



When smartphones save lives

Sometimes tragic events can give people great ideas – as the story of Emergency Eye demonstrates. With this software from Corevas, emergency response centres can pinpoint the exact location of an accident and ensure emergency services are deployed rapidly. Thanks to the Enterprise Europe Network, the world’s largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises, the fledgling company found the right IT partner.

Summer 2016, a warm evening in Brittany bathed in clear, vivid light – ideal conditions for a beautiful overland tour. Günter Huhle jumped on his motorbike with his wife Carola Petri on the pillion seat and headed out. Just as Huhle was about to overtake a car driving slowly in front of him, the car veered and hit the bike. Carola Petri flew over the car and landed in the ditch, seriously injured; Günter Huhle also sustained multiple injuries. But it got worse: it took 90 minutes for the ambulance to arrive, ‘because we could not tell the dispatcher at the French control centre exactly where we were’, recalled Günter Huhle.

He also called his son Viktor, who was unable to help his injured parents as he was not nearby. This terrible experience stayed with the family, and it was not long before a decision was reached: through Corevas GmbH & Co. KG, which the family had founded in 2015, they decided to develop a digital emergency call system.

‘Our vision is to use Emergency Eye worldwide, or throughout the EU at least, in rescue control centres. This will hopefully enable thousands of lives to be saved in the long term’, said Carola Petri, product designer and CEO of Corevas.

How does Emergency Eye work? ‘The software will be made available to rescue control centres, so that they can locate an accident site via GPS and quickly dispatch the emergency services’, explained company developer, scientist and doctor Günter Huhle. ‘If an emergency call is received by a control centre, the dispatcher sends the caller an SMS. If the caller allows access to their mobile phone via a link contained in the message, then they can be located in seconds. First responders can also be given valuable first aid instructions via a video link.’

Experienced IT partner discovered through Enterprise Europe Network matchmaking

While looking for a suitable software development partner, in 2017 Günter Huhle turned to Zenit GmbH NRW.Europa, Enterprise Europe Network partner organisation in North Rhine-Westphalia. At the European networking event ‘Successful R&I in Europe’, he met Agnieszka Kaminska-Swiat, both a Zenit employee and Enterprise Europe Network consultant.

‘This matchmaking event is organised by Zenit GmbH on a yearly basis on behalf of the NRW Ministry of Science. It’s a great platform for initiating new projects under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation’, explained the Enterprise Europe Network consultant.

Corevas benefited from this platform too, as Günter Huhle explained: ‘We looked at presentations from various software companies and finally found an experienced partner in Liki Mobile Solutions, with whom we developed Emergency Eye.’ Agnieszka Kaminska-Swiat added: ‘This laid the foundations for the successful development and realisation of this project.’

The next steps: accessibility and internationalisation

Once the right IT development partner was found, things moved quickly: the company applied for financial support and initially received funding from the 2017 Head Start Programme introduced by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). Another application for funding from the EIT Health Innovation Projects programme, funded through Horizon 2020, was also successful. Support for the patent application was provided by WIPANO, the BMWi support programme, which brings full circle the support the project has received so far. Since September 2018, Emergency Eye has been successfully deployed at the Rhein-Kreis Neuss control centre, while other control centres in North Rhine-Westphalia have already indicated their interest.

For Günter Huhle, there is no question that Corevas will continue to work with Enterprise Europe Network in the future: 'Thanks to the Enterprise Europe Network and Zenit, our product has received outstanding national and international visibility. At the last network meeting, we once again met with different partners and held numerous discussions – also with a view to further funding, as we are now in the phase of making Emergency Eye accessible and international.'

Agnieszka Kaminska-Swiat is keen to follow this path: 'We are very pleased to be able to actively support this still-young and successful company with its product launch and search for suitable foreign cooperation partners, as well as in its growth and expansion. With our consulting expertise and far-reaching network, we are at Corevas's side at all times.'

About the Enterprise Europe Network

The world's largest support network for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) brings together 600 member organisations in more than 60 countries, who provide their advice and support to help SMEs to scale-up, access funding and finances, understand EU legislation and find potential business partners across Europe and beyond. The European Commission launched the Enterprise Europe Network in 2008. It is co-financed under the European Union's [programme for the competitiveness of SMEs](#) (COSME).

For further information: een-deutschland.de