

Innovation at Work - Alcatel-Lucent's WebTV Transcript for edition 0/2008

Hugh SCHOFIELD

For this first edition of *Innovation at Work*, we needed something special. So here I am at Alcatel-Lucent's Paris headquarters for a unique event: a three-day presentation to clients, colleagues and the press of all the latest innovations.

The technologies of the future are within our reach. You only have to attend a couple of demonstrations here to see how Alcatel-Lucent is revolutionising the way we communicate with each other and with the world around us. The future is here.

First of all, a word with the man himself, Ben Verwaayen. Ben, can I ask you for a word?

Ben VERWAAYEN

Sure.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

What does innovation mean to you?

Ben VERWAAYEN

Well, let me say what it means to the company. It means everything because innovation is a kind of lifeline. It is an engine for change. It is the ability to think the unthinkable, to get creative new ideas and make sure that we as a company have something to say to the world. Today is no exception. What you can find here is really good stuff.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

I know that climate change is something that you hold very dear. Is there something here which has struck you in that regard?

Ben VERWAAYEN

Look at this little fellow here. It is amazing, this little thing. It is helping to cool the electronics and it will reduce the energy consumption by 50%. If you know that cooling is 50% of the total that we use, it means that for every device, this little thing, which has no electronics, will reduce it by 25%. That is massive, if you look at carbon dioxide (CO₂), and what is more important than that is that it will enable us to go very deep into the value chain and help people reduce their footprint. I think, therefore, that this is a phenomenal thing and it is just one of the many things you can see here today on the green agenda, which I find very encouraging.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

Thank you very much.

So many of the projects here have been developed by Bell Labs. Bell Labs is the powerhouse of Alcatel-Lucent innovation. Here is Gee Rittenhouse. You must see so many projects come across your desk every week. How do you know when one of these is a real innovation?

Gee RITTENHOUSE

The first thing we look at is the novelty of the idea - is it original or is it already out there? The second thing we look at is the impact of the idea. Some ideas will be more incremental; some will be much more revolutionary. Therefore, by choosing the ones that are both revolutionary and original, we really have a winning combination.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

There must be 20 or 30 demonstrations going on around us here. How many of these will finish as created products in the marketplace?

Ben VERWAAYEN

The actual number is hard to say because some will go from concept to idea to product; other things will become ideas that go into many products and services across the entire industry.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

Thank you.

Gee RITTENHOUSE

Enjoy Innovation Days.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

One of the great things about Innovation Days is the chance to meet all kinds of interesting people, like Wim Sweldens, for example. You are Head of Alcatel-Lucent Ventures.

Wim SWELDENS

Correct.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

At Ventures, how are you communicating this innovation spirit?

Wim SWELDENS

What we do in Alcatel-Lucent Ventures is rapidly incubate game-changing Bell Labs technologies. The innovation spirit we have is a spirit of rapid execution, excellence and teamwork. Innovation is teamwork.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

One of the things that I know that you have been working on is a revolutionary new device for safeguarding laptops.

Wim SWELDENS

Yes. I actually have it in my pocket. This is our Alcatel-Lucent Laptop Guardian. This is my ignition key for the laptop. The moment I plug it in I am connected anywhere in the world over third generation (3G) or broadband access and I know that my laptop is secure and protected from any kind of virus. Plus, if I were to lose my laptop, there is a Global Positioning System (GPS) in here and we can find out where it is. Even worse, my laptop could be stolen and I might be really concerned about the data on it. With this device, 24/7, no matter where the laptop is, I can actually delete that data remotely.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

That is fantastic. Thank you very much.

We are nearing the end of the trip, but before we get there, just come in here for a second because it is fantastic. Over here, we have Talking Beyond Hearing. Soon, we will be talking to our mobile phones without even making a sound. Over here, we have Contact Me My Way. This is Web 2.0 improved. You choose how the other person gets in touch with you. Is that right, Eric?

Eric

Absolutely. The principle is that the user is able to diffuse any way through the Web environment according to how he wants to be joined. For instance, if someone has put a communication happening into an eBay auction, a common Web user is able, just through a click, to enter into contact with the seller. In this example, the user of the service has just decided to select a phone call. However, he can modify this at any time. If you click again on the same communication happening, a new type of communication is established. This time it is an audio-video call. He can show me the toy itself and I can see that it is working properly.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

There is therefore complete security and anonymity.

Eric

There is no phone number on the Web, just a pure link that is active when the user wants it.

Hugh SCHOFIELD

That is amazing.

The best way to stay in touch is to join us again next month for another edition of *Innovation at Work*. Until then, goodbye and keep inventing.