Ariel Gringaus

Colegium

“ I saw an opportunity to provide a complete solution for school administration. ”

COUNTRY	Chile
INDUSTRY	Technology
EMPLOYEES	45
YEAR SELECTED	2009
PARTNER	José Manuel Barros
WEBSITE	www.colegium.com

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Ariel and Jose are helping schools get smarter. Colegium develops and implements integrated school management software systems for Chilean schools and has become the market leader in Chile with over 180 of the country's top schools using its software. In addition, it has expanded to countries such as Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela, and Brazil.

With their IT company, Ariel and Jose Manuel are providing leading Chilean schools with an integrated school management software system that is rapidly improving the way schools run. The effectiveness of the company's software is evident in the success of the company. Launched in 2000, Colegium is the clear market leader in Chile today with hundreds of schools employing their software solutions.

Ariel and Jose Manuel were both born to be entrepreneurs. As classmates studying Civil Industrial Engineering at the Universidad de Chile in Santiago, they set up a company supplying clothing for sports teams in schools. Although the company was very successful and helped Ariel and Jose Manuel get their entrepreneurial feet wet, the duo knew they had greater ambitions. A few months shy of graduation, and in search of a more scalable business, they teamed up with a local software developer named Alberto Bachler (current shareholder of Colegium, and the company's Manager of R&D), who had developed a unique database solution tool for schools but lacked the commercial focus and vision to bring it to market. They were encouraged and guided in their efforts by their University Professor and mentor, Ernesto Tironi, who initially took a share in the company and helped them develop an early business plan. Excited by the prospects of building something truly scalable, Ariel and Jose Manuel conducted an in-depth market analysis study, which allowed them to turn Alberto's software into a commercially-viable, multi-module system that would act not only as a database, but also as a fully integrated enterprise planning and management resource.

Today, Colegium's software is based on a mix of platforms, including 4D (a world class database motor, used by NASA as a foundation for some of its most important software developments), Open Source technology and PHP with MySQL. On top of this, Colegium assures a highly advanced and fully secure virtual (web-based) environment, which has won over its clients. Colegium serves its clients through renewable three-year service contracts, which, in exchange for a monthly fee, provide them with regular updates, on site training, and a helpdesk. One of the major advantages of Colegium's software is its versatility: as a modular platform, schools can opt for a basic service and add on extra components when required. Ariel and Jose Manuel have big ambitions and seek to become prominent, international software providers for schools across the world. Targeting other Latin American markets still largely ignored by the big international players in school management solutions (Blackbaud & Powerschool), the company has already begun distributing its software in Argentina, Colombia, Peru and Mexico.

ENDEAVOR AND COLEGIUM

Though recently selected, Ariel and Jose been involved with Endeavor Chile through its Promesas program for years. They are receiving support on several fronts: creating a board of directors, strengthening its technology, and delivering on its expansion model. They have also benefited from the global eMBA and Ernst & Young Fellows program.