

University Spinouts can be Seminal Companies.

Some examples from Queens University Belfast

Queens University spin out company KAINOS Software Ltd heralds an important development in the spin out story from UK universities. Like many future spinouts from UK Universities might turn out to be, KAINOS is proving to be a seminal company: a producer of spinouts from spinouts. Four new companies have been spun out either by KAINOS or KAINOS employees. Meridio software, which concentrates on a Document Management System developed in KAINOS now has its own management team and has raised venture capital for the marketing of their Document Management System. Lagan Technologies established by an ex Kainos manager and colleagues is now the leading CRM software supplier into local government in the UK. Amacis Holdings provide e contact software for major banks and other large organizations. A fourth spinout met with less success. Currently a further new business is being incubated within Kainos. Propertynews.com has almost 100% coverage of all domestic property for sale in Northern Ireland.

KAINOS itself employs over 200 software engineers and consultants and has offices in Belfast, Dublin and London. Leading edge solutions are provided by KAINOS to Financial Services, Utilities and Retail sectors. KAINOS, a corporate venture between Queens technology transfer company QUBIS Ltd and ICL (now Fujitsu) was set up in 1986.

Commenting, Edward Cartin Chief Executive of QUBIS Ltd says “KAINOS is indeed proving to be a seminal company but it is not an isolated example. We have another company in our portfolio of spinouts, which has also produced a spinout. That is Andor Technology, which now is a corporate venture investor alongside us in Avalon Technology Ltd. The QUBIS Ltd board has a policy of investing in each of these spinouts from spinouts as they involve human capital built up in our university spinouts. These spinouts from spinouts have had the benefit from exposure to experienced management and marketeers as well as to the technology and may even have better prospects than our first generation spinouts.”

Between them the aforementioned companies already employ nearly 400 people in Northern Irelands regional economy where manufacturing employs less than 100,000. University spinouts are becoming a driving force in Northern Ireland.

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