Erik Torreiter

Colaboración Virtual

“ I saw an opportunity to offer a one-stop shop for audio and videoconferencing technology. ”

COUNTRY	Chile
INDUSTRY	Technology
EMPLOYEES	150
YEAR SELECTED	2010
WEBSITE	www.colaboracionvirtual.com

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Colaboracion Virtual (CVI) is making distance disappear. With aims to become the global first-choice for videoconferencing & distance collaborative services, the firm offers a one-stop-shop for cutting-edge audio and videoconferencing technology. So far, the company is well on its way to meeting its goal. CVI owns a significant share of the managed services segment in its market, and has been able to expand to offices in five countries, delivering, installing, and integrating audio and videoconferencing technology, as well as providing end-user training and ongoing live customer support.

In addition to serving as the board president at CVI, Erik is also the CEO of Latin Telecom.
CVI's success to date represents founder Erik Torreiter's drive. An engineer with an eye for commercial opportunity, Erik has spent much of the last 15 years fine-tuning CVI's service-orientated business model. He began this pursuit in Chile in 1993. After completing his French "civil service" abroad, he remained in the country to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. Holding a degree in Civil Telecommunications Engineering from the National Institute of Telecommunications in Paris, Erik quickly realized the difficulty Chile faced in its early attempts to implement ISDN – a then complicated network technology with which Erik had considerable expertise. Erik saw this as an opportunity to use his skills and upon completing his service, used US$20,000 in savings and loans from family and partnered with local friends to found Latin Telecom. As soon as 1997, Erik and his team were selling ISDN equipment and solutions (such as radio transmissions of important soccer games). He realized the potential of videoconferencing technology that same year, when he sold his first videoconferencing project to Telefonica.

In 1998, Erik secured the rights to distribute and work with Polycom's new videoconferencing technology. Three years later, he had a "light bulb moment." While delivering a videoconference solution to CODELCO – the world's largest copper mining company – Erik realized that CODELCO employees didn't know how to use their new high-tech communication systems. They needed a suite of integral services that not only provided equipment and installation, but also oversaw each virtual meeting by providing trained personnel to assist in complicated videoconference needs. In 2003, Erik strategically restructured his company (forming Colaboracion Virtual as the holding company) to focus more on managed collaborative services. Over an intensive five-year period, he moved quickly to capture clients across the Latin American region. The product and service offered by CV made international expansion easy. Because offices on both sides of a conference require technical support, CV found that it was able to enter new markets effortlessly by serving clients in existing ones. By 2008, Colaboracion Virtual had subsidiaries in Chile, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela. A decentralized service and support model allowed it to rapidly respond to client needs. Today, it is the best in class provider throughout Latin America.

Colboracion Virtual has risen to meet two challenges in innovation. First, it has amassed the technical know-how and acquired an infrastructure rivaling that of any large tech or telecom company (including its own secure network, CVNet). Second, it has combined technical expertise with a sophisticated business model built around flexibility and customized services. In addition and unlike its competitors, CVI offers 24/7 remote support in multiple languages and locations. It boasts a specialized infrastructure in seven countries, but also maintains strong physical support from its local offices. The market for telepresence solutions worldwide is trending towards this kind of product, and Gartner research group predicts that the number of companies wanting to cut cost and increase efficiency by using video conferencing will only grow. By 2014 the global market for telepresence is expected to reach US$4.7 billion. Thanks to Erik, CVI is in a position to fare favorably in this growing industry.

ENDEAVOR AND COLABORACIÓN VIRTUAL

Among services received, the entrepreneur benefited from the Ernst & Young Fellows program in 2010.