CASE STUDY

UROS: BRINGING A MOBILE HOTSPOT SWIFTLY TO MARKET

Travelers had been paying far too much for Internet access. The Finnish company Uros sought to develop a mobile hotspot that could let them link in locally—and for much less. But it faced key time-to-market pressures and came to Sanmina. Sanmina met the deadline and the money-saving device debuted in September 2012.

THE OPPORTUNITY

International travelers have long suffered from high data roaming fees. The charges have burdened individuals, since a heavy Internet user might pay a thousand euros per day, and in Europe they have hindered cross-border business for companies. People have longed for cheaper access.

Uros arose to provide it. Its founders planned to build a mobile hotspot and service for international travelers, called Goodspeed. It would let people link in locally at much lower cost, wherever they were, without roaming charges.

The potential market is huge. In Europe alone, over one million passengers board airlines every day and countless travelers cross boundaries several times per month. More than 400 million Europeans use the Internet at least two hours daily. Although the European Union has regulated data roaming prices, they remained relatively steep, especially for heavy users. Outside EU costs are higher and the Goodspeed market is global.

Moreover, demand is exploding. The average smartphone user downloaded three times more data per month in 2011 than in 2010. In addition, 175 million laptops used mobile data in 2011 and each generated on average 22 times more data traffic than a smartphone. The huge market keeps growing bigger.

But Uros was a startup and needed help.

THE CHALLENGE

The founders of Uros envisioned a sophisticated standalone, pocket-sized device. The user would create a private WiFi network with Goodspeed and share the connection with up to five internet devices, without roaming fees. The solution was novel, but the technology was complex and the company faced a series of hurdles:

- **The hotspot had to reach market quickly.** The idea was timely and required quick action. The telecommunications sector changes rapidly and first-mover advantages greatly affect a product's success.
- **The hotspot had to work reliably.** Quality was a paramount. Testing for performance metrics and regulatory certification is a critical part of product development in telecom.

- **Manufacturing had to take place nearby**. The company needed a partner close to its headquarters in Oulu, Finland, to quicken all stages from design to testing to volume production.
- **Needed New Product Introduction (NPI) expertise.** Production had to reach high volume rapidly. They needed an EMS partner experienced in NPI so the ramp-up was flawless, with no delays.
- **The manufacturer had to have global reach.** Since the market for Good speed is worldwide, Uros needed an EMS with the skill and infrastructure to expand efficiently across the planet.

WHY SANMINA?

A startup like Uros gains an enormous edge with the operational and logistical backbone of a world-class EMS player. And Sanmina was the perfect match for Uros, for a variety of reasons:

- **Sanmina excels at time to market.** With its experience and complete portfolio of technology components, Sanmina is adept at shrinking lead times. Uros executives found that Sanmina offered them the fastest time-to-market available.
- **Sanmina's range of communications products and services is unmatched in the EMS industry.** Sanmina has been building components and equipment for over 30 years, and it designs and manufactures every element critical to complex communications devices. It met every technological requirement Uros had.
- **Sanmina is easy to work with.** Uros executives had previously collaborated with Sanmina and knew its culture of partnership.
- **Sanmina brings design and manufacturing under one roof.** Having worked with Sanmina before, Uros knew the product design would take manufacturing challenges into account and production would be cost-effective. Sanmina could thus minimize delays and costly, needless interactions with other parties.
- **Sanmina was local.** Sanmina had a factory and executives near Uros head quarters, so development could proceed even faster.
- **Sanmina minimizes costs.** Collaborating early with Sanmina improves the bottom line. For instance, as a Tier-1 EMS, Sanmina can integrate the latest high-speed technologies into new designs, using materials and processes that yield top performance at affordable cost. More over, Sanmina has long experience managing the supply chain, buying raw materials and components in volume at lower prices.
- **Sanmina excels at new product introduction.** In addition, with Sanmina's operational and logistics expertise, Uros could scale its business to the growing customer demand.
- **Sanmina has a global footprint.** With its presence in 23 countries on six continents, Sanmina can manufacture closer to the customer. Hence Uros could gain a competitive advantage worldwide as it expanded.

THE APPROACH

Uros introduced Sanmina to Goodspeed in early September 2011 and the project began in October. The good personal relationships helped it start smoothly, and Sanmina worked from the initial concept to create the product. Together, the companies addressed the challenges:

- **Efficient, easy-to-use design.** The device would have 10 easily replaceable SIMs, one per country, and users could swap them in and out. They could get additional SIMs from the company website. The user could also add a personal SIM to use Goodspeed in the home country.
- **Cost-effectiveness.** In addition to its many other advantages, Sanmina used DFX ("design for X" or "design for excellence") from the start to ensure efficient manufacturing.
- **Quality assurance.** Sanmina designed the production test process in Finland. In addition, from June through September 2012, Sanmina used statistical analysis to improve test applications for mass production.
- **Swift ramp-up.** Goodspeed entered production right on schedule.

RESULTS

Goodspeed launched in September 2012. The service currently covers many European nations and global expansion is underway. Among other key results, Sanmina and Uros achieved:

- **First-mover advantage.** Sanmina brought the product from initial concept to ramp-up in 48 weeks, and to product and service launch in 12 months. As a result, Goodspeed debuted as the first international roaming-free device.
- **Lowered cost for consumers.** As Uros intended, Goodspeed let international travelers surf for a reasonable, fixed daily rate, with no roaming or wi-fi access fees. It also allowed up to 1Gbyte of daily data transfer at 21Mbits per second.
- **A design for the future.** Goodspeed can easily integrate with LTE.

With Sanmina's help, Uros swiftly brought to market a device that could transform international Internet use and make global business more efficient. But more than on-time delivery was at stake. Sanmina made sure that Goodspeed displayed the quality performance critical to the long-lasting success of a new product.

ABOUT SANMINA

Sanmina Corporation is a leading electronics contract manufacturer serving the fastest-growing segments of the global Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) market. Recognized as a technology leader, Sanmina provides end-to-end manufacturing solutions, delivering superior quality and support to OEMs primarily in the communications, defense and aerospace, industrial and semiconductor systems, medical, multimedia, enterprise computing and storage, automotive and clean technology sectors. Sanmina has facilities strategically located in key regions throughout the world.

More information regarding the company is available at http://www.sanmina.com.

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