



THE GENESIS OF CELSIUS X VI II

The founding concept behind Celsius X VI II was born in 2005 in the mind of Thomas Pruvot, a mechanical engineer specialised in industrial design, during a flight from Paris to Hong Kong. Frustrated at losing the time display when he had to switch off his cellphone, he had the idea of adopting a mechanical solution inspired by watchmaking. Thomas soon produced some sketches and showed them to a childhood friend.

Romarc André, who had just graduated from business school, proved an ideal partner thanks to his entrepreneurial mindset and a capacity to take the inherent risks. Both launched into the adventure with a confidence tinged with naïvety. Their early stages were more akin to an artistic approach than to a business start-up. They spent most of the time devising the mechanised cellphone of their dream, fine-tuning it in step with meetings they arranged with specialists from the various fields involved. Building on their youthful energy, their primary aim was to appeal to people rather than to prove the potential profitability of their scheme. At that time, Thomas was still in paid employment and so it was up to Romarc to handle the various administrative procedures. While some people were sceptical and funding the endeavour was no easy task, other encounters proved fruitful. Personal conviction enabled the pair to stand firm in the face of obstacles and to find means of bouncing back.

Alejandro Ricart, a friend Romarc had met while studying at a university in the United States, was contacted during 2007, at one of the critical moments of the project in gestation. He joined the team, thus contributing the professional skills acquired in a Barcelona consulting company, as well as the fruit of an aristocratic family background. He was one of those who approved and even reinforced the decision to aim for a firmly prestigious, uncompromisingly top-quality product strategy.

The team managed to attract the attention of an independent risk capital company which suggested that it should first and foremost broaden its field of competence. Edouard Meylan thus began the fourth member to join the adventure at the start of 2008. In addition to his family roots in the Swiss fine watch industry, he also brought with him a



a wealth of marketing and sales experience acquired in Asia with a distributor in this sector.

The group thus formed features a particularly valuable range of complementary talents, further backed by the enthusiastic support of eminent figures that later became the Executive Board Advisors, including Hugues-Olivier Borès, a strategy and marketing consultant well known in watchmaking circles, as well as telecommunications expert Jean-Marie André. Finally, Richard Mille, won over by the youthful team's determination to pursue absolute perfection, agreed to sit on the future company's Board of Directors. This impressive set of human factors, along with the interest generated by the innovative nature of the project, finally convinced Sofinnova Partners to invest in Celsius X VI II. The support of this European leader in the financing of young tech companies is a well-deserved token of recognition of the multiple resources engaged in the venture. The good news of their backing was confirmed in mid-2008 and ever since, Thomas, Romaric, Alejandro, Edouard and their partners have been unswervingly and entirely committed to gradually giving shape to their dream of a micromechanical cellphone.

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