

ENTERPRISE ENGINEERING SOFTWARE · STARTUP ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH · ICP QUALIFICATION

Turning the European startup ecosystem into qualified engineering-software accounts

13

EUROPEAN MARKETS RESEARCHED ACROSS
THE NORDICS, BENELUX, UK & IRELAND
AND THE BALTICS

Dassault Systèmes wanted to identify young European companies that could plausibly need sophisticated 3D design, engineering and simulation software.

It sounds like a startup database problem. But most startups were irrelevant: a software startup, marketplace or consulting business might pass every company filter with almost no need for engineering software.

TheClaygency (TCA) built the research and qualification logic to tell the two apart.

01 — THE BUSINESS PROBLEM

Early-stage companies across selected European markets, generally:

Under five years old

Below approximately €5 million in funding

Below approximately €5 million in revenue

Relevant to physical-product development, engineering, design or prototyping

Age, revenue and funding were straightforward attributes. Engineering relevance was not.

02 — WHY A NORMAL STARTUP LIST WASN'T ENOUGH

COMPANY A

5 YRS · €3M RAISED · 20 STAFF ·
"TECHNOLOGY"

Builds workflow software

COMPANY B

5 YRS · €3M RAISED · 20 STAFF ·
"TECHNOLOGY"

**Designs and manufactures a
new robotic product**

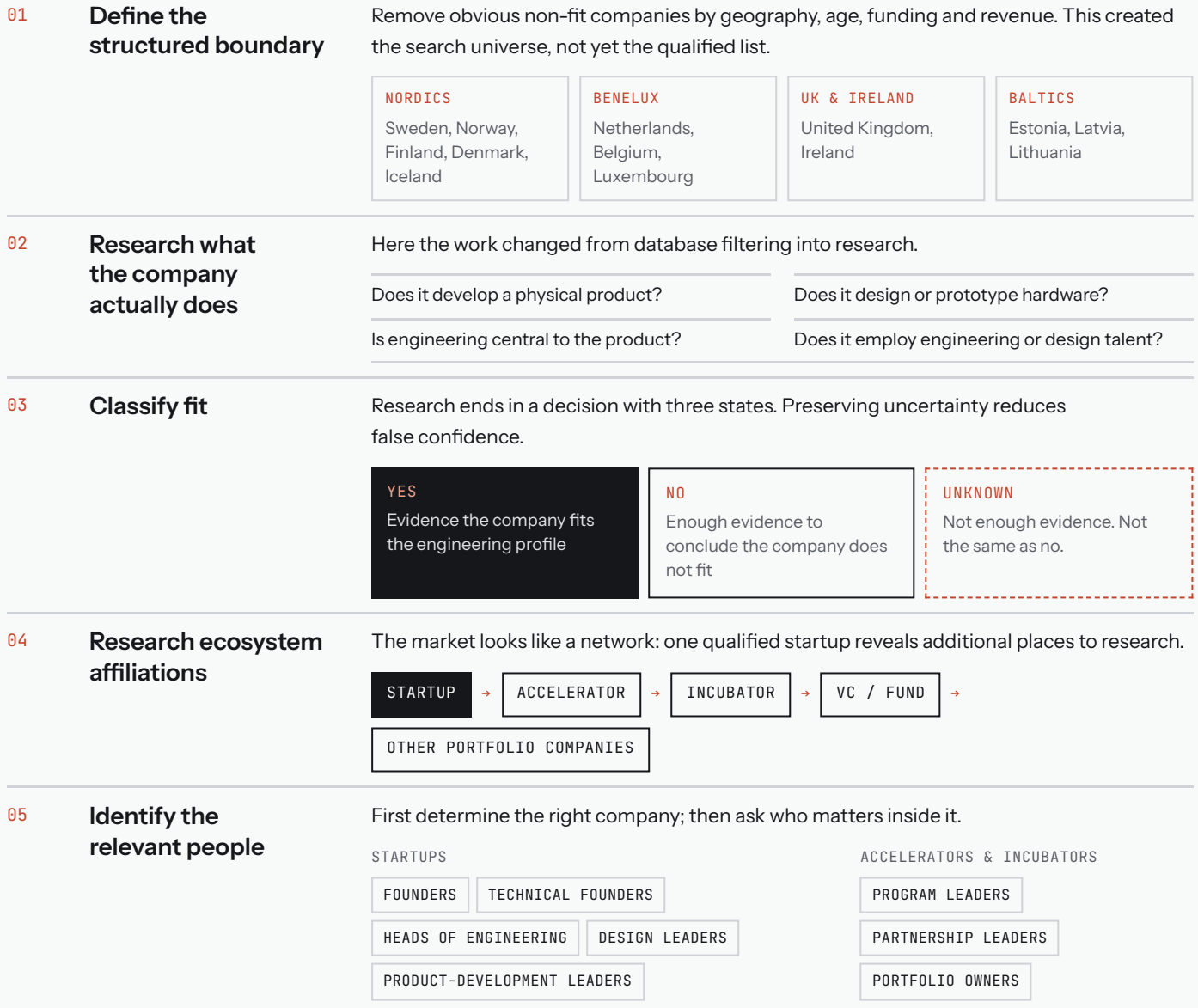
Identical firmographics, very different opportunity. Filtering could narrow the market; it could not finish the qualification.

~~IS THIS A STARTUP?~~

**Is this the kind of startup that actually
designs, engineers or builds something?**

A research model for defensible engineering-software relevance

The model narrows the European startup ecosystem to companies with evidence of what they actually build, drawn from websites, product pages, team composition, LinkedIn, funding profiles and accelerator portfolios.



The difficult part was in the middle

01 EUROPEAN STARTUP UNIVERSE

02 GEOGRAPHY

03 COMPANY AGE

04 FUNDING / REVENUE

05 COMPANY RESEARCH

06 PHYSICAL PRODUCT?

07 ENGINEERING / DESIGN / PROTOTYPING EVIDENCE?

08 3D / SIMULATION RELEVANCE?

YES

NO

UNKNOWN

09 ACCELERATOR / INCUBATOR / VC AFFILIATIONS

↻ PORTFOLIOS REVEAL MORE STARTUPS TO RESEARCH

10 RELEVANT TECHNICAL STAKEHOLDERS

11 SALES-READY ACCOUNT INTELLIGENCE

FINDING STARTUPS WAS THE EASY PART. STEPS 05-08 DECIDE WHICH DESERVE TO MOVE FORWARD.

13

Countries in the search universe

4

Regions: Nordics, Benelux, UK & Ireland, Baltics

3

Fit states: yes, no, unknown

05 – MULTIPLE SOURCES WERE REQUIRED

No single source contained every answer. Different sources solved different parts of the problem, and the qualification decision emerged from the combination.

STARTUP DATABASE	Establishes funding
LINKEDIN	Reveals team composition
COMPANY WEBSITE	Reveals the physical product
ACCELERATOR PORTFOLIO	Reveals affiliation

06 – AI INSIDE THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Part of the work involved designing prompts that evaluate company information against the ICP. Rather than one ambiguous instruction, the system breaks the decision into narrower questions.

~~"FIND GOOD STARTUPS."~~

Does the evidence indicate the company develops its own physical product?

What evidence supports that conclusion?

Does it appear to have engineering or product-design capability?

Is there evidence of prototyping or manufacturing?

Is its product likely to require 3D design, engineering or simulation?

Is the evidence strong enough to classify the company?

This makes AI a research component rather than a source of unsupported certainty.

Contact information has little value if the account is wrong

Outbound often begins with a request for the CEO's email. This engagement established the company, its fit and evidence first, and only then the people.

~~FIND ME THE CEO'S EMAIL.~~

Is this the right company, and why?

Why accelerators and investors mattered

Startups live inside ecosystems: accelerators, incubators, venture firms, university programs and other enabling organizations. These relationships add information about company stage, technical focus, portfolio peers and potential routes into the market.

Researching the ecosystem did two jobs. It improved understanding of the individual account, and it created additional paths for market discovery.

COMPANY	FIT	EVIDENCE	COMMERCIAL RELEVANCE	PEOPLE	CONTACTABILITY
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THE TCA PRINCIPLE

Right company → Right reason → Right people → Right message

Messaging is downstream of **account judgment**.

08 — WHAT CHANGED

~~YOUNG COMPANY~~

Young company with plausible engineering-software need

Beyond firmographics, the research added:

- Who appears to build a physical product?
- Who actually has engineering/design relevance?
- What evidence supports that judgment?
- What startup ecosystem are they connected to?
- Who inside the company matters?

09 — THE DELIVERABLE

PROJECT ARTIFACT

"Lead Generation Strategies and Sample Data of Companies for Dassault Systèmes_v4a"

LEAD-GENERATION STRATEGY

SAMPLE-COMPANY RESEARCH

ICP QUALIFICATION

COMPANY-FIT LOGIC

ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH

REPEATABLE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The output was account intelligence rather than a generic startup export.

An ICP is not finished until a system can determine who fits it.

"Early-stage European engineering startups that build physical products and could benefit from advanced design or simulation software" sounds like an ICP. It is not yet an executable search: no single field reliably represents **builds physical product** or **likely needs sophisticated engineering software**.

TARGET PROFILE

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European countries

<5 yrs

Company age

~€5M

Funding ceiling

~€5M

Revenue ceiling

ICP translation

Definitions turned into observable evidence.

Physical-product inference

Engineering relevance read from public sources.

Ecosystem research

Affiliations mapped as discovery paths.

Stakeholder identification

Technical leaders found once fit was clear.

TECHNOLOGY AND SOURCES

LINKEDIN

APOLLO

CRUNCHBASE

EUROPEAN STARTUP DIRECTORIES

COMPANY WEBSITES

ACCELERATOR & INCUBATOR RESEARCH

VC / FUND RESEARCH

STRUCTURED QUALIFICATION LOGIC

AI-ASSISTED RESEARCH PROMPTS

FROM ICP TO DECISION

1

Translate the ICP into observable evidence

2

Turn the evidence into research logic

3

Turn the logic into an operational decision

4

Only then find the people who matter

Need to operationalize an ICP that doesn't fit a database filter?

TCA builds sales research and prospecting systems for established B2B companies with difficult markets. We translate commercial definitions into research logic and turn the result into qualified accounts and people your sales team can use.

SEE IF YOUR COMPANY IS A FIT →

THECLAYAGENCY.COM