, while in other sectors the profitability is not expected to be short term.

G10: It has easy access and proximity to the education system, and is promoted within education.

Education is the key element for people to enjoy culture and creativity. Today, in the education system, video games are incorporated as part of the learning system, so they begin to use and demand them from an early age. This does not happen with other arts, which have access or an anecdotal presence in the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: Work with the end user to use up creativity and to generate it.

The need to be close to the end user from a younger age is proven, so that they are sensitised and taught to appreciate art in all its forms. Only by knowing it and appreciating it will they become a consumer of it afterwards.

R2: Sharing experiences helps avoid failures. It enhances associationism and meeting up.

It is necessary to get behind working together and to learn from each other to avoid failures. The options of mixing together, of creating meeting spaces or periodic cycles of joint activities are fundamental. Although there are already some, both from the public and private sectors, it would be interesting to promote them among the artists themselves and between different sectors of the cultural and creative industry.

R3: Work on seeking synergies and collaborations, avoiding "egos" for ideas and creativity.

In the cultural and creative sector, ideas are the basis of all work, so it is common that they do not want to share them. They need to break down these "egocentric" stances and work in the search for continuous collaborations in order to multiply possibilities and synergies.

R4: Encourage professional training and the development of specific training.

Although in Malaga there is more and more professional and university specialised training in the different sectors of the cultural and creative industry, much remains to be done. Only through better training, will there be greater professionalisation and recognition of the value of products and artists from Malaga.

R5: Enhance risk capital and seed capital.

Without adequate financing there cannot be a professional sector and an industry in these fields, so it is necessary to locate and implement more risk capital options, seed capital and private support for culture.

R6: Teach how to market products. Learn how to select the target client.

Knowing the market and how it evolves is fundamental and we should take into account that the new generations of young people are very different from the others. It is important to make an effort to understand them and adapt to their needs and demands, so that the products that are created can be marketable.

R7: Use social networks to create an image and gain financing.

The possibilities through social networks and the internet in general to generate a brand image for Malaga and its industry have not yet been sufficiently exploited. There are more and more companies that help visualise Malaga´s cultural and creative industry, but there is still much to be done in order to achieve greater funding.

R8: Increase the use and application of ICTs in products.

The commitment of the public and private sectors in Malaga´s case for new technologies, both with the University and with the Technology Park and municipal initiatives such as the Digital Centre or business incubators, would help towards applying multiple options within culture and creativity through ICTs.

R9: Propose experiences related to art, as a tourist attraction and open up to new audiences.

The new urban tourist, and in part the current generations, are looking more for experiences rather than simple purchases of products and services, the cultural and creative sector has multiple options in this area (visits to workshops, self-creation, exhibition, etc.)

R10: Constantly find new ways to reinvent yourself.

Creativity cannot stand still and has to find a way to constantly reinvent itself, so companies linked to it must do so too. New ways of helping Malaga´s cultural and creative industry to constantly reinvent itself to be attractive and competitive must be explored.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The video game sector in Malaga is developing as a result of different meetings with video game creators and producers organised in Malaga around creative culture. They decide to get together over the weekend to create a product between them (a session known by the name of "jam"). As a result they realised that this way of meeting and working together could interest others so a public "jam" attended by 50 people was organised. From there on, they began to create more recurrent meeting spaces and design a cycle composed of 6 events over 6 months. These events help people who are starting up in the sector to get to know them better, to learn about the tools available in the market in order to do their work, to participate in testing sessions, to learn how to share their work and, finally, to create a complete product in a weekend.

They discovered **multiple characteristics in this sector that were similar to those of other current cultural sectors** (visual arts, audio-visual, advertising), and that could help to create these clusters in other sectors. Among the similarities of other sectors within the video games sector, the following stood out:

- The way contents have been generated
- The capacity to work as a team
- The need for tasks coordination
- The interactivity
- The necessary balance between art and business
- The need for meeting and association
- The network based on microenterprises
- The negative labels related to the ways of living and work

However, in order to move forward in cluster generation, in addition to the recommendations mentioned above, the main Working areas would be:

- Products: to develop marketable quality products.
- Markets: customer-orientated and to find new market niches
- Communication: to do cross-cutting marketing and to create Malaga's quality Brand image.
- ICTs: to integrate new technologies during the creation and sales cycle of cultural and creative products and services, where possible.

Finally, another of the conclusions drawn was the need for the public sector to support culture and creativity from within the educational system itself in order to generate future clients, but also to support those business people and entrepreneurs who take risks and generate innovation.

The quadruple helix of innovation (public sector, companies, academia and citizenship) must work in a coordinated manner and go in the same direction to create creative and innovation ecosystems in cities that promote the uptake of culture and creativity.