

Autumn 2018

- *The CIOA Concept dedicated Best Collaboration Value Creation Model*
- *Interview of the President*
- *How CIOA generates value for its members*



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### Judges' Report

#### Groupe CIOA: Best Collaboration Value Creation Model – Global 2018

Stronger and more powerful than the sum of its parts, the CIOA Group's expansive network of subsidiaries and providers encompasses a global market of shared resources, networking opportunities, and strategic expertise. CIOA (International Business Opportunities Centre) affiliates operate in more than 140 countries, representing 500,000 businesses and 120,000 suppliers across multiple industries. CIOA is a facilitator of international business, and provides companies, organisations and government agencies with multidisciplinary solutions and collaborative services to reach a global audience. The company is focused on creating valuable business connections, linking suppliers to customers and expediting strategic technology and financial partnerships. It offers administrative support for business by managing and monitoring data, from daily transactions to customer relations. With more than 40 offices worldwide, 200 multidisciplinary advisors and 2,300 co-developers in its network, CIOA understands the importance of collaboration. Since its inception in 1994, it has grown to become an international advocate for, and facilitator of, global, open, and self-sufficient business models. With a firm foothold on the global map, CIOA recognises that "together we are stronger" – making it the clear winner of the Best Collaboration Value Creation Model – Global 2018 award.

Barry Elliot

Awards Liaison Officer



> Q&A with CIOA CEO Léon Lucide:

# CEO Taken as a Hostage Sees Upside of Situation – and of Working Hard

**WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR BUSINESS IDEA?**

CIOA is the evidence of a life course. As my experiences grew, I became aware of what I could do in my life to serve the community.

I was born in Martinique, a French island in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies in the Caribbean, where I lived for 33 years, in a family of 8. This, added to eight years of boarding school, taught me how to live with others. In my mother's grocery store and father's farm, we worked to maintain a modest lifestyle. I began to appreciate the value of hard work.

At the age of 19, while pursuing my law studies, I was already a father, and the owner of my house, built on weekends on family land. I understood building well enough to become a builder: in 1990, a construction group I created realised €40M in turnover... then went bankrupt, a victim of indelicate bankers associated with influence groups, and my mistakes of youth. It was a hard test, and I understood the fragility of the isolated entrepreneur.

Defeated but free, I settled in Canada with my partner, where we created an import-export business. For four years, we visited 42 countries and came to understand that the needs of some were the opportunities of others. We live in a compartmentalised world, with too few bridges. We created a business-opportunities magazine and I became vice-president of the Traders Association of Canada. Back in France in 1995, I started a business club with our subscribers' journal.

With the web, everything had evolved, and the opportunity was there to create a global, open, self-sufficient, diverse company, without territorial limits, with a common *affectio societatis* (the common will of several persons or entities to merge into one entity), with rules, organisation and resources.

I am an idealist but I am down-to-earth. And, with CIOA, my utopia of an open and united world can become reality. This is my counterproposal to free and undistorted competition, and a proposal to "little ones" of this world.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION OF THE WORLD TODAY?**

Today, things seem unequal, and too predatory; it is an insecure world. I was held hostage for eight hours at Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, when Islamist militants took 170 hostages and killed 20 of them in a mass shooting. If we start



CEO: Léon Lucide

to rethink things, there is an opportunity to build another world. "Collaborative" is the key word in this. In fact, tomorrow's world – as depicted by Jeremy Rifkin, an American economist and social-theorist – is the world the CIOA community lives in every day.

**AND YOUR VISION FOR CIOA IN 10 YEARS?**

To move in the right direction, we must return to basics. The most obvious thing is to meet needs with a sustainable perspective. This is how our

offer has been built, by providing institutional decision-makers with the means to help their populations to consume better, to live, train, work and recreate better.

On a corporate level, with the company on Euronext, a creator of sponsorships and on-going partnerships, CIOA will be a force for public good, belonging to its beneficiaries – with the benefit of keeping financial services, health, personal development in focus. ➤

## > CIOA:

# An Ecosystem That Can Bring the World to Every Doorstep



### Manufacturing process

Imagine a global, collaborative system whose interactions help to meet the basic needs of populations to consume, live, work, recreate...

It took a quarter of a century to translate this vision into an operational system that provides decision-makers with development-as-a-service solutions for CIOA. It facilitates the business of economic operators in the fields of import-export, construction, distribution, tourism, craft, and agribusiness, among others.

The CIOA ecosystem brings together people from 140 countries in an international marketplace. It entails 500,000 users, 120,000 suppliers and 135,000 hotels and residences, as well as users of affiliated communities, unions, Chambers of Commerce, local authorities and government agencies. Members find out how to make their businesses grow.

First, CIOA had to give the member companies, big or small, the digital capacity to use the Market Network Builder, its digital business machine. This private information system uses Enterprise

Resource Planning to support business flow, from pre-transaction to post-transaction. It is connected to the international network of marketplaces, in real time, allowing instantaneous purchases, sales, production and services,

With globalisation, small is not always beautiful. An SMEs has to sell everywhere. This need for the internationalisation of companies is a business opportunity for the 2,300 business facilitators federated by CIOA. Trained and supported by the headquarters office, these facilitators provide members with a commercial presence in 50 countries.

If artificial intelligence is seen by some as a threat, the result of CIOA's Collective Brain work in the building industry restores some faith in the human brain. The Collective Brain brings together 200 experts who contribute to shared R and D to develop members' expertise.

Titan Factory is a mobile building machine which, for its development, brought together Finnish, Dutch, French and Turkish experts. It realises building structures from their building

information digital model. This manufacturing-as-a-service offer brings architects, builders and suppliers together to offer turn-key buildings, worldwide.

Since government institutions and states have shown interest in the CIOA system, a new perspective has opened-up to provide citizens with better consumption, housing, employment and entertainment options.

For the Union of Comoros, it is deployed as a public service in the plan for 2030 emergence, to realise road, lodging, industries, commerce and digital plans. For the DR Congo and Cameroon, it is the tourism division that is retained to modernise reception structures, create jobs, and promote the destination.

CIOA is still a small business ... but that may change soon. After 25 years of prototyping, self-funded, proof-of-collaborative enrichment, the CIOA system has a €10m turnover for 2017, and an EBIT of €2.9m with 15 employees.

CIOA seems to be on the runway! ✂