

Corporate Innovation Essentials

What An Innovation Day Can Do For Your Business

Vienna, 19.12.2017 - In the light of the countless hackathons, incubator and accelerator programs, startup weekends and co-creation workshops offered by our consultancy arm, **Pioneers Discover**, we take a closer look at what the benefits of an Innovation Day can be for international businesses. We use yesterday's Henkel Innovation Day as a case study and talk to previous clients **Rehau** and **Raiffeisenlandesbank Oberösterreich** about their experiences at past Innovation Days.

Innovation Days are a way for corporations to take their first steps towards embracing a culture of innovation and collaboration with startups. **Pioneers Discover** typically inspires the attending employees through tailored sessions and presentations specific to the client's business challenges, startup scouting, pitches and co-creation workshops.

"Innovation Days are ideal for introducing a company to its first experience of the startup world," says **Pioneers Discover** Project Manager Anton Schilling. "They're designed to inspire top staff to think in innovative terms and give them the opportunities for first contact with relevant startups. The ideal outcome is that the participants become ambassadors for startup collaboration within the business."

Yesterday's Henkel Innovation Day was a case in point. The spirit of innovation in the room was almost palpable, with employees and the nine invited startups really giving it their all. And the outcome was nine great pitches resulting from a great joint effort.

In the end, Henkel invited four startups to travel to its headquarters in Düsseldorf to form a deeper connection with the company and discuss potential collaborations. From tools that can forecast local sales patterns to AI-driven chemical formula optimization solution, **7LYTIX**, **CCS Digital Education**, **DEEPSEARCH** and serial **Pioneers** event winners **Craftworks** showed something concrete they could build for Henkel.

"The nine startups were super," said Dr Paolo Bavaj, Henkel's Head of Corporate Venturing. "I attend a lot of pitch events, but not many with such a high quality of startups. They had very well thought-through business models and were at a very good maturation stage. You rarely see that at normal pitch events. I was pleasantly surprised to have such a lot of problems picking the winners."

Also pleased with outcomes was Dr Wolfgang Binder, EIMEA Head of Process Consulting, who is driving the innovation culture in the Integrated Business Solutions unit.

"This was a pilot for us and the conclusion is that we would like to take this format further in one way or another, adapting for local requirements of course. It also shows we're ready and open for other formats, like hackathons, where we have concrete issues or problems to address.

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“For sure we would be happy to work with Pioneers Discover on these: the co-operation worked really well and it was obvious that they are experts in doing such events! We were only going to invite three startups to Düsseldorf, and the fact that we decided to invite four was an indication of their quality.”

Pioneers Discover has delivered similar innovation days for the likes of Porsche, Rehau, Raiffeisenlandesbank Oberösterreich and the Austrian Post Office.

Rehau, a leading systems and service provider for polymer-based solutions in construction, automotive and industry, wanted to inspire employees to think innovatively and co-create with startups specifically in the areas of Smart Retail, Smart Industrial Solutions and Smart Furniture Applications.

“Pioneers Discover connected us to first-class international startups and introduced us to the vibrant and intriguing startup world,” said a representative from the Rehau Research & Development Department. “We can definitely recommend Pioneers Discover to facilitate the venture into the startup world as a corporate and to introduce fruitful collaborations with top-notch startups.”

Raiffeisenlandesbank Oberösterreich, meanwhile, were looking to meet FinTech startups to help develop innovative solutions for Austria’s leading regional bank.

“The Innovation Day not only revealed many exciting new additions, services and solutions for the financial industry, it also provided insights into the efficient operation and organization of start-ups,” said Dr Heinrich Schaller, General Director of Raiffeisenlandesbank OÖ.

Innovation Days, of course, are just the beginning of what our consultancy arm can offer. Once they’re on board with the startup world, companies may consider diving deeper into bespoke tech solutions by means of a hackathon.

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Note to the Editors

Media Contact: For further information contact: press@pioneers.io. For more news from the world of Pioneers, visit our blog (<http://pioneers.io/blog>) or follow us on social media:



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