



/employee interview

Enno Romkema

*knowledge is essential to our business

Enno Romkema is the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and co-founder of Technolution. His main driving force is his inexhaustible passion for technology.

"I graduated from HTS Leeuwarden in 1979. After a brief period at Olivetti, I went to work for Brinkman, a business that specialised in operating systems for the horticultural sector. It was interesting work, but it was a one-product organisation, and I had greater ambitions. I wanted more variation in my work and I wanted to be active in numerous markets. Furthermore, I was not the only one at Brinkman with these ambitions: Jan, our current general manager, and Rob, who has since retired, also had similar aspirations. In 1987, we founded Technolution, a project-oriented organisation that allows us to work our way: conducting a wide variety of projects in a short space of time.

Passion for technology

Technology is crucial to our business, and it's no coincidence that we chose the name Technolution. The development of the business has always been closely linked with the development of technology. The situation in 1987 was completely different to the situation today. It was considerably simpler, and the PC had just made its entry. Computers were still isolated units that rarely communicated with each other, if ever. There were very few standards: the first major standard was the IBM PC, introduced in 1981. However, the microprocessor had already been developed, which was essential to what we wanted to do: build industrial systems. Nowadays, wireless technology is everywhere, and the evolution of components has created a third technological sector: programmable logic.

Technology management

In those days, I could oversee everything in my capacity as technical director. However, the

technological progress that has been made since then makes it impossible to know everything, so I now also rely on the support of my colleagues. We currently have five technology managers, each of which has their own specialist field. They keep a close eye on developments in their particular area of expertise. We want to be on the cutting edge of technology, just as our clients expect us to be. We want to be ready to answer questions that our clients haven't even asked yet, and we do this by means of internal projects that develop our knowledge of and practical experience with new technology. We did this with smart cards, with the 10GB link used in, amongst others, the FEI's Falcon electron microscope, and this was also how we developed the MobiBoxx, our in-car automation device. These projects are internal investments that we then use during our projects for clients. We do not seek to bring our own products onto the market, as this would put us into direct competition with our clients. Our goal is to conduct projects and deliver tailor-made solutions.

Knowledge development

Knowledge is essential to our business, and we conduct an active policy of knowledge sharing. After all, knowledge does not communicate itself: it has to be actively distributed and people need to be given the time and opportunity to absorb it. One way that we do this is via our Technology EXchange meetings. These meetings are organised by the technology manager, and they allow employees to explain particular areas of technology to their colleagues.

Knowledge is the only thing that multiplies when shared. It requires our employees to have a certain mindset characterised by openness and hunger to learn. Furthermore, these are the values that I, as technical director, must reflect to the rest of the company. It is an honour and a pleasure to co-manage this technology-driven organisation."

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