

VareseNews

Smart-Up has been born. The third industrial revolution starts in Varese

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It is called “**Smart Up**” and is a **digital production lab** which will be launched in January thanks to the partnership with **LIUC University of Castellanza** and the **Province of Varese Employers’ Federation**. The aim of the project is to create, in the university, an accelerator of the procedures regarding product innovation; a step that goes towards what **The Economist** has defined as the “**third industrial revolution**”

It would not be the usual **start-up** incubator, even less a place where to produce handiworks, but rather it will be a **lab for the technological transfer and for the delivery of knowledge to the companies**. Or better, it will be a place of “**creativation**” where **new ways of prototyping** could be developed along with **product innovation**, to use a definition which was coined by **Luca Mari**, lecturer of **engineering** and coordinator of the project.

During the press conference at the LIUC University where the project was launched, there was a 3D printer on a table near the speakers which worked to show how quite simple is to produce prototypes using new hardware and software technologies.

“This is a jump towards the new standards of the manufacturing, and our university is moving to catch this new opportunities. Smart up isn’t an extemporary project, but it integrates inside the support activities to the companies innovation,” said **Michele Graglia**, rector of the university.

The Internet of the things, which is able to put together bits and atoms, that already existed. So, we are not speaking about an experimentation stage, but rather about a change in progress that companies cannot ignore, at the expense of losing their competitiveness. It is not just a coincidence that a top company in the aviation field, **Roll Royce**, recently announced that they were going to produce the brake system of an on demand aircraft using a **3D printer**. “Once, some months had to be spent from the first prototypes of the product to their launch onto the market. Nowadays, in some fields, it is just a matter of days. This is not science fiction, but is a change in standards,” explained the president of Univa, **Giovanni Brugnoli**.

The advantages for the companies consist in **better efficiency and saving in time and money**, goals which are possible using basic software and **3D printers at an affordable price**. In the world, more than **\$ 2 billion worth of 3D printers** have been sold, and this number is expected to grow reaching **\$ 6 billion** by 2017.

Mari alludes to the experience of Arduino, a case of **open source** innovation which was created in Italy thanks to the brilliance of Massimo Banzi, who in the US is considered an innovation guru in the same ways as **Steve Jobs and Bill Gates**, whereas he is unfortunately still little known in Italy. The mention is no coincidence, because the success of **Smart Up** would not depend only on the ability of exchange between companies, but also on the whole context and on the industrial policy of the territory. This is a **huge challenge for a static country like our Italy**, which has a poor aptitude to the innovation and which is unwilling to be inclined, at least after the economic boom, to the technological development. “Schools must be open to this treasure of knowledge and the university, which is a flexible place, has

the duty to create an intelligent production chain, or at least to try to do it,” Mari concluded.

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