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INNOVATION IS REBEL STUFF

WITH CHRIS BURRY,
USMAC CO-CEO

The massive technological development of recent years has multiplied consumer expectations: **the customization of products and the speed of delivery**, two of the most pressing requests from customers, **push companies to a continuous pursuit of innovation**. At what point are the companies in the country that, according to the **Global R&D Funding Forecast**, **invest the most** (566 billion dollars in 2018) in scientific research and technological development? Chris Burry, co-heir of USMAC - US Market Access Center, a business accelerator specializing in the entry into the U.S. market of small and medium-sized high-growth companies in the areas of information and communications, clean technology and bioorganic sciences, tells us about it.

"There are two mega trends that for some years now have influenced the production space. First, the **much deeper knowledge of the customer**: the use of Big Data and Analytics tools, applied to the information that customers generate by accessing social networks, surfing the Internet, using search engines, is a great opportunity to predict very effectively what are the desires and new needs to be met. The second mega trend is **the transition from mass production to mass customization**".

Rising from the masses and underlining one's own individuality seems to be increasingly important. Man is looking for a sense of recognition and gets it when he gives space to his own personal taste.

Customized products are therefore the trend of the moment: you are no longer satisfied with pre-packaged goods, but you want to see your personal preferences fulfilled and it does not matter if this manifestation of your personality costs a few euros more. **The mass customization allows to provide each customer with the product / service tailored to his needs, while maintaining the efficiency of mass production in terms of cost containment and speed of response.**

Additive manufacturing will play a decisive role in this proposition, and its promise is that each piece will leave the production line differently from the previous to the next one. This is also thanks to the enormous progress made by the technologies involved: today, for example, a CAD drawing is no longer a two-dimensional flat space, we can rotate around it in an environment of virtual reality, we can look at it from different angles within a three-dimensional space.

Another technology that enables these trends is 'cloud computing', so it is no longer necessary to own servers, but it is possible to use them at consumer rates by contacting a provider, such as Oracle, Microsoft, Amazon or Rack Space. And so, if in a given month we have collected data on how the customer uses a specific product / service, with 'cloud computing' you can have 50 servers that chew, analyze, digest

that data and as soon as the analysis exercise is over, you can return those servers to the provider and not pay more. It is clear that **the ability to access essentially unlimited computing power on demand, greatly changes the ability of an organization to actually do the analysis of the data available to it.**

And the more we move forward; the more technologies and areas of application will achieve revolutions unthinkable until now. **But the real difference in the path of a company is not the technology you choose to use, but the will or not to explore an alternative future.** In fact, it happens much more often that entrepreneurs are very attached to the way in which they have been successful and not very willing to change. The biggest problem is the willingness to take not only risks, but also many risks.

Many companies around the world are afraid of change. And when they wake up from hibernation, it's too late.

Let's think electric cars. For a long time the big car manufacturers didn't

take Tesla seriously, "they make so few cars a year, it will not be a big deal," suddenly Tesla produces thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of cars and the rest of the car manufacturers suddenly wake up "oh wow electric cars, you can make a lot of money," but in recent years have done nothing to prepare for the time when electric vehicles would be the most in demand in the market. There are no more second chances.

I therefore urge you **to embrace new paths, new technologies, new innovations.** For this to happen, it is necessary that the upper levels, the top management of the company, the CEO himself not only gives his approval, but is the first "champion" of change. A champion and a rebel because if you do not have the mentality of a rebel, you will always be slaves to risk: only a rebel can have the courage to take what exists and throw it away to do something new and different.

CHRIS BURRY

Chris is a serial entrepreneur with over 30 years' experience as an entrepreneur. Chris started and sold his first company while in college. Since then, he has been involved in **founding eight more startups.** One was sold to Electronic Data Systems in the early 1990's. Another, Avanade, was founded in late 1999. When Chris left in 2009, the company had reached \$1B USD in revenue with **operations in almost 30 countries.** In addition to his role as co-CEO of the USMAC, Chris is **an Industry Fellow at UC Berkeley and a partner in a venture capital firm.**