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www.lacantine.co



Region / Country

Region Pays de Loire, France

La Cantine - Nantes CASE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

"La Cantine" is the merge of 2 structures based in Nantes. At first, the structure was a cluster of digital companies and startups called Atlantic 2.0. Alongside this cluster, there was also a third-place called La Cantine du Numérique.

In 2017, they merged and created "La Cantine" www.lacantine.co

Today, La Cantine is a non-profit organisation which aims to connect companies and individuals in the fields of the web and digital innovation in the Loire region. Its missions are:

- Facilitate the implantations of companies & teams in Nantes
- Contribute the rise of innovation project
- Create bonds between SMEs and startups
- Evangelize the students to digital ecosystem
- Animate the local digital community



SUMMARY

La Cantine represents in 2017:

- 300 companies member of the cluster employing 22000 people
- 9 employees
- 1,2 million annual turnover
- 18000 people welcomed during an event organized by La Cantine

La Cantine organizes its activities in 3 main chapters :

- Coworking: La Cantine hosts more than 50 coworkers - <https://www.lacantine.co/le-coworking/espace-tarif/>
- Events: La Cantine organizes lot's of event dedicated to the digital sector such as Startup Weekend, Project Booster Day (to help entrepreneurs with all their issues) and the Web2day Festival for the ITC sector. that we plan to attend in 2020
- Programmes to help companies / startups to grow :
 - Maia Mater : pre-acceleration program
 - Corporate: open innovation program to help small & medium companies with their digital transformation thanks to startups skills
 - International: Different actions such as learning expeditions or welcoming delegations



CHALLENGE

La Cantine has different challenges :

- Make Nantes the place to be for digital themed projects
- Ease the implementation of companies
- Create and develop innovative projects
- Create a bond between SMEs and startups
- Sensibilize students to digital
- Help the different members and partners in any way

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STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

- Nantes Métropole
- Région Pays de la Loire
- CARENE Saint-Nazaire Agglomération
- ENEDIS
- Audencia Business School
- CIC Ouest Bank
- SFR
- SNCF
- Banque Populaire Grand Ouest
- In Extenso Accountants
- Parthema Lawyers
- Capgemini
- O2A Insurance
- Leyton Consulting

TARGET

La Cantine targets different types of groups, depending on the service offered:

1. Maïa Mater targets first time entrepreneurs, designers, developers, students and more generally people with ideas.
2. The Corporate Programme targets:
 - a. Companies that have already started their digital transformation and are looking for concrete solutions to their development needs
 - b. Startups members of La Cantine to boost their business
3. The International Programme targets:
 - a. Member companies that are willing to internationalize.
 - b. International delegations interested in knowing the diversity of the ecosystem in Nantes as well as allowing the members of the cluster to meet potential international clients and/or partners without having to travel.

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PROGRAMS

PRE-ACCELERATION:

The pre-acceleration program Maïa Mater have been founded by public and private actors: Cities of Nantes and Saint-Nazaire in one hand and entrepreneur Quentin Adam on the other hand. The common objective is to promote entrepreneurship to young people. In other words, the program helps to transform a simple idea into a project, then to a product.

Maïa Mater targets first time entrepreneurs, designers, developers, students and more generally people with ideas.

La Cantine provides accomodation (professional & personal), meals, as well as sessions with entrepreneurship experts. The offer is free and La Cantine doesn't take any royalties on the startups.

The Maïa Mater is a 3 sessions program divided on 3 years :

- Year 1 : During 5 months, participants will work on their projects without going out with the final objective to build a Minimum Viable Product.
- Year 2 : The projects that have survived the first session will carry on the program starting by doing a retrospective of the past year and decide which path they should follow : accelerate, change direction or stop. The objective is to prepare a Seed Round.
- Year 3 : Projects that have succeeded the first two steps are sometimes called in order to reassure the new arriving and help them in their own projects.

The Maïa Mater program second session applications are soon to be open.

The program is financed by NantesTech, Agglomération de Saint-Nazaire and Nantes Métropole.

Among the projects/startups that have participated in the Maïa Mater program :

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- Abradebarras : A removal and recovery service of bulky items for professionals and individuals. The startup was first driven by its founder before being joined by his partner, after facing the failure of his own project during Maïa Mater.
- Fiitli : Same story, reunion of two people during the program while coming for another project. Fiitli is a startup that promotes sports in companies.

CORPORATE:

The Corporate Program promotes open innovation by organizing meetings between SMEs and startups in order to make them work together by answering the different issues the first ones can meet.

The Corporate Program targets :

- Companies that have already started their digital transformation and are looking for concrete solutions to their development needs
- Startups members of La Cantine to boost their business

The Corporate Program suggests different types of meetings :

- Collaborative diner with no more than 15 people
- Innovation and digital transformation themed events
- Afterworks : discuss the different needs in a casual environment

TRAINING SESSIONS:

La Cantine also offers training sessions to discover new practices and develop a numeric culture to companies, freelancers or individuals in business context.

Many forms of training sessions :

- Short form : Half a day of training
- Long form : A whole day of training
- Personalized : A training adapted to the need of the company

The training sessions are animated by experts with a big field experience and turn around different topics. Some examples of training sessions: Discovering Design Thinking, Design the intrapreneurial device of your company, Which strategy to adopt to optimize your visibility on the search engines: SEO or SEA? ...

INTERNATIONAL:

As expanding on an international level is a challenge for all sizes companies, La Cantine has created a program that helps the member companies to internationalize.

Learning Expeditions are suggested to companies member of the cluster to access new markets, discover new environments and organize meeting with potential clients or partners.

Four destinations and festival/summits:

- WEB A QUEBEC in Quebec, Canada
- WEB SUMMIT in Lisbon, Portugal
- KIKK in Namur, Belgium
- AFRICA WEB FESTIVAL in Abidjan, Ivory Coast

La Cantine has as well a Welcoming Delegations program in order to welcome international delegations in Nantes. The purpose being to show the diversity of the ecosystem in Nantes as well as allowing the members of the cluster to meet potential international clients and/or partners without having to travel.

Events are organized to access an implementation expertise on a specific international market, plus workshops with experts on different topics.

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EVENTS

More than 100 events are organized by La Cantine every year to promote digital and entrepreneurship culture.

Among those, the 4th edition of Founder Stories the 29th January 2019, an evening dedicated to personal experiences of entrepreneurs. The guests for this edition are the founders of App-Elles, Makidoo and Do It Abroad.

Plus, they also organize many user tests for member companies or startups (Eram, CaptainVet, Booksquare...).

That's for their "small" events.

Concerning much bigger size ones, 4 can be noted :

- **Web2day** : La Cantine is the founder of the Web2day festival in Nantes. They define it as "the festival for professionals and new technology enthusiasts seeking inspiration, knowledge, and networking activities in a relaxed and off-beat atmosphere." The Web2day festival has celebrated its 10th birthday in 2018.
- **Project Booster** : Half a day is dedicated to help many actors (Project Manager, Startup CEO...) in the development of their project by inviting experts to answer all the questions they might have about many topics : Fundraising, financing, legal issues, insurance or accounting. The experts come generally from the partner companies.
- **303 Tour** is a 15 days development and acceleration program where 15 startups compete each other in front of a jury of experts, investors and entrepreneurs. The 3 firsts win a participation to the Concrete Week, a week dedicated to a personalized acceleration of their startup. And the big winner fly to Canada to participate to the Quebec A Web summit and discover the digital ecosystem of Quebec and Montreal.
The winner of the last edition is Flex Sense, a startup which offers a telecommunication system for oyster pens to counter theft and reassemble information. Thanks to this innovation, producers have improved the quality and quantity of their production.
- **Startup Weekend** is a 2 days intense event to experience all the steps startups have taken to become big : build a team, validate the business model, develop a product, market test... This event is the chance to discover the world of startups and maybe launch one. The 8th edition takes place in March 2019.

OTHER SERVICES

Among all these services, La Cantine also rents meeting rooms with a capacity going from 10 to 16 people, as well as a conference room for events.

Plus, they have a coworking offer. Today, they host more than 48 coworkers in their building, including Fiitli, the startup that have participated in the Maïa Mater program.

FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

The Maïa Mater Program is financed by NantesTech, Agglomération de Saint-Nazaire and Nantes Métropole.

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INNOVATIVE ASPECTS

The Maïa Mater program of La Cantine shows definitely some innovative aspects as it offers to the future entrepreneurs the opportunity to work at an intense level on their project without having to worry about external issues (accommodation...). It makes the participants focus totally on their project since they all live together during the time of the program.

Plus, the place itself is a real source of innovation in all the organized events and the way it promotes numeric culture among people by opening the door very easily to any interested person and with all the free programs it offers.

More importantly, we can say that La Cantine shows the most of its innovative aspect by giving the opportunity to all level or size companies to be involved in one or more programs in order to develop their activities locally and internationally.

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

The bigger difficulty La Cantine has encountered is the fire that has burned its building in 2016. At the time La Cantine Numérique and Atlantic 2.0 were still two separated structures that have merged after the tragedy.

TESTIMONIALS

On the Maïa Mater blog, the startup Fiitli has shared its experience on the program and how it impacted the development of the company.

Maïa Mater helped them to find a successful business model and efficient working methods. Today, Fiitli released a 100% functional platform that seems to correspond to what users are looking for. In addition to that, Fiitli has integrated a network of Nantes entrepreneurs who are there to help them when they need it.

In July 2018, they had already recruited 4 people, aiming to be 12 in 3 years and have an objective of €2 million turnover for 2021. For that, they focus their strategy on the development of their company in France then in Europe. They settled their offices in La Cantine.

