

FROM THE INDUSTRY

technetix

From Veenendaal to Mexico City:

A CONVERSATION WITH PAUL BROADHURST,
FOUNDER AND CEO OF TECHNETIX GROUP

BY MELISSA COGAVIN, BROADBAND JOURNAL

AFTER A FASCINATING TWO DAYS AT
TECHNETIX' FACILITY IN VEENENDAAL,
NETHERLANDS, MELISSA COGAVIN TALKED
TO PAUL ABOUT FOSTERING INNOVATION,
NAVIGATING INDUSTRY SHIFTS, AND
BUILDING A CULTURE WHERE TALENTED
ENGINEERS CAN FLOURISH.



Walking through Technetix's impressive facility in Veenendaal, Netherlands, it's immediately apparent that this isn't just another technology company. The high ceilings, abundant natural light, and open collaborative spaces reflect a deliberate philosophy about creating an environment where innovation can thrive. At the helm of this operation is Paul Broadhurst, whose passion for both technology and talent development has helped establish Technetix as a significant player in the broadband infrastructure market.

Over two days I talked to the team there and enjoyed a number of presentations on R&D, production, sustainability, quality control and the Technetix product line itself. I was struck by the international, multi-lingual nature of the friendly team that Paul has assembled from all over the world, the pride displayed by everyone who works there, the enthusiasm in communicating the work they were doing and the common goal the team were all striving to attain. It was quite something.

YOUR SETUP IN VEENENDAAL IS VERY IMPRESSIVE AND YOU HAVE CULTIVATED A LOVELY CULTURE THERE. WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

"What I'm most proud of really is that success of a business isn't about investment—it's about building a team of very talented people. My job is to create an environment where talented people can flourish. The thing that gives me the most job satisfaction is when people within the company grow in loads of different areas."

Paul likens his role to "operating a greenhouse," cultivating a learning organisation where employees can develop and thrive. "To retain, motivate and develop people - what motivates people for me is three things, and I'll say money last, because everyone has to feed their family. But the most important two things are for people to have fulfilment, be part of projects doing something important, useful, interesting and challenging, and to be in a really good team pushing the frontiers of technology."

With 160 patents to their name, Technetix demonstrates the power of combining talented individuals with the right environment, so this philosophy is obviously working. Paul offered me an example: "We were doing this unified DOCSIS amplifier and had a particular RF

component called a coupler. All published work in the technology field said that there was a limit to what could be done, but the requirement of the job meant it needed to be more. We had lots of great minds thinking of a way to do it, and in the end, a young engineer in the company, Matthias Laro, came up with a really clever, game-changing idea." Providing an environment where new ideas can bubble up from anywhere, where young entrants to the industry can feel confident they will be listened to requires vision, patience and skill.

HOW DO YOU AS A COMPANY COME UP WITH YOUR BEST IDEAS?

"There's always a danger in a development environment that you can keep reinventing the wheel. In the end, we must deliver products in volume mass production which have to be highly qualified and certified. So, a major part of what we do has to be doing things that are proven and will work."

The key to Technetix' success lies in incorporating "optionality for the future" — building products that can adapt and evolve rather than becoming obsolete. "Our differentiation isn't just being compared on price, we're compared on quality and the capability of the product. That generates what I call a bit of a halo effect in terms of people having confidence that we've really got a picture of the roadmap of where we're going—not just now, but two years, five years, ten years from now."

"The thing that our customers are absolutely crazy about is what they call "regret spend". They don't invest in a product that will then be ripped out and replaced by something else a few years later with the associated cost write-off."

It was clear during my tour and meeting the team that the company's innovation process is deeply collaborative with customers; a customer will approach Technetix and explain their problem, and ask Technetix for a solution. That's just the start of a complex, often long-term process to find one, involving the customer in the process throughout. "One customer's problem is often the same as another's. Some perhaps want to be more conservative about the way things are done, and others really want to incorporate as much next-generation technology as possible." This customer-centric approach has led to developments like auto-setup features and smart alignment systems that completely "de-skill" or "automate"

complex processes, allowing installation technicians to focus their expertise on higher-value activities rather than "twiddling knobs and putting in plug-ins."

The company's balancing act between organic, customer driven development and strategic long-term planning is a tricky one, requiring pragmatism and falling back on years of experience. "We're looking at the laws of physics and then looking at what we can do." For example, when we were considering whether to develop a 6GHz multi-tap for trunk cable coax systems, customers' response was typically, "We're not really sure whether we'll ever go there, but if we're going to invest in swapping out a piece of equipment, sure, why not, if it can be done at a reasonable cost to make the upgraded system as future proof as possible."

The company has a history of spotting the opportunity of this development process, one that is very much hand-in-glove with the customer to build out future product lines and offer them out more broadly to the industry once established.

PEOPLE ALL OVER EUROPE ARE NOW SAYING THEY WILL CONTINUE TO SERVICE AND INVEST IN THEIR EXISTING CABLE NETWORKS RATHER THAN INVEST IN FIBRE, QUITE A SHIFT FROM THE MOOD A FEW YEARS AGO. OBVIOUSLY, THAT'S GOOD NEWS FOR TECHNETIX, BUT AS YOU HAVE A FOOTHOLD IN BOTH NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE, WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

"When it comes to northern Europe, where labour costs are quite high and in a lot of countries the cabling is direct buried with no ducting, the cost to change becomes significant. If you're one of my customers and you're quite happy with 100Mb or 500Mb, and I'm going to change you to fibre but you're not going to pay me any more money, why would I spend loads of money upgrading the network outside your house to provide the same service?"

The economic argument for fibre has always centred on reduced operational costs, but Paul thinks that "after the investment, it doesn't really pay back unless we can entice customers into taking much higher speed services with

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an increased monthly subscription.” Meanwhile, existing cable networks retain significant capability. “It’s very clear that the plans of customers we’re dealing with show they’re going to have networks still going in 15-20 years, with no plan on record to rip it all out, because they still have the capability of current performance requirements and up to 10 times the performance requirements without rewiring.”

The broader economic environment has reinforced this pragmatic approach. “The cost of money has gone up significantly in the last two years, so for most alternative networks that are over-wiring the telecoms and cable companies, they’ve slowed right down to basically sweating their existing assets. That means there’s less imperative to rush cable to defend itself.”

TECHNOLOGY VS. REALITY

There is a broader truth around the adoption of technology that Paul expanded on; something I have heard expressed a few times this summer. “We talk about technology all the time—technology is speed and latency—but actually, for customers, there’s a much more important thing: reliability. Speed isn’t the only thing that’s important.”

This reminded me of the cinema industry, which was preoccupied with the latest digital projectors, premium large formats, surround sound and laser technologies to such an extent it forgot the audience generally neither know nor care about all that stuff. They are interested in a comfy seat, decent snacks that won’t break the bank and most of all, a great movie.

Paul agreed, adding that even major sporting events like the 2024 Euros football tournament chose 2K HDR over 4K UHD picture resolution. “The main reason they did it was because, to be honest, 4K—you can only really see the difference between 4K and 2K if you’ve got a 75-inch screen. How many people actually have a 75-inch screen?”

This disconnect between what the industry thinks customers need against what they actually want is reflected in broadband as well.

LOOKING BACK, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU’D CHANGE ABOUT THE DECISIONS YOU’VE MADE?

Paul’s sophisticated understanding of business risk and portfolio management is clear, and he told me that “As a business, we’re still 80% cable, but we’ve got a big imperative on fibre, and we’re developing mobile products for Open RAN.”

The company’s expansion into new areas stems from customer demand and their core RF expertise. “Customers have asked us to do it because we’re experts in RF. Quite often our competitors doing these things are building reference designs, but we have capabilities some don’t have because we’re still engineering at a deep dive level on our products.”

When it comes to managing risk, Paul added that “The only thing we’ve got to be very careful about as a company is to make sure we don’t allow too much customer concentration. I sort of compare it to a table—a three-legged or two-legged table isn’t very stable, but an eight-legged or ten-legged table, you can have an accident with one of the legs and you don’t notice much.”

Paul was refreshingly honest about the realities of product development – it doesn’t always work. “A third of our investment has very good returns, a third we probably just about get back our investment, and a third is money down the drain. If only I knew which third was which. It’s just like marketing—if you knew which bit was a waste of money, you wouldn’t do it, but you don’t know.” That said, there are lessons to be learned even when things don’t go according to plan. “There’s no investment in product development that is a complete waste. The engineers learned about things, so when they do the next project, they will do it differently, better, faster.”



WHAT BENEFIT DOES TECHNETIX GAIN FROM INDUSTRY NON PROFIT ORGANISATIONS?

“The great thing about organisations like the SCTE is they’re networks of people. Because our customers generally don’t have much overbuild going on, they’re quite a friendly bunch, so they tend to share things. If we do a good job for one customer, our success leaks across to others.”

He compares the industry dynamic to “a bunch of farmers—we’re all trying different things, and if something didn’t work, we have no problem telling our neighbours that was a failure. The market is big enough that we’re not going to step on each other’s feet.”

Like many others in the industry I’ve interviewed, the relationships in the industry are really what make it so worthwhile; “they are personal relationships as much as business relationships. That’s what I love about this business. It’s good fun. I get up in the morning and come to work and I love it.”

WHAT’S ON THE HORIZON FOR THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS?

“We won’t desert cable. Cable will be around for another 20 years. All we have to do is give our customers the ability to reduce their capital and operating costs.” Some customers are spending nearly 20% of revenue on capital costs, and Technetix’ mission is helping them reduce this burden while maintaining service quality.

“In the fibre market, it’s the same. Fibre has all the direction that cable had 25 years ago—pass as many homes as possible. Now it’s about profitability, and that’s where we can help them stretch the maximum out of their capital by minimising upfront costs and delaying capital investments.”

The company continues to expand its technical capabilities. “We used to be RF, then RF and fibre. Now, nearly 50% of our development effort is in firmware, system software, and broadband management software. We’ve built from RF to fibre to IP networking to software. As a company, our competence has broadened massively.”

But the fundamental mission remains constant, Paul tells me. “Our business is solving problems. It’s not doing cable. We found our place in cable, and these companies that are doing what was cable are now doing hybrid cable, telecommunications, fibre networks, and mobile. We will be a solutions provider for those companies as they develop.”

THE INTERNATIONAL ADVANTAGE

The company’s international presence provides both stability and unique capabilities. Paul gave me an example of this diversity in action: “We were doing this job in Mexico and had this technician in Veenendaal who’s actually Colombian, worked much of his life in Peru and Columbia building telecoms networks. We needed more firepower for Mexico, and it turned out he’d been doing training in his earlier life. He became our trainer for the system across quite a number of cities, and he’s absolutely brilliant. He had all this talent within him and didn’t shout about it.”

In the Veenendaal office alone, there are employees from 20 different countries, and the pride in this is evident amongst everyone I spoke to.

Through acquisitions like Lindsay Broadband, which was strong in Canada and Latin America, Technetix has been able to expand its reach and capabilities. “We’ve been able to hire some very good people. Our Mexican team is fantastic. We have an extremely good team.”

FUTURE HORIZONS

I imagine it will be very difficult to tear himself away when the time comes and wondered what Paul’s plans for retirement might look like, whether he might write a novel, open a microbrewery, or sail around the world, and wasn’t surprised to hear he isn’t planning on any of the above any time soon. However, he said, “I love traveling, I love going around the world, I love all the cultures and different places we’re selling into. I love the industry friendships within the business. I don’t see myself slowing down anytime soon because I just love this business. I love doing what I do.”

“I get the biggest kick out of seeing the talent development in the company and with delighting customers. The two things that keep me motivated are the customer relationships and those innovative discussions we have with customers, and the development of people and how they’ve developed within the business.”

Technetix have managed to not only weather some severe storms in a tumultuous decade, but thrive. Whether you’re a market leading engineering company or a British rock band, breaking the US is notoriously difficult, but Technetix’ twin achievement of embracing fibre and exploiting their existing stable of products into a market dominated by big names, is extremely impressive. Their positive outlook and pride in their work, brand, output and each other is clear. Paul’s own greenhouse approach to management continues to yield impressive results, with 160 patents, umpteen awards accolades and growing international presence serving as testament to the power of creating a fertile environment for innovation to flourish.

As we turn into the second half of 2025, the broadband sector finds itself at a crossroads. Operators are wrestling with fundamental infrastructure decisions against a gloomy economic landscape where debt is expensive and investors scarce: fibre deployments versus cable upgrades, 5G integration strategies and the relentless pressure of evolving customer demands for higher speeds and lower latency combined with an expectation of incredible value for money are enough to make anyone’s head spin.

Technetix’ calm philosophy of embracing fibre and maintaining cable therefore offers customers a compelling value proposition. Predicting the future beyond two years, never mind five is something people in this industry are reluctant to do; the last ten years have been anything but predictable; but companies that provide a variety of solutions, allowing operators to pivot when they need to is clever futureproofing based on decades of smart decision-making, and hard-earned experience.

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MEET THE technetix TEAM



IVAN PERALLON



DIEGO ROYO



LEN VISSER

SERVICES: ASPX PLATFORM

WHAT ARE THE MAIN PROBLEMS THAT THE ASPX PLATFORM SOLVES?

The ASPX platform saves the network operator up to 33% of their utility energy costs by improving network power supply efficiency as well as greatly reducing the copper (I²R) losses in the network. An additional benefit of the reduced copper (I²R) losses is that the end of line voltage now increases and can support additional revenue generating equipment if the operator wishes to add these.

WHAT'S THE DEMAND BEEN LIKE FOR THIS PRODUCT AMONGST YOUR CUSTOMERS?

Technetix has seen requests for the ASPX platform worldwide.



MADURAI WITVERS,
GROUP QA DIRECTOR

QUALITY ASSURANCE

HOW ARE YOU INVOLVING AI IN YOUR QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES?

Everyone is talking about AI and the future, but at Technetix we have already automated many our processes. Notably, in Quality control, we have automated our QC planning via Technetix portal where each supplier PO will be visible for the team to plan and inspect the product.



**MELANIE PULLAN, GROUP
MARKETING MANAGER**



MARKETING: THE TECHNETIX FIBRE VAN

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THIS IDEA?

Roadshows had been on our radar for some time. We exhibit at many industry events; and we are always looking to try something new to reach more potential customers. We've always believed in the value of face-to-face marketing, particularly when it comes to demonstrating our fibre solutions. The van gives us the opportunity to highlight how we can tailor our products to customer's needs. Working with our Chief Sales Officer, Europe, Phil Scott, we explored a variety of options and quickly saw that a branded demo van would tick all the right boxes. The concept offers a flexible, mobile format to connect directly with customers, deliver live product demonstrations, and build relationships across multiple European markets. After months of careful planning and coordination between our marketing, sales, and product teams, the van set off on a six-month tour across Europe. So far, it has travelled across Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany, and the UK, with upcoming stops planned for Eastern Europe. The van has become more than just a vehicle, it's a mobile showroom, a conversation starter, and a symbol of Technetix' customer-first approach.

TELL ME HOW THIS MARKETING INITIATIVE HAS WORKED - HAVE YOU SEEN AN UPTICK IN LEADS?

The fibre van has been a great success. Feedback from customers has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly around the opportunity for in-person product demonstrations and personalised consultations directly on their doorstep. This has helped build trust, strengthen relationships, and increase our brand visibility and differentiation. And of course, the coffee, goodie bags and sweet treats onboard have added a welcoming touch!



**ANNA BURNS, GROUP
OPERATIONAL
EXCELLENCE &
SUSTAINABILITY
DIRECTOR**

SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT SUSTAINABILITY ACHIEVEMENTS ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF AT TECHNETIX?

We believe that innovation and collaboration is key to sustainability. Broadband networks today are faced with the complex challenges of growing data demands, legacy infrastructure, climate change, resource scarcity, and opaque supply chains. We offer our customers solutions that deliver operational and energy efficiency whilst also taking a proactive stance on environmental and social issues in the value chain.

By the end of 2024 we were proud to have removed over 35 tons of plastic from our packaging, cut our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 60%, and conducted sustainability assessments for 89% of our suppliers. We also advanced innovative solutions—including smart amplifiers, faceplate-only tap upgrades, fibre actives, and optimized power systems—that drive meaningful reductions in emissions and waste.

This year, with our revolutionary ASPX, we aim to demonstrate double-digit percentage energy consumption reduction in operating networks across 3 regions. We are also targeting the full footprint of our products, using product lifecycle assessment (LCA) to guide sustainable design principles, from cradle to grave."