



REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA



CASES OF GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Azalea Co-operative

GENERAL INFORMATION

Area

Creation of social care networks deeply rooted in the territory

Abstract

The case of Azalea is an example for an original path of growth. The present development of social cooperatives in the framework of the public system of social care appears to be conditioned by a number of factors which can undermine further expansion of these organs; however, they can open new spaces of action to the units that are able to call upon the reasons why they were settled and expanded, to follow innovative paths growth.

Particularly, the type of network chosen by Azalea, being focused on the relationship with the other non-profit units of the territory and the inclusion in the local system of social services, promote aggregative formulas that offer new perspectives of development. Following this path, the entrepreneurial role of Azalea does not turn out to be diminished, but rather exalted, as it concurs to establish new bases to meet the served publics' social needs, its members' employment and pay requirements as well as to pursue the economic equilibrium trough the time.

Registry

Name Azalea Cooperativa Sociale a r.l.

Dimensions (det. on 31/12/2005)

Number of working associates: 287 - Number of voluntary associates: 55

Turnover

€ 7,619,000.00

Headquarters

Via Brunelleschi, 3/b

37138 Verona

Tel.: 045575388 – Fax: 045575272

Operating office/s

Azalea has many operating centres, located in the province of Verona

Founded in

1992

Business

Type A cooperative: Azalea is a social cooperative dealing with the management of health, social and educational services. It is engaged in many activities ranging from home care to assistance at day and residential centres, mostly performed on behalf of public customers.

Activities

Azalea delivers services in the following fields:

- home care for handicapped and older people;
- care services in residential centres for handicapped, AIDS patients, minors with psychological difficulties, psychiatric patients and older people.

Geographic context

Verona

Web site

Under construction

History

Azalea is a social cooperative of health, social and educational service management, engaged in many activities ranging from people's home care to assistance at day and residential centres, mostly performed on behalf of public customers.

Azalea was established in 1992 as a result of the "splitting-up" of Codess' "veronese branch" – a big-sized social cooperative operating in numerous areas in North Italy. As a result of this decision, 35 Codess' members from Verona settled Azalea – a limited liability social cooperative. After that, the mission that it will guide the cooperative's future choices is developed, which consists in

“contributing to assure, maintain and improve the quality of life of their own customers, who are weak people from the city of Verona and the province.”

Immediately, Azalea proposes itself like “cooperative of Verona”, integrated in the territory and expression of the charitable needs of the province. Initially, the cooperative operates in the field of services at domicile for handicapped people and in the of assistance at domicile and in residential structures for AIDS patients. Then, it extends the assistance activity at domicile in other areas of uneasiness (minors with psychical difficulties, psychiatric patients, old persons), involves new associates and increases the activity volume. In 1994, Azalea counts 59 associates, carries out activity of assistance in favour of 285 needy subjects with an activity volume that reaches 1 million euro. It is in this phase that the cooperative begins to develop the activity in residential structures in order to answer to the demands for the associates to operate “protected” and “less exposed” areas. Therefore, from 1995 Azalea assumes the management of an Educational Occupational Diurnal Centre (C.E.O.D.) for handicapped people and of a Centre Vacations for old people; subsequently, of an Open Centre for minors, of an Assisted Sanitary Residence (R.S.A.) for psychiatric patients, of a hotel structure destined to charitable activities and social tourism. Today, Azalea manages 10 residential structures in which provides charitable services in favour of old people, psychiatric patients, AIDS patients, minors. In addition to these services, Azalea provides services of assistance at domicile for handicapped and old people. It boasts nearly 300 working associates, 55 voluntary associates and a volume of transactions that exceeds 7,6 million euro in 2005. Some significant data of the evolutionary path of Azalea are synthesized in table 1.

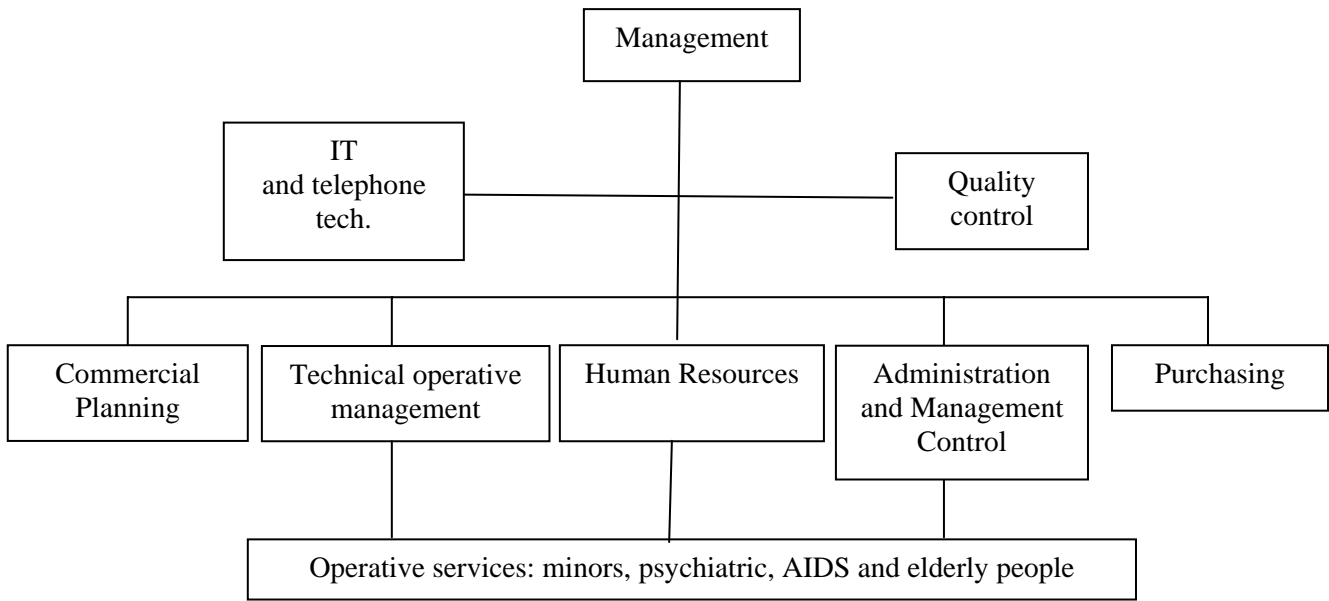
Working context

The cooperative Azalea operates in favour of various needy categories: old, psychiatric, AIDS patients, minors to whom it supplies a wide range of charitable services. The main services offered by Azalea today are (the services are articulated according to the served area of uneasiness):

- for AIDS patients: assistance at domicile, management of a family house, management of U.E plans of prevention and reduction of the damage against the AIDS, management of a Listening Centre for HIV-positive persons;
- for psychiatric patients: assistance at domicile, assistance to the transport, management of a CEOD and three RSA, management of two hotel structures destined to charitable activities and social tourism;
- for old people: assistance at domicile for the municipality of Verona and some neighbouring municipalities;
- for minors: management of an integrated Infancy Centre and a diurnal Open Centre;
- for other subjects: management of a Samples Centre and supply of nursing staff to the Searches Centre Glaxo.

The strengths of the cooperative are the deep-rooted contacts in the area of Verona, where it can activate the local net which it belongs to (including subjects and their families, public customers, economic operators, the social fabric, the civil community), and the high quality of the provided service, which will be enhanced by promoting certification and accreditation policies.

The cooperative organisation is structured as follows:



AREA OF MANAGERIAL EXCELLENCE

The excellence area is represented by the Azalea ability to undertake original and advanced aggregative processes that have allowed it not only to exceed the problems of sour competition with profit and non-profit companies that have taken place from the second half of the 90s, but to make it with good economic and financial results. A network has been growing since 1997 onwards, which has enabled the cooperative to achieve the organizational and financial strengths to manage and develop services in cooperation with other social cooperatives as well as public and non-profit private organizations, while preserving its own operative and economic independence. The aggregation has helped achieve greater economies of scale in organization (management and training of the staff), in finance (bank credit access) and in contracting (contractual strength and reliability towards a public body) that have in real terms allowed to contrast the increased level of competitiveness, access to new orders and compress the centres structure costs.

Development goals

The completed “network” choices have positioned Azalea among the subjects of reference of the entire social and charitable system in the area of Verona. This has allowed the cooperative operators to improve their know-how in planning, coordination, relational, technical and social. Now, as leader of the social-charitable protection network of the territory, Azalea can look at the future with confidence, thanks to the experience of management and integration so far made. Azalea management is fact checking new opportunities in order to plan network services, involving the families and the civil society more, defining widespread political quality and therefore participating as protagonist to the social policies of the territory.

Researcher

Mr. Andrea Lionzo

Email: andrea.lionzo@univr.it

Tel.: 348-2663031