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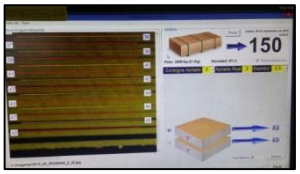
Sonae companies invested around 100 million euros in innovation over the past year

SONAE COMPANIES DISTINGUISH INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Sonae Companies granted the **Chairman's Award** to the best innovation projects developed over the past year, in an initiative promoted by the Sonae Companies Innovation Forum. The finalist projects, chosen among dozens of applications, translate the importance of innovation for Sonae Companies, which have invested around 100 million euros in research, development and innovation (R&D+I) over the last financial year.

The **Chairman's Award**, which is handed by Belmiro de Azevedo and acknowledges one innovation project from among the hundreds developed at Sonae Companies, was given to the wooden panel density improvement system, developed by Sonae Indústria. Worten's price determining software and the new ice transportation system developed by Sonae MC were also awarded with honourable mentions.



Winner: Reinforced density wooden panels (Sonae Indústria)

The winning project allows to estimate the density of a batch's wooden panel through an automated technological solution. The project integrates a computer vision system that automatically counts the number of wooden panels on a batch, a group of loading cells that weigh the batch and a *software* that automatically reads the thickness of the panels connected to an SFC database and Big Data.

The collected information allows to improve the production process efficiency, as well as logistic aspects of transportation, bringing important savings to the company. The success of the project was also financial, as the payback period took less than 3 months.

This innovative solution was developed by Ángel García, Luis Ferrari, Miguel García and Alberto Vicente, from the Tradema factory, the Sonae Indústria unit in Valladolid.

Sonae is a Retail company with two major partnerships in the areas of Shopping Centres (Sonae Sierra) and Software & Information Systems Media and Telecommunications (Sonaecom).
By the end of 2014, Sonae achieved a turnover of over 5 thousand million Euros. The company defined as its strategic objectives: the internationalization and diversification of investment style and the leveraging and strengthening of core assets and competencies.
More info at www.sonae.pt

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Honourable mentions:

Ice transportation system (Sonae MC)

The ice transportation system, developed by Sonae MC, allowed to reinforce the safety of all collaborators while also making it a swifter process. The new solution is automated, reducing the need for human intervention in the process, hence reinforcing its ergonomics and quality. Ice is now collected through a suction system based on a vacuum pump that carries the ice from the ice chamber to a deposit, which, when activated, drops the ice into the container used for ice distribution. The project was developed by Rodrigo Charro.

Price determining software (Worten)

Integrated in its omnichannel strategy, Worten developed an app that restructured the price determining process in place at its online and physical stores. The solution is based on MS Access and Excel and allows to manage and centralize the most relevant pricing processes, incorporating several relevant variables in the calculation. The software suggests prices, issues alerts and includes productivity tools, simplifying the work for the teams in charge of price determining. The project was developed by Ricardo Ferreira Pacheco, Marina Dias and Tiago Proença.

Stimulating Innovation

FINOV – Sonae Companies Innovation Forum came to life in 2005 with the mission to stimulate and support innovation among Sonae Companies in order to increase the levels of added value, as well as to identify and share the innovative practices carried out in different business areas. Nowadays, FINOV aims to also foster the value of innovation within the community, contributing to the country's economic and social development, while also supporting innovative projects at the several Sonae Companies, so as to create even more value to all stakeholders.

As a result of this commitment and of the many implemented innovation initiatives, Sonae Companies have developed new products, solutions and services, as well as new processes and business models, contributing to a greater commercial dynamic and efficiency gains.

Luís Filipe Reis, president of the Sonae Companies Innovation Forum, says, 'The culture of innovation is nowadays deeply rooted in our collaborators. The Chairman's Award winning projects clearly demonstrate our ability to develop solutions that create competitive advantages and make Sonae Companies a reference in their scope of action both national and internationally. Innovation is strategical for Sonae Companies, for which we will continue

to invest in this area, proceeding with a policy that promotes the creation of long term competitive advantages, contributing to strengthen leadership positions in Portugal and to the growing international consolidation of Sonae Companies as renowned multinational companies.'