

FROM OPEN INNOVATION IN THE ENTERPRISE TO COLLABORATIVE BUSINESS ECOSYSTEMS

Posted on 17/05/2023 by Naider

The evolution of innovation in companies and organisations has moved from a closed and internal approach to a more open and collaborative approach. Years ago, innovation took place within the boundaries of the organisation itself, with an internal research and development perspective. Companies invested in their own R&D teams and relied on internal expertise and resources to generate new ideas and solutions to existing problems.

Over the years, organisations have been forced to look outside the company for solutions. This is due to the increasingly competitive environment and the inefficiency of internal processes despite the expense incurred by the organisations.

Coined by Professor Henry Chesbrough in 2003, the term [Open Innovation](#) refers to the business innovation strategy based on the relationship and cooperation with the environment in the search for ambitious solutions. In this way, companies are open to collaborate with external agents to develop solutions and achieve objectives more efficiently than through the traditional process.

Although open innovation was initially implemented in the form of collaborations between only two organisations, examples abound today where a large number of actors are involved in the same innovation process.

The effectiveness of open innovation is not limited to a few multinationals. It is a process that makes more effective use of the internal and external knowledge of all types of organisations, old or young, large or small, public or private.

Renowned Basque companies such as Mondragón Corporación Cooperativa, Danobatgroup and CAF have been implementing Open Innovation projects for years with the aim of improving their business competitiveness.

In the case of CAF, for example, they have developed a platform named [CAF Startup Station](#). The purpose of this instrument is to collaborate with different start-ups and entrepreneurs to develop innovative solutions for the railway sector. The platform offers these external agents access to the company's financial resources and technical knowledge, allowing them to test their new products in real conditions.

In recent years, open innovation has been evolving and more and more emphasis is being placed on collaboration. Thus, innovation ecosystems are being established. Innovation ecosystems are networks or communities made up of different companies and agents that collaborate with each other to foster the creation and adoption of innovations. They share resources, knowledge and experience, fostering innovation and the development of new ideas. These alliances are usually focused on a specific industry sector or geographic area, thus driving innovation more effectively.

Some examples of innovation ecosystems in the world are Silicon Valley in the United States, Stockholm in Sweden or Shenzhen in China. These ecosystems are home to multinationals such as Google, Spotify or Huawei, respectively.

In conclusion, the evolution of these processes reflects the growing awareness of companies that innovation requires the involvement of different actors and an openness to new ideas and approaches.

