Supporting Innovation in Practice: an SME’s Perspective

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Technology/Challenges

Understanding the Science

50% Aeration Energy Reduction

Risk Management

Protecting the Environment

Cutting Carbon Emissions

Aging Infrastructure

Promoting Best Practice

Frameworks/Procurement Minefield

Asset Resilience

Easy Wins

Product Rollout

Tailor Made Applications

Measuring the Results

Customers’ Company Champion

Financing the R&D

Communicating Innovation to Customers

Strathkelvin Bringing the Innovation
Challenges: Financial

- Development and marketing costs - Strathkelvin have spent £2m bringing the ASP-Con to Market
- Patent costs
- Insurance costs
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Financing TAG – Technical Approval Group
- Financing Trials
Challenges: Financial

- **Eurostars**: In conjunction with a Spanish company on a specific project for slaughter waste “Biomont”.

- **Scottish Enterprise**: Business improvement grants towards wages, training and marketing support.

- **Scottish Enterprise**: Specific Technical Development Projects.

- **SDI**: Overseas trade mission costs including Aquatech in 2018.

- R&D Tax Credits.

- Supplementary income to support R&D costs by taking on work that was outwith our business direction.
Challenges: Market Acceptance

- Frameworks – 5 year periods – significant costs to participate with no guaranteed income.
- Diverse industry appetite for embracing new technology.
- Access to company champions and developing long term relationships.
- Customer procurement rules/processes.
- Product development stage - Innovation Labs are often looking for technology they can develop and commercialise.
Challenges: Understanding the Technology

• TAG Technical Acceptance Group – trials results.
• Market understanding of the technology’s USP.
• Customers understanding of the technology’s full potential.
• We continue to innovate and always will – it’s in our DNA at Strathkelvin.
Innovation is a challenge in a highly regulated industry.

A lot of time needs to be invested in developing customer relationships.

Consistency of customer personnel is important.

Clear articulation of the technology so the full potential is understood.

Clear articulation of the benefits to the customer’s business.

Risk appetite.

“If it does what you says it does – it does too much and it’s too cheap”
Solutions to Common Challenges facing SMEs

• **Funding & Support:** Help to navigate the funding and support landscape – Scotland, UK and beyond.

• **Trials & verification:** A universal acceptance water innovation group.

• **Customer Engagement:** Forums and introductions to engage with end-users.

• **Customer relationships:** Continuity and appropriate knowledge and insight at the correct company level.

• **Commercialisation:** Exceptions to Framework procurement to enable innovative technologies to access markets, especially in relation to energy and CO₂ emission reduction.
Practical Support through HNWIS

- Supported us to meet with the relevant customer contacts, attending and facilitating these meetings.
- Invited us to events to meet with key customers.
- Allowed us to showcase our instrument at Exhibitions on their stand.
- Met with potential buyers to present an independent assessment of our instrument.
- Independently assessed the TAG process and subsequent TAG Report.
Embrace Innovation…
Why Swim Against the Tide?

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