

Embracing diversity and inclusion to unlock innovation at IDEMIA

The essential role our people play in fostering innovation leads to better product design, a deep understanding of our clients' needs, and continuous improvement.

POSTED ON 04.18.23

In today's fast-paced market, where trends and consumer preferences are constantly evolving, innovation is critical. In technology especially, rapid evolution requires thinking outside the box to unlock new ideas and drive the whole industry forward.

At its core, innovation is about people. More diverse teams offer a wider range of perspectives that result in more creative and game-changing solutions. IDEMIA recognizes the essential role our people play in the company's success, and how different perspectives and ideas that foster innovation lead to better product design, a deeper understanding of our clients' needs, and continuous improvement.

Diverse and inclusive teams create more unlikely ideas

Beyond common traits like gender, ethnicity, and age, diversity also encompasses people from different cultures and world views.

IDEMIA has 15,000 employees, across the 62 countries in which we operate, representing 80 nationalities that speak more than 100 languages. When people from such diverse backgrounds work together in teams, they bring a wealth of skill sets and experiences. They are more likely to create breakthrough ideas simply by approaching issues and problem-solving from new angles—something that may be overlooked by a more homogenous team.

The benefits of a diverse team in creating breakthrough innovations can be seen in real-world examples.For instance, IDEMIA's end-to-end eco-friendly offer for financial institutions, GREENPAY, emerged from an Innovathon that was open to all IDEMIA employees. The team behind GREENPAY hailed from different parts of the world, bringing with them a range of skills and knowledge that helped create a sustainable solution that is now making a significant impact in the payment services industry.

Diverse teams make better decisions

A diverse team can make better decisions by considering a wider range of perspectives and experiences. This approach can lead to more thoughtful and effective decision-making, which drives innovation in the long term.

With more differing opinions there is less room for confirmation bias and more room to understand and empathize with a diverse user base.
And it's not just the diversity of the people in the room that is important, it's also the way in which these technologies are tested. When it comes to facial recognition, for example, the diversity of the dataset is crucial to ensure that the outcomes are accurate and unbiased for all individuals, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or other physical characteristics.

On this metric, IDEMIA's biometric technology outperformed competitors on the fairness test among the top 100 algorithms in the NIST Facial Recognition Vendor Test 1:1, the international gold standard for biometric testing. The algorithm's advances in reducing the risk of discrimination are in line with IDEMIA's ambition to achieve responsible and ethical use in developing AI technologies.

> *A diverse workforce is a tremendous opportunity. By bringing together individuals from different ages, backgrounds, regions, cultures, genders, and beyond, we gain access to a multitude of unique perspectives to challenge our assumptions and drive innovation forward. Diversity is not just a checkbox; it's a competitive advantage.*
>
> Jean-Christophe Fondeur, Chief Technology Officer

Diverse teams deliver more tailored solutions

Diverse teams have more pathways to execute an idea. From a neurodiverse work force with various complementary skills to collaboration between teams across functions, IDEMIA teams are able to tap into expertise and networks that lead to a more holistic approach to problem-solving.

What this means is that teams can come up with solutions faster and implement more efficient solutions. It also means that, with a workforce that represents the communities in which it serves, the company can better understand and address the needs of its customers in specific geographies, while creating solutions that benefit everyone.

Importantly, employees need to feel safe to voice their opinions and be given autonomy to drive change. Research by Deloitte shows that companies with inclusive cultures are six times more innovative and agile, eight times as likely to achieve better business results, and twice more likely to meet or exceed financial targets than companies with less diversity in the workplace.

> *Embracing diversity and inclusion isn't just the right thing to do, it's essential to the success of our company. But what comes hand in hand with diversity is inclusion. We make sure everyone at our company feels empowered to speak up and be heard.*
>
> Astrid Warren, Chief People Officer

Diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization

Unique ideas require a leader to champion them. When senior management has a structure in place that prioritizes diversity, a healthy organizational culture cultivates the birth of innovative ideas.

According to a Boston Consulting Group (BCG)-Technical University of Munich study, a relationship exists between the diversity of companies' management teams and revenues from innovative products and services. For instance, innovation performance only grew significantly when more than 20 percent of management positions were held by women.

More interestingly, diversity's impact increases with company size; and management diversity seems to have a particularly positive effect on innovation at complex companies such as those with multiple product lines or that

operate in multiple industry segments.

> *As a woman working in tech and leading innovation, I've directly witnessed the value brought by diverse teams—they are the key to creating unique ideas and the methodologies to achieve them. I have also personally experienced how diverse leadership enriches everyone's perspectives, allowing sponsorship of a broader range of ideas and ultimately resulting in better business outcomes for the company.*
>
> Amaanie HAKIM, Vice President of Innovation

IDEMIA is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion that foster the breakthrough innovations that lie at the heart of our business. By bringing together people from different backgrounds and experiences, we can develop new ideas and approaches that can drive the whole industry forward and better serve our customers. Above all, we strive to create a diverse and inclusive work environment that makes IDEMIA the workplace of choice.

Our people are our greatest strength, and their differences make us stronger.