

Project title and number: ELVETE - Employer-Led Vocational Education and Training in Europe.

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LLP logo and disclaimer



Partner name and country: AICA – Associazione Italiana per l'Informatica ed il Calcolo Automatico - Italy

Case study title and focus: **Loccioni Group. Marche Region**

**Main activities/sectors:** Loccioni Group develops complex measurement systems in five different business areas: Mobility, Energy, Environment, Industry and Humancare.

**Size of company:** around 400 people (average age 32)

**Website:** <http://www.loccioni.com/>

**Contact person and role:** Maria Paola Palermi- Communication Manager

**Email address:** [mp.palermi@loccioni.com](mailto:mp.palermi@loccioni.com)

**When interviews took place:** 03/10/2014

**How did you select the company:** Mr. Claudio Gentili, the Director of the Educational Division of Confindustria (the Italian employers' federation and chamber of commerce), recommended Loccioni Group, during the first Elvete meeting in Rome held with AICA representative on the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2014.

**Who carried out the interview:** Francesca Alfano- AICA project researcher

**Information on the implementation of the selected project in the company:**  
Loccioni Group

Loccioni Group is an open knowledge base company that has always been active in nourishing local interactions with the socio economic system, with a privilege interest in human capital development and investment.

Its success is fostered through networking interaction; *“because people are the greatest value”* has always stated Graziella Rebichini and Enrico Loccioni ... *“people are at the center of all our success (or failures), they are our most important assets.”*

**Team working** at Loccioni Group is mixed and cross with **dialogue with no hierarchies**: internal collaborators, university students and customers work together to develop ideas and projects, following the vocation of **“Open Company”**.

The investment in building networking interactions, together with the priority given to the development of human capital, brought Loccioni Group to create a **solid and fluid interaction with the whole local system** of educational stakeholders and Schools of primary and upper secondary level and Universities.

**Table 5.** Shows the three education and training Areas promoted by Loccioni Group in their lifelong learning business model.

PRIMA   Bluzone	DURANTE   Redzone	DOPO   Silverzone
		
<p># search # select # insert</p>	<p># grow # training # assess</p>	<p># spin-off # network</p>

**BLUZONE** includes “English Camp”, “Classe Virtuale” and “Grow On Loccioni.” English Camp, is a week organized every summer, dedicated to the collaborators’ children, who come to the headquarters with their parents and participate in recreational and educational activities designed especially for them.

“Classe Virtuale” is targeted to 18ys technical students and “Grow On Loccioni”, is a project involving, each year, 12 students selected among the best enrolled in the second year University course in Economics and Engineer, includes training, mentoring and project work.

**REDZONE** is connected with Loccioni employees management and training. The aim is to develop everyone's potential and let the Group grow throughout people's enforcement.

**SILVERZONE** is a virtual area in which **experienced people over 65**, coming from valuable professional positions, **share their knowledge** with Loccioni employees **through esteem and trustful relations**.

Silverzone involves researchers, consultants, professors and managers of important industrial sectors who have achieved great results during their professional life.

**SPIN-OFF:** "Avvia l'impresa" ("Start your enterprise").

Since 1968 **more than 80 employees** have successfully started their own business, helped by Loccioni Group.

It is not seen as a loss because, giving them the possibility to develop their business ideas, the Group earn a better and more motivated partner.

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**BLUZONE- "Virtual Class", a bridge between school and work.**

**"Virtual Class"** is an interesting opportunity for students of the 4th year of upper secondary schools to experiment a bridge between school and work.

It's a consolidated partnership between Loccioni Group and technical educational institutions, started in 2001 when the enterprise began offering to young students training periods and internships, giving the students a chance to work on **projects, based on real world problems**, together with very skilled people and technicians.

**Every year "Classe Virtuale" promotes and enables personal and professional growth of 28 students** involving them in a **multidisciplinary collaboration experience** for the development of theoretical, technical and project management skills. Since today more than **350 students** have been hosted in the company.

In 2001 the project started from the collaboration with the upper technical institute TIS *"G. Marconi"* in Ancona Province. In 2010, the project opened to new collaborations with other three Technical Schools: *"Volterra-Elia"*, *"A. Merloni"* and *"E. Divini"*.

In Virtual Class a **technical project and the management of an ad-hoc budget** is assigned to the youngsters offering them the opportunity to face a specific "challenge". The training activity is activated during **afternoon meetings with the students, from January to May**.

Later the students undertake an **internship of three weeks** in Loccioni Group, aimed at stimulating **innovative solutions** and technological instrument designed to **promote the analysis of local and concrete issues**.

An example of this **multidisciplinary collaboration experience** is represented by the 2013 internship project "[People Meter](http://blog.arduino.cc/2013/09/01/arduino-at-school-people-meter/)" (See <http://blog.arduino.cc/2013/09/01/arduino-at-school-people-meter/> )

The students worked in **interconnected team-groups**, made up of 3 to 6 students from **different technical institutes with different school backgrounds, focused on one common "challenge"**.

**Each group had a specific role in the project:** i.e technical guide, control management, communication team, electronic team, informatic team and mechanic team.

This project management approach, gave the students the possibility to detect, adopt measure, correct simultaneously and face problems in a dynamic and **interconnected team networking activity that enables the students to solve the problems with unexpected emerging solutions**.

The company trainers lead the process leaving the youngster to step up the dialog and overcome the problems.

The **feedback and the dissemination activity of the project results** are taken into special account.

At the end of the internship, the students present the project results/products through a public meeting to their families, teachers, Loccioni Group employees and local representative institutions. The public meeting is a crucial step of the project, planned and managed by the students themselves, with a specific budget provided by Loccioni Group for this specific activity (communication and dissemination leaflets, small catering etc).

Moreover the students are asked to **disseminate** their first-hand experience and results **trought web media** in the company website and in Arduino's blog.

For more informations about 2012 project "[Flow meter](http://blog.arduino.cc/2012/07/10/schools-projects-with-arduino-flow-meter/)" see: <http://blog.arduino.cc/2012/07/10/schools-projects-with-arduino-flow-meter/>

**Joint design/planning of training path: Please describe whether and how did the company take part in the definition of training objectives and training path.**

As described for the projects “Flow meter and People meter” the training objectives are leaded by the company and **based on real world/business problems, in accordance with the school** to develop theoretical, technical and project management skills and competeces.

**Students’ Skills:**

The most important skills and competences for the company are oulined in “**2 KM OF FUTURE- the enterprise to seed beauty**” the recent book that describes the company values and business model.

*“...the path to “intra-entrepreneurship” can be simplified in four steps intended to develop:*

- **knowledge**: it is cultural background attained at school and enriched at work*
- **knowhow**: it is the application of knowledge to specific work*
- **command**: it is the manager’s competence, delegation, trust in the team*
- **communication**: it is the ability to valorize and communicate one’s value, the value of one’s team and of the work done.*

*“(.....) When a talented developer or researcher gets to the point of “command”, they have to employ other competences, and the school does not teach this. Creating a team, managing it, motivating, discovering the talents of the others, risking imperfection or even failure just to have trusted them are issues that go beyond the professional activity of developers and researchers, and it is necessary to help the people develop these skills and understand that personal growth is possible through the growth of the others.*

*This is why we invest in the managerial development of people and offer it to everyone, from interns (through the “Virtual Class” project) to senior year students who are developing their degree thesis and newcomers who are at the beginning of their working adventure”.*

*In “**2 KM OF FUTURE- the enterprise to seed beauty**” it is possible to find the company definition of “**talented peple**” :*

- They have logical and emotional intelligence. They have self-control on occasions of high organizational turbulence;*
- They show great will and express strong energy and commitment with a high*

*sense of responsibility;*

*–They have planning and final forecast abilities;*

*– They are curious, imaginative and careful to the interlocutor with whom they always share mutual understanding;*

*– They clearly influence any event thanks to their leadership and spirit of initiative;*

*– They devote part of their time to acquire new notions, experiment with new behavioral patterns and test their willingness and ability to face new challenges”.*

### **Implementation: relations company-VET provider during project implementation**

During the project implementation the students are autonomous, leaded by the professional company tutors, and the person in charge for the relation with the Technical schools reports weekly to the teachers about the ongoing process and results of the student experiences.

The teachers from the four Technical schools as well come to the company premises to visit the students and share feedbacks.

### **How it is financed**

The project “Classe Virtuale” is completely financed with the enterprise private funds. The students are requested only to cover travel expenses to reach the company.

### **SWOT Analysis:**

- **Strengths:**

- Solid and dynamic interaction with the regional education system since 14 years
- Strong reputation of the company and large autonomy in planning objectives, work methodologies and management of the intership projects offered to schools students
- Investment in the development of human capital
- Investment in equipments and ad hoc laboratories.

- **Weaknesses:**
  - The company has faced the logistic problems to host 28 students simultaneously through the investment in new premises locations
  - Financial efforts to create dedicated laboratory areas for the hosting groups.
- **Opportunities:**
  - The pioneering activity of human capital investment with young students can produce emerging and innovation solutions to projects based on real world and business challenges.
- **Threats:**
  - The Company prefers to invest in the school projects with private funds to limit bureaucracy and time spending with “institutional” ASL paths.

#### Key messages and recommendations:

- **Lifelong learning approach (See: Bluzone-Redzone-Silverzone-Spin-off)**
- **Open knowledge company**
- **Time and financial investment in development of human capital**
- **Dynamic feedback and open interaction with the local community, especially with the education system**
- **Schoolwork projects based on real world/business problems and analysis of local and concrete issues**
- **Multidisciplinary and collaborative teamwork interactions offered to students**
- **Communicational and relational skills to disseminate results to the education local community, families and schools networks.**

**Bittor Arias Rodriguez (TKNIKA- EAeko Lanbide Heziketarako Berrikuntza Zentroa) Basque Country.**

*Why do we like Loccioni Group?*

*The case of Loccioni Group is amazing. Just a look at their website -*

*<http://www.loccioni.com/?lang=en> - or a small reference from someone who has visited them is enough to realize that this is an out of the box company.*

*We know there are people committed to the neighbour who demonstrates a remarkable scale of values, leading them to behave usually with a large degree of empathy towards the others.*

*What is happening here is that we expect to find such people in NGOs, in Development Assistance Organizations, in Religious Orders (such as the aid workers and missionaries who have lost their lives while helping others to overcome Ebola in Africa) as well as in similar philanthropic groups.*

*But we do not expect to find this kind of behaviour inside the business world. According to what we have seen and known, we find it just natural for employers and people dedicated to industry or business to seek, in their professional spaces, basically his own benefit, independently of the civic attitudes or the significant social concerns in their own daily lives.*

*We find it weird, surprising even, striking that from time to time, less frequently that we would like, we come across experiences such as that of Loccioni Group, which immediately causes surprise and admiration.*

*On the other hand, especially in time of crisis, it also leads us to wonder if similar initiatives would be possible, another business management style, which makes us confident that, a different economic development is feasible.*

*Because the point in here is precisely that the approach to management in Loccioni, their set of values, with such creative and innovative initiatives, that interest for the environment, that respect for history and traditions, that concern for people, not just for their workers (Red Zone), but for the young ones (Blu Zone), for the elder (Silver Zone) and, finally, their peculiar corporate culture are key factors leading Loccioni to be a world reference, a model admired and respected. Because it demonstrates that it is possible to do business with that management style, being at the same time an example and an inspiration for others.*

*Hence they receive frequent visitors, many books about their case have already been written, and references to their activities are prevalent in the press.*

*When in our innovation management models we talked about the need to create enabling environments for innovation and entrepreneurship in the companies, when we state that it is essential to consider cultural factors such as attitudes, behaviours,*

*values and the organizational structure to facilitate the implementation of innovation, we are referring to cases like this one. That's why to get to know it pleases us that much. It confirms us that, as we see in some other "open" companies, this is indeed a good role model, worth considering.*

*If we think a bit about this and keep in mind what Loccioni himself tells us about his experience, we realize that if there are not many examples like this one in the Marche region is because there are no such businessmen among us. Most current businessmen do not share Loccioni's values. They are based certainly on different experiences and their approaches when setting up business also vary, they have different desires, visions and goals.*

*To get to that stage where an entrepreneur like Loccioni is, with that innovative and creative approach, so optimistic, so humanistic and supportive, he would have previously lived, during his childhood or youth, in a family and cultural environment where the values that he promotes now - a strong will, tenacity, moderation, simplicity, solidarity, family responsibility, respect for traditions, etc.,- were also prevailing, till indelibly mark the character of a person for ever.*

*Having a role model like Loccioni is not easy. Circumstances conducive to the emergence of similar souls must be previously set up. Someone who has lived or lives immersed in a job insecurity environment, economic crisis, institutional corruption, social disregard and lack of environmental concern, can hardly become a champion of values unknown for him, values he is not familiar with because they are uncommon in his daily life.*

*The learning lesson from the experience of the Loccioni Group is: Yes! Another type of business is possible, different from the ones we usually meet, only concerned with short-term benefits, denying labour rights, reducing labour force and wages. These enterprises are not what we need or wish, despite their likely success in the short time.*

*To overcome crisis in Europe we need, first of all, courage, imagination and creativity, and secondly, personal conviction and commitment to higher values and shared goals, conducive to a sustainable economic benefit, setting up the right conditions to make it happens, along with employees, partners, customers and competitors.*

*For this reason, we must demand our organizations and governments to enhance attitudes and behaviours that enable ethical and cultural environments in our society,*

*where entrepreneurial and talented people can emerge and lead the Europe on the path of mutual understanding, sustainable progress and knowledge.*

*October 2014*