

Chapter 13

ANOBIUM, SL: The Use of the ICT as Niche of Employment and as Tool for Developing the Social Market

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ABSTRACT

The chapter presents the experience of the company Innovation in Information and Documentation Systems Ltd. (ANOBIUM). It is a nonprofit Special Employment Centre focused on the social integration through employment of physical, sensory, intellectual, and mentally disabled persons. Its activity is based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT), offering services such as the digitization, the destruction or the custody of documents, the dynamization of website and website positioning in search engines, as well as the consulting in both fields the documental archives, and the production and the spreading of analyses in specific fields as CSR and business policies for work integration. The ANOBIUM case shows that ICT can be used as a niche of employment in order to develop the activity of Social Enterprises, and that ICT incorporates multiple benefits that can be used to achieve the social objective pursued by Social Enterprises. Also, ANOBIUM uses ICT to increase the impact and the spreading of the activities of other Social Enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

ICT are an essential tool for the development of Social Enterprises. An analysis of the experiences is needed in order to examine how these organizations use them in the business reality,

and what possibilities ICT have in order to spread the activities of these organizations. This chapter presents the experience of the company Innovation in Information and Documentation Systems Ltd. (ANOBIUM), a Social Enterprise that uses the legal form of Special Employment Centre,

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which employs people with disabilities, and that is dedicated to the ICT field. The objective of the chapter is to show a real implementation of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) from the Social Enterprise and their benefits.

Data for elaborating the case study come from several sources:

1. A semi-structured interview to the ANOBIUM's general manager
2. The financial statements contained in the Spanish Official Register of Enterprises
3. The review of both public documents available on the ANOBIUM website and private documents (as the ANOBIUM memory of activities of 2010), both provided by the firm. With all these, we want to convey an overall picture of the organization as well as the most relevant aspects related to the theme of the chapter.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: Next, we present the general context of the Special Employment Centers as Social Enterprises; in Section 3, we explain briefly the methodology of study, and Section 4 and 5 analyze the ANOBIUM business model and its relation to ICT, deepening the one hand, in specific cases that show how ICT are useful in achieving their social objectives, and secondly, in spreading the activity of other social organizations. Finally, Section 6 concludes the chapter.

Special Employment Centers in Spain

The main characteristic of Special Employment Centers (SEC) in Spain is that their creation as social enterprises has an objective to satisfy the needs of people with disabilities through the obtaining of reserved areas of employment. The goals of Special Employment Centers (SEC) are specified in the article 42 of the Law 13/2982, of April 7, of the Social Integration of Disabled

people (LISMI in Spanish capitals): “they execute a productive work, participating regularly in market operations and having as objective the ensuring both the wage-paid employment and the provision of personal and social services required by their disabled workers. Also, SEC are a means of integration of the highest number of disabled people to the normalized regime of labor market”. Personal and social services required by their disabled workers are mentioned in the law as “the rehabilitation, therapeutic services, the social integration, cultural and sport services, etc.”

Other of the core organizational characteristic of these entities is that the formation of the workforce of the SCE has to be 70% of disable people at least. So, the ultimate purpose of SEC is always the creation of reserved areas of employment for disabled people, bearing in mind that the process should result with the work integration in production structures of normalized enterprises.

From different experiences of Social Enterprises, the academic literature has identified various social enterprises' models coming from both the European tradition and the Anglo-Saxon tradition (Fayolle & Matlay, 2010; Hulgard, 2010; Kerlin, 2006; Quintao, 2007). The case of SEC in Spain can be related to the European tradition, following to Spear and Bidet (2005). According to these authors, social enterprises are those focused on the social and labor integration, created by groups of citizen or nonprofit organizations in order to provide temporary/permanent employment to certain population groups at risk of exclusion, and whose activities are related to activities in the production and commercial fields adapted to the capacities of the target population group.

SEC, especially those non-for-profit, are social economy's entities which combine 1) the economic viability and their participation in the market with 2) their commitment to social groups with less opportunities in the labor market, following the structure and organizational rules of the ordinary enterprises (CEPES, 2011). Advancing more on

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