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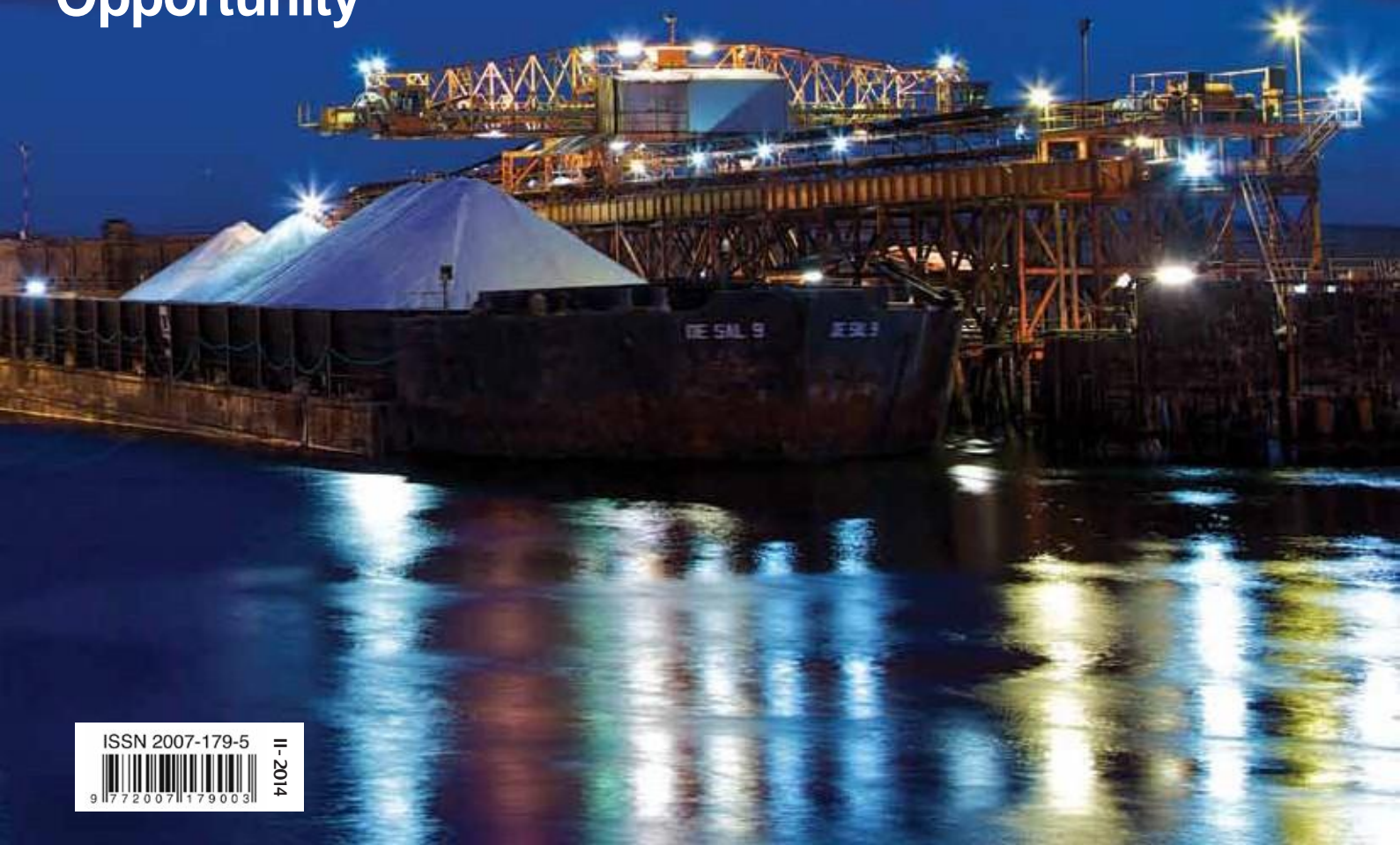
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CORPORATIVO TECNOLÓGICO DE JALISCO: A NEW IT BUSINESS MODEL

Close to four years ago, a group of entrepreneurs from western Mexico implemented a scheme based on alliances that enabled them to complement each other. The experiment has been successful in several countries in the Americas and Europe and is now going global.

BY ANTONIO VÁZQUEZ

Nine companies, one goal: mutual aid. In 2010, the heads of nine information technologies (IT) companies in the state of Jalisco, in western Mexico, agreed to work together to expand their area of development.

The idea has now materialized and is called Corporativo Tecnológico de Jalisco (CTJ), a project within the Software Center belonging to the Instituto Jalisciense de Tecnologías de

la Información (IJALTI), which houses close to 40 IT businesses.

"Most of these companies have been in the sector for several years. We realized that we weren't in competition with each other and we could, in fact, complement one another; that with our certifications, staff and dynamism we could create cells of development," says Roberto García, CEO of Netcommerce, one of CTJ's firms.



CTJ has surprised customers in the US, Canada, Colombia, Argentina, the United Kingdom and the Dominican Republic with its extensive portfolio of products. The nine local corporations that make up the consortium have put around 50 products and services in web applications, telecommunications infrastructure, software, information security, human resources and certifications within reach of customers around the world.

He adds: "Projects come in and developers and designers from all the companies work on them; when the job is completed, everyone goes back to their places."

The result has been so successful that only two years after its establishment, the CTJ was already exporting several products. CTJ has surprised customers in the US, Canada, Colombia, Argentina, the United Kingdom and the Dominican Republic with its extensive portfolio of products.

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With a workforce of 265 and more than 20 certifications (many from global companies such as Apple, Cisco, Google, Microsoft and Hewlett-Packard [HP]), the

CTJ is aware of its pivotal role in Mexico's IT industry.

Roberto García explains that the so-called triple helix that has been implemented in the sector—a three-way collaboration between education and technology institutions, government and businesses—has allowed small and medium-sized businesses (SMB) in the industry to develop extensively.

According to García, Mexico has become one of the leading countries with IT development given its highly-skilled workforce and privileged geostrategic location next to the US, the world's largest technology consumer.

The CEO of Netcommerce points out that operating from Guadalajara is an added value for the CTJ. Being the second most important city in Mexico, it has top-ranking IT universities and specialized infrastructure, such as the new Digital Creative City (DCC) that is under construction in the center of the city.

In 2012, when Jalisco's CTJ began exporting, it became aware of the need to internationalize. Since then, it has established synergies with organizations such as ProMéxico to accomplish its mission.

Through ProMéxico, the CTJ is already analyzing the possibility of having a presence in places such as Silicon Valley, in California, and Chicago, Illinois.

"Our sales pitch abroad is not based on claiming that we are cheaper or close to the US. We don't fall back on those arguments to compete; instead we say and ensure that we are the best in this or that situation. Ours is a new model and we can cover large projects. We have the dynamics to create cells and grow them based on demand. To that, we add several aspects such as our people's training, which stand us in good stead," concludes García. **N**

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