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Berlin, December 2014

Clever Minds

The Digital Economy in CITY WEST

Editorial

Digital is a major buzzword. The EU Commission fills the post for the Digital Economy, the German government has enacted the Digital Agenda and the motto for Science Year 2014 is „Digital Society“. PC, smartphone, tablet – digital devices in everyone’s hands. And soon on everyone’s wrist too. There’s hardly a single workplace left without information technology.

Berlin has around 5,800 companies that belong to the digital sector. They employ 60,000 people. And they’re on the increase. In this supplement we’ll be introducing you to a sample of 16 of these companies. All that they have in common is that they’re located, or were founded, in Berlin City West. An overview of our selection:

Very special connectors: 3YOURMIND has programmed a plug-in that allows 3D printouts at the push of a button (p. 4), TVIB an alarm that enables online campaigns to react to TV adverts (p. 5). BITPLACES provides you with local, self-determined advertising on your mobile device (p. 6).

Loudly and quietly: TEUFEL loudspeakers are not just at the vanguard of direct online sales, but are also looking forward, together with RAUMFELD, to the world of WLAN listening culture (p. 7). The relationship of music and emotion is celebrated by SONGFOR (p. 8). At AUTICON, on the other hand, specialisation and systematics are at the centre of the work carried out by autistic consultants (p. 9).

No worries: CLOUDCONTROL is a start-up providing optimised IT environments for creating websites (p. 10). Services from A to Z in the app development sector are provided by KARLMAX BERLIN (p. 11).

And still no end to their talents: COIRE synchronises music devices wirelessly and to the microsecond – having developed its own software for this purpose (p. 14). DIS-SERTO goes to the heart of the company processes of its customers in order to program their Microsoft products to fit them like a glove (p. 15). SIGNAVIO visualises complex, invisible work processes and gives many participants a voice via the cloud (p. 16).

Protection in the digital jungle: M&H IT-SECURITY encrypts sensitive data and allows only authorized access (p. 17). The whistleblowing system of BUSINESS KEEPER enables anonymous reporting when something in a company is going wrong (p. 18). MIKADO simulates hacker attacks from outside and provides remedies (p. 19).

Last but not least – exam success: Learn maths the easy way using the multimedia platform from INTEGRAL-LEARNING (p. 20), and measure vibrations with a new product from MAUL-THEET (p. 21).

We hope you enjoy reading this booklet!
Hedwig Dylong, Dirk Spender, Jan Berewinkel

The Digital Economy in Berlin City West!

*Cornelia Yzer
Senator for Economics,
Technology and Research*



„Berlin is the capital of the digital start-up scene. Every twelve hours a newly found start-up joins the high-tech sector. Global players decide to locate their digital units in Berlin and successful start-ups team up with established companies. The digital economy is growing fast, and no other region in Germany is attracting as much venture capital as Berlin.“

*Reinhard Naumann
District Mayor of
Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf*



„Digital solutions are created all over the world, and there are also excellent examples from Berlin City West. They link up commercial sectors and strengthen the innovative spirit of companies: they nurture flexibility and freedom or provide protection and security.“

*Angelika Schöttler
District Mayor of
Tempelhof-Schöneberg*



„The digitalisation of business is creating new opportunities for a large number of industries. Above all, it creates the conditions for global networking. The approach that lies behind this really suits Tempelhof-Schöneberg, because both analogue and digital networking has always been the key to success here.“

*Dr. Stefan Franzke
Managing Director of
Berlin Partner
for Business and Technology*



„In Berlin, young company founders find enthusiastic people to share their creative ideas with. City West, with Campus Charlottenburg, is particularly indicative of the start-up boom in Berlin, as it is home to start-ups in the digital economy as well as hardware and high-tech start-ups.“

Printing out the world of tomorrow

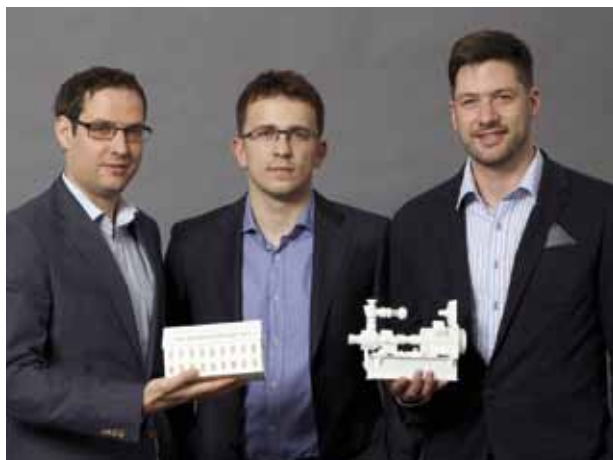
„3YOURMIND“ takes drafts from the worlds of architecture and machine engineering into the third dimension. This start-up specialises in 3D printing

Kaiser Wilhelm II took five years to complete the building that is home to the Federal Ministry of Economics today. Stephan Kühn can manage this in just ten hours. He simply prints it out – this time in pink. The needle of the 3D printer dashes back and forth and sprays the ground plan of the building onto the base: this first layer is only 0.1 millimetres thick. „This is only a small printer for presentation purposes,“ Stephan Kühn explains. „The real ones are as big as ten refrigerators.“

Around one and a half years ago, the economic physicist and Aleksander Cizek (Financial and Accounting) and Tobias Wunner (IT) founded the „3YOURMIND“ start-up. Their business idea: 3D printing in the architecture, machine and plant engineering sectors.

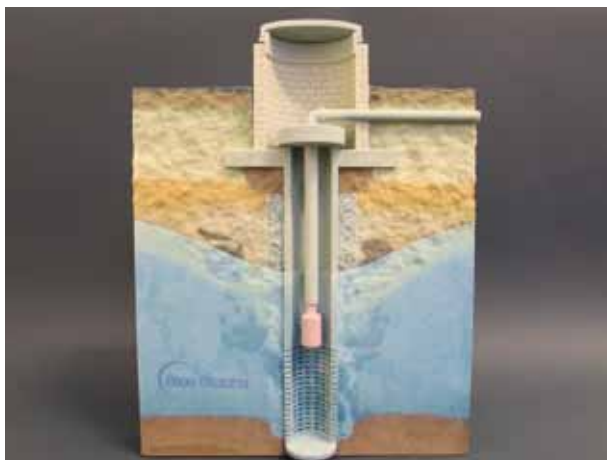
The architects simulate every door handle, every detail, in their CAD (Computer-Aided Design) programs. This is too much unnecessary information for a printed model. With machine engineering, on the other hand, one might want to emphasise a particularly important turbine screw in the 3D printout that would not be visible if everything was simply transferred on a one-to-one basis: „Our software simplifies and prepares the data that is already there,“ says Kühn, then specifying: „We have created a plug-in for CAD programs. We’re the 3D print button, so to speak.“

Kühn has not taken a holiday since 2012. But he does not look exhausted at all. „What really pushes us are the customers with their requests and their feedback. It’s the



Tobias Wunner, Aleksander Cizek, Stephan Kühn (from left)

It had previously struck Stephan Kühn that while the technology had developed rapidly in recent years, it was not being used nearly to the extent that its potential hinted at. He wanted to change this. After some home experimentation with a 3D printer, he had an idea where the difficulty lay. But after a few months at the Technical University of Berlin (TUB) he knew for certain: „The problem is the preparation of the data. Though architects and machine engineers design in 3D, you cannot simply send this data to the printer,“ says the company founder.



Blue Biolabs deep well (printing material: multicolor gypsum)

most honest thing you can get: when they buy the product and don’t complain, it tells you a lot.“ He is elated by the entrepreneurial spirit that suffuses the Centre for Entrepreneurship at the TUB. Not only is the expert advice inspiring – the exchanges with the other start-ups are also very helpful. The „3YOURMIND“ team is very happy in City West. It’s not far to the trade fair – and the airport is relatively close too. Although they plan to remain in the Centre for Entrepreneurship until March 2015, they are already putting out feelers: towards the USA. (suh)

Have you surfed TV today?

The Tvib company has found a way of connecting two worlds with each other: It makes classic TV advertising profitable for the internet

Advertising is as integral to a product as electric current is to the light bulb. So said German advertising expert Charles Paul Wilp. But what happens if the light bulb has electricity but no light switch to turn it on and off? This question is also on the minds of Thomas Grandoch (30), Marc Holtbecker (30) and Jens Schumann (28). However, their light bulb is the internet and its electricity is classic TV advertising. The trio wondered how these two worlds, which still seemed to be strictly separate from each other, could be brought together. Or, more straightforwardly: how could you get people to buy the shoes on the internet that they have just seen in a TV advert? A switch was needed – and they found exactly this with their company Tvib (pronounced more or less as spelt). The overall pro-

what effect it has. On the internet, on the other hand, the companies can call up every key figure such as page views and number of clicks in detail. Investigations have shown that these figures rise after a particular TV ad is aired. Sometimes they even multiply. This is the point at which the company founded at the end of 2012 gets involved. At the start of this year, Tvib was able to present the relevant technology, ready for the market. „The technology was a real problem. Because it required an extremely sophisticated algorithm,“ explains Thomas Grandoch.

What are known as „watcherholics“ are on duty around the clock for this purpose. This is the pet name the three company founders have for their powerful servers. At present, they are in the cellar of the UdK on Einsteinu-



F. Böhm, Th. Grandoch, J. Schumann, M. Holtbecker (from left)

cess is known as TV alerts. It is based on a simple idea that is technically difficult to implement: a kind of alarm is to be used to enable advertisers to adapt their websites with absolute precision. Shoes that just appeared in a TV advert are promoted just a few seconds later on the website – in the very top spot.

„Television is like a black box,“ explains Thomas Grandoch, who studied social and business communication at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK). While a lot of money is invested in TV advertising, none of the advertisers knows exactly when their ad is running and

fer, where the young company also has its offices. The servers scan the TV channels, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As soon as a particular advert is aired, the servers send a signal – known as a TV alert. The advertisers can then update their websites within a few seconds, start discount campaigns and release banner or search engine advertising. „For this purpose, every advert is assigned a kind of fingerprint,“ the company founder explains. Around 30 free TV and pay TV channels are presently being scanned in this way. And the light bulb is glowing. (spa)

Slipping through the fence

A virtual fence, an app and the necessary software from Bitplaces – and already the local advertising on a smartphone is perfect

For some people fences are a major obstacle. When you run into them, it's usually the end of the road. For others, fences mean exactly the opposite. They are the gateway to a new world. Behrend Freese is one of these other people. For him, the fences are invisible and are known as geo-fences. They're virtual fences, and we pass them by every day, or go through them. We usually don't notice them at all. Unless we have an

gram wakes up, so to speak," explains Behrend Freese. Specifically, this means that the advert appears on the phone's display. What's special about this is that the app does not have to be opened first. Specialists refer to this as „proactive“. The user can specify what type of advertising they want displayed on the smartphone: be it the menu of the day from their favourite Italian restaurant, the nearest second-hand bookshop, job of-

with Professor Axel Küpper and Dr. Peter Ruppel. Both teach at the Technical University of Berlin. In 2011, the trio founded the company Bitplaces. A prototype was created in co-operation with Deutsche Telekom. During development, the entrepreneurs had to overcome various difficulties: for example, the strict German data protection provisions. The data is made anonymous and must not be saved permanently. Also, the application should not additionally drain the battery. In March 2013, the market-ready software was finally launched. It is now available as a pure cloud service and as a subscription model. In this way, customers can forgo the acquisition of costly hardware. For major customers such as the „Yellow Pages“, the software is also customised. „The idea behind Bitplaces is basically simple. We asked ourselves how the customers could be enticed back into the premises,“ the entrepreneur explains. That is: how can the online world re-connect with the offline world?

Online there are no limits for Bitplaces: the software is already being used in Barcelona, Krakow and New York. In the offline world, Charlottenburg and its CHIC Innovation Centre are the company's home. „Being close to the TU was very important to us,“ says Behrend Freese, enthusing, „the location is simply ideal for us.“ (spa)



Dr. Behrend Freese

app on our smartphone, along with specific software. This software was developed by Behrend Freese and his company, Bitplaces. It enables these virtual fences to tell us that a branch of our favourite café is just around the corner. Or a supermarket where tomatoes are on offer today. This is known as local advertising.

The geo-fences send a signal, like a kind of Wi-Fi. „If the app then makes contact with the fence, the pro-

fers or the places of interest in a city. They also define how often and for how long the message is to be visible. Or whether it is to be a push or background notification, for example. „It's not just an advertisement, but rather a very specific way of addressing the customer,“ the entrepreneur explains. The customer determines what they are to be informed about.

The required software was developed by Behrend Freese together

Giving the devil his due

A small components shop grew into Europe's biggest direct online seller of loudspeakers. Lautsprecher Teufel is a success story – made in City West

Called simply “devil” in German, Teufel was founded in Berlin by a man named Peter Tschimmel back in 1979 as a components shop for DIY loudspeakers. Since then, this devil has grown into a household name in Germany for quality audio, and the company's new flagship store in the Bikini Berlin shopping center is an audiophile's paradise.

The company moved its entire operation to Bikini Berlin on the Budapester Straße in August. The upper stories house research and development teams, customer support, marketing and management. The basement, now home to an open acoustics laboratory and several showrooms, was once the location of the legendary “Linientreu” discotheque, the center of Berlin's New Wave scene in the 80's where the likes of David Bowie, Nick Cave and Iggy Pop were regular guests.

“We were in the Bülowbogen commercial complex for ten years,” said Sascha Mallah, Marketing Director at Lautsprecher Teufel, adding that the company had outgrown the location, both in terms of size and requirements. “We found that we were no longer the underdogs,” says Mallah. And no wonder: What started out as an insider tip for music fans is now Europe's largest direct seller of loudspeakers. “This is not just a random location for us,” Mallah explained. “It incorporates what the company stands for: Tradition, reliability and quality. Our history is what gives us authenticity,” says Mallah. Which is why Teufel has remained true to itself. The company had been selling its speakers via specialist dealers up

until 1996 when Peter Tschimmel made the bold decision to switch to a direct sales model, a concept that remains successful to this day. “This makes our contact with customers so much more direct and personal,” explained Mallah. Teufel was also among the earliest e-commerce pioneers. An early website

le, Teufel acquired the Berlin startup Raumfeld. Raumfeld had developed a novel software product that allowed music from multiple sources to be streamed via Wi-Fi to loudspeakers throughout the home. As part of Teufel, Raumfeld's cutting-edge software gained access to over three decades of audio experience – a



Sascha Mallah

that included a PDF document for downloading and printing was revolutionary for the time.

But while Teufel's success is firmly rooted in its history, the company remains committed to innovation. Teufel's acoustic developers are always looking for new ideas, striving to make the product even better and stay one step ahead of current trends. In 2010, for example,

winning combination for the creation of hi-fi streaming speakers. In order to better market both brands across Europe and the United States, the Berlin Acoustics Group was recently formed and includes Teufel products in their classic black as well as Raumfeld streaming speakers with their boldly elegant lacquered cabinets – two brands that do the devil proud. (spa)

Let's kiss one more time

Whether heartache or headache – the internet platform Songfor has just the right music for every occasion and every mood

What was that first kiss like again? It was with Tom from next door, at a party, and in the background Bon Jovi was singing something about a bed of roses. And when Tom broke it off, there was a song by Radiohead playing on the radio. „Many songs remind us of very specific events. Our first heartache, a fantastic holiday or a really fun car journey,“ says Sven Wedig. Together with Björn Kötter he runs the internet platform Songfor. The entrepreneurs want to bring together two things: music and emotions.

The users can create their own very personal playlists from more than 14 million songs. For example, a list about preparing for a party, about a stag party, about having a headache or the best football songs. The users can then decide for themselves what happens to the playlist: for example, they can make the list public for others or buy it and download it. One song costs around 99 cents.

The new music platform is particularly popular among 18- to 25-year-olds. „We get more than a million clicks every month,“ says the satisfied 36-year-old company founder. Statistics show that more women than men use the site. To be able to offer as many songs as possible, the database co-operates with the iTunes multimedia management program from Apple.

The idea for the database came to life in 2012 at a home match of 1. FC Köln football club. „Whenever possible, I watch every home match in the stadium,“ the Cologne native

explains. There are countless musical love letters to the cathedral city on the Rhine. „So at the time I made up a kind of personal Cologne playlist,“ the entrepreneur recalls. The idea for the platform was born. Songfor has been online since the middle of 2013. The company gets around ten new registrations every day. And the trend is upwards. „We're excited

gramme on RTL on Saturday evening could serve as a template.

At present, the start-up company is situated on Einsteinufer in Charlottenburg, in the direct vicinity of the Berlin University of the Arts. „The whole environment and our contact with the students are very exciting,“ says Sven Wedig about the location. Then there's the good



Geschäftsführer: Björn Kötter und Sven Wedig (from left)

about how all this is developing,“ says Björn Kötter. For example, some day this could be a kind of personal network. A link-up with television is also a possibility for the two entrepreneurs. The „Chartshow“ pro-

public transport service and the reasonable rent. „The cost-benefit ratio is very good,“ the entrepreneur explains. (spa)

Finding patterns and a place of their own

Dirk Müller-Remus' IT consultants recognise structures faster than others, but they still often fall through the grid in the everyday working world. Not at Auticon: here autistic people can realise their potential



Dirk Müller-Remus

Outside, traffic is pushing down Hardenbergstrasse, from Ernst-Reuter-Platz towards Zoo. Even though there's only a slight hiss from the cars, Dirk Müller-Remus closes the windows. He aims to reduce sensory input to a minimum in the office, because he knows that his employees perceive things differently. He has learned to avoid subjunctives when he speaks and conveys his intentions very directly.

These are small details that reveal that Auticon is a special company. The people who work here have extraordinary expertise, but might struggle when it comes to social conventions or ironic winks of the eye - they are on the autism spectrum.

Auticon employees might test highly complex systems, analyse codes, or clean up large quantities of data for external client organisations. Meanwhile, job coaches provide them with support in their day-to-day communication. 'People

on the autism spectrum bring particular qualities to clients. They are highly focused and take an original approach to problem solving,' says Müller-Remus, adding: 'You might not notice it at first glance.'

In the case of his own son, it took 14 years for Asperger syndrome to be diagnosed. The Managing Director turns serious: 'We had to come to terms with our own child needing a lot of support in his everyday life.' Then Müller-Remus had a key experience, visiting a self-help group for people on the spectrum and their relatives. There were 20 adults, sharing one dilemma: on the one hand they were creative and talented, and on the other hand disorganised and feeling overwhelmed. 'They all had one thing in common - they were unemployed.'

At that point Müller-Remus became angry - about this injustice, angry about the future of his own child.

He then decided to create an occupational environment that could facilitate this autism-specific potential. The idea for 'Auticon' was born, and the economics graduate and software developer changed careers.

Today, Auticon employs 34 consultants on the autism spectrum at six different locations across Germany. Having started in City West, Auticon now runs branches in Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, Munich and Hamburg, and also set sights on London. In these densely populated areas, Müller-Remus connects the data flux of our time with the exceptional ability of his employees in a meaningful way. Their ability to recognise hidden structures and patterns allows them to optimise processes quickly and efficiently. He summarises: 'I'm not saying that they're better software developers. But their contribution significantly improves teams.' (suh)

auticon consultant Marko Riegel



In the city of the like-minded

The cloudControl start-up helps others to create web applications faster and more easily, and has made something that is changing the world of the web



Tobias Wilken, Philipp Strube, Thomas Ruland (from left)

In the middle of the financial crisis, in winter 2008/2009, Thomas Ruland suddenly found himself on the blue sofa again. There, in the bedroom of co-founder Philipp, a question occurred to Ruland, who is now 31 years old: „Why should we stick with these boring jobs when we can create something that changes the world.“ It was the moment in which his old life was replaced by a new one: a meaning instead of money, passion instead of nine-to-five, start-up instead of investment bank.

Ruland actually just wanted to bridge the gap between two jobs and help his school friends with the business plan for their idea. But then came the Eco Award – the first of many awards and prizes – and so he founded cloudControl together with law graduate Philipp Strube and IT systems electronics engineer Tobias Wilken. Successfully: today, five years later, they’ve bought their American competitor dotCloud.

A German lay person visiting their website won’t understand very much – and not because the company language is English. The service is aimed at software developers who are familiar with expressions like „supercharge development“ or „scale applications“. „We’re the people who provide others with the shovels to dig for gold with,“ Ruland attempts to describe the business idea. „We’re a PaaS, a Platform as a Service,“ he continues, then grabs a pen after all to sketch the world of cloud computing and their start-up’s place in it.

Ultimately, cloudControl provides the people building an application with an environment in which it’s easier and faster for them to create, operate and scale their web pages. For example, if a lot of people are accessing an offer, cloudControl ensures that automated processes provide increased computing power so that everyone can call up the website. „We’re not the people who

build the e-commerce shop; we’re the ones who make sure that nobody needs to worry about server capacity any more. We offer everyone who develops and operates websites the optimum IT infrastructure,“ says Ruland, looking through the window of the conference room into the next room.

The blue sofa is there now, right next to the football table and the fridge full of Club Mate. It came here with them from Bonn to City West – into the ecosystem of the start-ups in which the three founders discovered what they were looking for: customers and early adopters, i.e. people who are open to new things. And like-minded people who care more about the meaning of their work than money. Looking back, Ruland says: „If you’re starting something up in Germany, you do it in Berlin.“ (suh)

Everything starts on paper

More than just a programming den – that's Karlmax Berlin. The young company develops software applications for Android and iOS



Karl Szwilius

What do you need to develop an app? Maybe a state-of-the-art, lightning-fast computer? Maybe a couple of clever programmers? Or a conglomeration of the latest smartphone models? If you ask Karl Szwilius, the reply you get is: „Firstly, you need a lot of analogue things.“ For example, a pin board, index cards, coloured pens and a whole lot of paper. These are the analogue birthing tools for the digital world. Because what appears on our smartphones later on showing us the current local weather, or measuring our daily calorie consumption, or navigating us reliably through the streets, begins in the old-fashioned way on a plain white sheet of paper. This is where the app gets its design, where the interface is designed, colours and shapes are specified and the functions and menu items are arranged.

And the app also has to pass its first test on paper: does the model

even make sense? How good is the user-friendliness, or how high the annoyance factor? Weeks or months can go by in this way. Only then is the code written for the software. „So this means that in the beginning we do a lot of painting and sketching – and only then does the programming begin,“ says Karl Szwilius. With his company Karlmax Berlin, the 35-year-old develops software for Android and iOS, and also for mobile websites. His customers are mainly smaller and medium-sized companies throughout Germany.

„But we wanted to be more than just a programming den,“ says the media sciences graduate. This means that the company doesn't just develop the software, but works on the programs from the first idea to the design and the implementation. And the company has continued developing some of the apps for years afterwards. Which presents the program-

mers with an ongoing challenge. „You have to keep figuring out what happens to the app when there is no reception, how much memory space the program is allowed to take up, how the updates are meant to work, on which device the program is meant to run,“ explains the Dortmund native. One of the main focuses of the company is on the development of e-learning software and the control of external devices such as lighting systems, home entertainment systems or trade fair exhibits.

Karlmax Berlin was founded three years ago by Karl Szwilius and Max Julian Dreißig. „We spent a long time trying to think up a name,“ Szwilius recalls. The solution: a combination of the first names of company founders Karl and Max. The two met at Mobile.de in Europarc Dreilinden. „That was a very nice period,“ Szwilius remembers. They gathered experience and learned about how a company works. „But we always wanted to be self-employed,“ explains Szwilius, who has been sole Managing Director of Karlmax Berlin since the start of the year. The company started out at the Jannowitzbrücke in Berlin. It relocated to the Bülowbogen commercial complex a few years ago. For Karl Szwilius, an extremely exciting location. Above all, the interaction of the many different companies makes the commercial complex unique. (spa)

City West

City West is one of the two large central areas of Berlin and comprises sections of the Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf, Tempelhof-Schöneberg and Mitte districts. Over more than 650 hectares, a wide range of utilities are on offer. From Stuttgarter Platz to Nollendorfplatz and from the Spreebogen to Lietzenburger Strasse, City West is a shopping paradise, party district, education and research centre, cultural location, residential area and trading centre. (rm)





- 1 Bitplaces GmbH
- 2 Tvib by storyfeed GmbH
- 3 Songfor GmbH
- 4 cloudControl GmbH
- 5 3YOURMIND GmbH
- 6 auticon GmbH
- 7 M&H Group
- 8 integral-learning GmbH
- 9 Lautsprecher Teufel GmbH
- 10 Signavio GmbH
- 11 disserto management gmbh
- 12 Business Keeper AG
- 13 Karlmax Berlin GmbH & Co. KG
- 14 MAUL-THEET GmbH
- 15 mikado AG
- 16 Coire GmbH



A conductor of bits and bytes

Start-up company Coire has created a software interface with which computers and smartphones can make music together

It is late summer. A poinsettia garland weaves its way across the desks of Marius Braun, Christian Dietz and Florian Goltz. „We’ve had more important things to do in the last months than worry about the office décor,” says Marius Braun, noticing a certain puzzlement. For the start-up trio it’s the last official day in the founders’ building of the Technical University of Berlin (TUB).

Coire is now fully fledged. Up to now, the start-up was able to work on its idea in the founders’ incubator of the Centre for Entrepreneurship – financed by ESF and Exist start-up stipends and the „IKT Innovativ“ competition. Coire used this time and created a technology whose name might sound somewhat megalomaniac when heard for the first time: „The Almighty HUB“.

„This thing is incredibly powerful in its simplicity,” Christian Dietz says of the software interface. Speaking calmly and clearly, the 35-year-old seems no more megalomaniac than his co-founders – three likeable young lads with a passion for digital music and a profound knowledge of bits and bytes.

These three have created a software module that runs with iOS, Android, Mac, Windows and Linux. It synchronises the time of different devices so that they can make music together via music software. Ultimately, this all works similarly to an orchestra: the body of sound requires a conductor to dictate the rhythm, so that the cello doesn’t overtake the violin and the trumpets don’t step out of line altogether. The situation is exactly the same when smartphone A wants to make music with smartpho-

ne B, or computer C want to play with music programs. Even if the applications were started at the same time on all the devices, they would drift apart after a certain time.

Up to now, this problem has been solved using the „Midi“ standard, a digital interface for musical instruments. But the Coire founders have higher standards – for them it’s about microseconds. They’ve create a more

precise system that requires no additional hardware, instead using existing, wireless interfaces such as Wi-Fi or Bluetooth. „Until now, it’s also been difficult to join in with an ongoing session. We do this automatically and dynamically,” says Christian Dietz, as his phone suddenly interrupts us with dissonant piano notes.

„My initials in musical form,” Dietz explains. Like all the members of Coire, he likes tinkering with sounds, using algorithms to convert binary files into music. He and Florian Goltz already experimented with this as undergraduates while they were studying communication sciences and technical acoustics. A stone’s throw away, in the electrical studio of the TUB. They still go there regularly: „The expertise and the networks are pretty close by here,” says Dietz.

Even though the market is ultimately in the USA, many of the big software manufacturers are located in Berlin and Hamburg. They’re already negotiating with one of these, and others have shown an interest. Goltz summarises: „It’s a niche that we’re working in, but we fit into it pretty snugly.“ (suh)



Marius Braun, Christian Dietz, Florian Goltz (f.l.)

Looking forward with the Memorial Church behind them

The IT services company disserto optimises company processes – while also leading Word out of its shadowy existence as a typewriter

IBM, AOL, SAP... – if you want to make it in the IT industry, you seem to require a name with three letters. However, Andreas Klingenberg and his wife Michaela Goerlitzer-Klingenberg made a conscious decision against this. They named their IT services company „disserto“, which is Latin and means „to discuss, to debate, to deal with“. „We’re very good at understanding the processes of our customers,“ says Managing Director Goerlitzer-Klingenberg, „and we’re also technophiles, combining process know-how with technology.“

Since 2007, disserto has been developing solutions for companies „where people are the main focus“. These are service providers who do not earn their revenue by selling goods, but who deploy their staff for projects and budget accordingly. Their customers include, for example, corporate consultants, corporate law firms and engineering consultants, project controllers and service provider companies. disserto mainly supports these companies in the personnel, order, project and contract management sectors – either with pure consulting or with specific new solutions tailored to the customer’s needs. All of this is performed on the basis of Microsoft products and structures: „We don’t do this because we’re Microsoft fanatics, but because the licences are often already there,“ says Klingenberg, who is responsible for operative business and development.

disserto uses the existing technologies and combines topics such as communication, document management or

customer relationship management (CRM). „Most people use Word like a typewriter and Excel like a pocket calculator – and very few use them as interaction tools,“ Klingenberg explains. For example, to simplify processes these „Word typewriters“ are „converted“ into programs that automatically fetch files from the correct folders, rearrange them and display them in combination with the necessary information.

The consultants and developers mainly operate on the medium scale, in companies with around 150 to 250 employees. They develop solutions here and connect data for invoices, orders, dunning notices or timekeeping. „We do all this – but we are not in thrall to technology; we use it. You don’t have to follow every single trend. You have to find a good mixture that also reflects the tradition of the respective company,“ says the qualified businessman as he looks out upon Tauentzienstrasse and reminders of Berlin’s history.

It’s no coincidence that you see the Memorial Church when you look out the windows of disserto, and not Alexanderplatz or Kottbusser Tor. „It was important to us to position ourselves as an established company. We didn’t want to have this ‘in’ status that you get

when you join the start-ups in Mitte,“ says Klingenberg, who also has his roots in City West in another sense, having been born in Schöneberg. Nevertheless, innovation is at the top of the list at disserto. So you won’t hear anyone saying „We’ve been doing it this way for 15 years.“ (suh)



Michaela Goerlitzer-Klingenberg, Andreas Klingenberg

Democracy from the clouds

Signavio is the first company to provide software as a pure cloud service. It enables work processes to be represented graphically



Founders: Torben Schreiter, Nicolas Peters, Willi Tscheschner, Dr. Gero Decker (f.l.)

How do you bake a chocolate cake? You need flour and eggs, sugar and a little butter. Probably some baking powder too. And chocolate, of course. And when you've got all the ingredients, the question is: in what order do you put them all together? At what point do you switch the oven on? On the one hand, it needs to be hot on time, and on the other, you don't want to waste energy. Gero Decker points to a diagram with arrows, boxes and symbols. This is what it would look like if you were using the software of Berlin company Signavio to bake a cake.

Of course, this isn't about cake. And not about the order of the ingredients either. It's about medium-sized and large companies and their process management. „But the cake diagram is a good example of what we do,“ says Decker, Managing Director of Signavio. Simply put, the company founded in 2009 makes business processes visible. Special

software is used to suddenly turn invisible, convoluted work processes into simple graphics.

The software evolved from a PhD thesis at the Hasso-Plattner Institute of the University of Potsdam. „A colleague of mine at the time had a vision that all programs wouldn't be stored on the desktop any more, but would be used via the internet,“ says Decker. This was in around 2006. The idea was spectacular – a program that runs via the web browser. Smartphones or cloud systems were still a thing of the future. „The most complicated thing you had at that time was eBay,“ says Decker, one of the four company founders.

The theoretical paper was first turned into a big experiment, and then a spectacular, novel product: for the first time, software that is provided as a pure cloud service. More than 500 companies now use the software. These include major banks, but also frozen cake manufacturer

Coppenrath & Wiese. The software has many advantages for the companies. The cloud service enables them to save the costs of expensive programs. The software is rented rather than purchased. Nothing is stored on the desktop, there's no need for time-consuming updates on every single computer, and all the employees use the same, most up-to-date version.

„There used to be just a few gurus in companies who knew about process management,“ the entrepreneur explains. The new software enables more employees to input their knowledge and play a role. But also business partners, suppliers and customers. „The result was a kind of democratising effect, combined with added value for the companies,“ Decker explains. The processes were optimised, errors avoided. This is how the companies see it too. In the first half of 2014, Signavio grew by 72 per cent, and branches have now been set up in the USA and Singapore.

But the beginning was far from easy. „The first year and a half was very difficult,“ says the 32-year-old. The founders went door-to-door with a PowerPoint presentation. The response: catastrophic. Potential customers were sceptical that the company was too small, the technology too untested, the risk too great. Only health insurer AOK believed in the idea and came aboard. Ever since, the process-optimising clouds have had the wind at their backs. (spa)

The crown jewels out there somewhere

Classify, encrypt, protect – this is the recipe for success at M&H IT-Security GmbH. The company's software keeps sensitive data safe – all over the world

For some, clouds are simply wonderful. They are the gateway to a brave new world full of unlimited possibilities. For others, clouds are simply a nightmare come true. They are the gates of an IT hell. While many start-up companies could not survive in the market without cloud systems, they give the IT departments many sleepless nights. „For IT departments, clouds are a total horror. Because with them, the data is no longer located in the company,“ says Hans-Peter Möschle, main shareholder and Managing Director of the M&H Group. These days, hardly a single IT system is still self-contained. Documents, contracts, technical data, design plans or research work, some of this highly confidential, are buzzing around out there somewhere on the internet. These documents and data must be protected – from being accessed by outsiders on the one hand, but also within the companies. For example, when employees are leaving the company or changing to a different position, or when projects with deadlines are completed.

„Of course, the question is, what is actually confidential and which documents need to be protected?“ explains Ralf Ehren, Managing Director of M&H IT-Security GmbH. Because this is not about the majority of data, but rather the „crown jewels“ as the jargon has it. That is, particularly sensitive documents that should only be available to very specific users. For this distinction to be made, the documents must be classified and a user



Hans-Peter Möschle, Bernhard Altmann, Ralf Ehren (from left)

group defined. This is exactly where M&H IT-Security GmbH comes to the aid of medium-sized companies in particular. The IT specialists were honored with the Innovation Award from Initiative Mittelstand (a medium-sized company initiative).

Software is used to assign a unique identification code to documents and data and then encrypt them. „In the past, they were stamped ‘confidential’,“ Hans-Peter Möschle explains. The code now performs this function. Only those with the correct authorization, and the password or chip card, for example, can open, print or change the document. For every opening a request on an internal company server is required, thus enabling the detection and prevention of unauthorized attempts to open the document. In the future, the federal printing office in Berlin, with whom a partnership has existed for many years, is to be the central

certification authority for these requests. „At the same time, we endeavour to keep the security as simple as possible for our customers,“ says Hans-Peter Möschle, who began his work in this area around ten years ago in Berlin. „I recognized Berlin's potential early on. The city is simply an incredible place for innovation,“ says the native of Baden.

Since it was founded in 1997, the company has its offices in Hardenbergstrasse. „We've resisted every trend,“ says Ralf Ehren. The company benefits from its proximity to the Technical University of Berlin (TU) and the Fraunhofer Institute. „Contact with professors and students remains very important to us,“ explains Ralf Ehren, himself an alumnus of the TU.

And by now the clouds are only half as bad. (spa)

„How do we want to act?“

Business Keeper AG is the provider of a unique electronic whistleblowing system. It helps uncover misconduct and malpractices in organisations and administrations

The topic is almost as old as humankind itself. For example, Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius wrote around 2000 years ago: „Every man is worth just so much as the things are worth about which he busies himself.“ But what does this really mean? And do we, as people, still need values at all? Yes, says Kenan Tur, and today perhaps even more than ever. With his company, Business Keeper AG, he has developed a whistleblowing system to combat value infringements and to uncover corrupt practices.

With the aid of the Business Keeper Monitoring System (BKMS® system), employees and suppliers can disclose malpractices and misconduct in companies. The ability to report anonymously protects them from possible reprisals. Companies use the application to prevent financial and reputational damage, and to investigate incidents internally. Sometimes this involves serious white collar crime such as balance sheet falsification, corruption or insider trading.

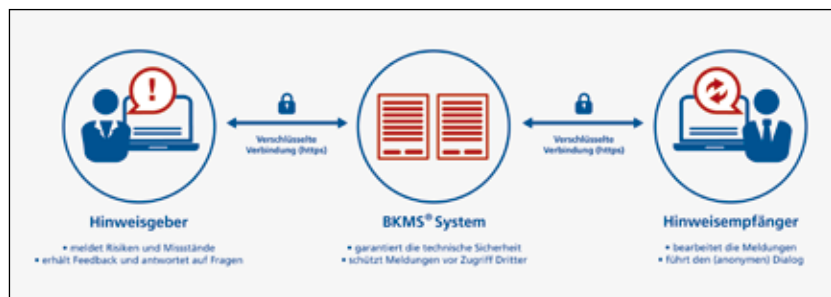
Authorities such as the Federal Cartel Office or the State Office of Criminal Investigation of Lower Saxony are already successfully using the system. Companies like Deutsche Telekom, Deutsche Bahn, Osram or Merck have recognized the value of the whistleblowing system as well. At present, it is being used in 50 languages worldwide.

A report is submitted by initially filling in a form on a secure online platform. The report is encrypted within the application and sent to the



Kenan Tur

denunciation. „The first years were really difficult. The companies were very dismissive.“ But then came the scandals at reputable German corporations, on a previously unheard of scale. Suddenly, compliance and business ethics were popular topics, even among the general public. But it is about more for Kenan Tur. He wants to re-establish a lost identification. In the past, many companies were owner-managed. The business owner's values were also the values of the company – and those of the employees. Today, there are a lot of manager-run companies. The value



BKMS® System

compliance manager of the organisation. To follow up, an anonymous dialogue can be conducted via a secured postbox. „Many whistleblowers surrender their anonymity at some point, when they feel that they can trust the contact person,“ says Kenan Tur. Though now a matter of course in many organisations, this was difficult in the beginning. At first, Kenan Tur's idea was not well received by companies. Some believe that the system encourages a culture of

orientation is usually rather number-based. „For many, only the business transactions count. What counts is profit maximization – at all costs,“ says Kenan Tur, who decided some time ago that he did not want to work in such an environment anymore. After 17 years he left his secure, well-paid job at General Motors and founded Business Keeper AG. „Basically, everything we do revolves around a very simple question: How do we want to act?“ (spa)

A weakness for weak points

Hacker attack, data lost, alien device in the network? Mikado AG provides advice on IT security



Reimund Reiter

Reimund Reiter and Wolfgang Dürr think hard, look at each other, and remain silent after all. Nor can they answer the question about the hacker attacks or IT slip-ups that they have experienced in their 30 years of business with Mikado AG. They've seen plenty, but in the IT security sector, a lot of people don't want these things to go public. So they only talk about an administrator who quit a company and left program code behind him with which he could access internal data from outside.

Mikado provides technical and organisational security consulting: its employees certify computer systems as per BSI and ISO standards (Federal Office for Information Security; International Organisation for Standardization), implement security concepts or perform penetration tests. This means that they simulate

a hacker attack so that they can help fill in the security gaps. Along with its industrial customers, the company also caters to federal, state and district authorities. One of the benefits of being in Berlin. „The topic of security is one for larger organisations,“ says Reiter. „It's not so present among medium-sized companies. We want to change this.“

Which is why their website has been full of sport lately: doing the crawl, clambering up hills, playing golf. This is to demonstrate to the small and medium-sized companies that „getting security-fit can be a lean process“. Easy on the budget but still efficient. „Not all the data of a company needs to be encrypted. But our consultants do not breeze into the companies all aloof,“ says Wolfgang Dürr: „We know what we're talking about when we talk about security in networks.“ When you see the „Consultant“ badge at Mikado, you're really dealing with a technician – an expert who knows the material and is on the same level as the customer's IT people.

Everything began in the time of microcomputers and punch cards, when the first personal computers were emerging. The name Mikado, an acronym, is from this period. It stands for „Microcomputer Applications in Data-processing and Organisation“. „Our original goal was to make PCs useful for medium-sized companies and implement business software on them,“ says Reimund Reiter. Then came the big orders from AOK and Schering. The task



Wolfgang Dürr

was to replace mainframe computers with a networked system of PCs. It wasn't until the mid-90s that security became the main topic at Mikado – when the first viruses appeared and their customers asked them for help. „In 1998 we moved here to the Bülowbogen commercial complex,“ says Reiter, and his companion Dürr adds: „We were the first tenants.“

He talks about the past of the brick buildings, as a printer specialising in Cyrillic letters. And the duo also sees the future of Mikado as being, at least partially, in the East. Poland is a future market, and it's „right outside their front door“. Reiter says: „The pioneering spirit has found its way into the country. It's always this way: first the economy grows like crazy – and then they start thinking about security. And then we join in.“ (suh)

Building bridges over European knowledge gaps

The integral-learning company makes lessons that use online content more efficient.

The solution: MUMIE



Prof. Dr. Ruedi Seiler, Marek Grudzinski (from left)

At the end of the Ku'damm there's a building company that isn't really one: integral-learning builds bridges and closes gaps. However, the IT company doesn't use plaster and a scraper, but rather bits & bytes. The team assembled around Prof. Dr. Ruedi Seiler and Marek Grudzinski specialises in bridging knowledge gaps, working in the e-learning sector, among others.

Seiler actually taught mathematics at the Technical University of Berlin (TUB) – and he noticed that it was getting more and more difficult to pass on the knowledge to the growing number of students using conventional means. „So he started giving them tools that they began to be able to use as the technology developed over time,“ says Grudzinski, who also refined the learning platform in the course of his informatics studies at the TUB. In co-operation with a

number of universities in Germany and abroad, an open-source solution came about with a name evocative of ancient Egypt („Mumie“ being German for „mummy“) rather than vectors, binomial formulae and equations: the MUMIE learning platform (stands for „multi-medial mathematics education“).

Scientific studies were used to develop a didactic concept to support the students within the learning cycle of their academic week: „Explorative learning is in the foreground here. The aim is to nurture the commitment of the individual.“ As he explains, Grudzinski clicks through a demo version: aA little mummy stands at the edge of the screen and scratches his head while the program throws up colourful graphics and generates new tasks.

All over Europe, high-school graduates and budding engineers sit

at their computers and use MUMIE to brush up their knowledge: While the platform is used at more than a dozen German universities as an online preparatory maths course for high-school graduates, the Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan in Stockholm uses it to close the knowledge gap between bachelor and master's studies. „MUMIE is a system with different modules. It has a variety of applications, and any number of personalised tasks can be corrected and evaluated automatically,“ says Grudzinski. Along with technical support, integral-learning also provides a call centre where students have direct access to tutors.

Because the coffers of the universities are empty but the demand for online learning services is still there, integral-learning now also develops courses to meet individual needs. However, the customer not only applies its software development expertise to the e-learning sector: in collaboration with partner companies it develops software solutions for customers such as DHL, bettermarks or My Lorry. Ultimately, education is closest to Seiler's heart. And it's also worth paying for, in Grudzinski's opinion: „The readiness to hand over a little money for education is much greater in neighbouring countries than it is in Germany.“ He's in luck, because the market in Europe is a big one, there are a lot of budding engineers – and MUMIE speaks many languages. (suh)

Everything's vibrating

But how? The team at Maul-Theet specialises in analyses and measuring technology in the vibration control technology sector

After a two-and-a-half-hour visit to the Maul-Theet company, when you emerge again in the Bülowbogen commercial complex, you have to adjust your view of the world just slightly. Firstly: Maul-Theet is not just any company tucked away in a courtyard, it's a hidden champion. Secondly: the Heraclitian saying „Panta rhei“ was incomplete for over 2000 years. It should be: „Everything flows – and vibrates“.

In the words of Managing Director Wieland Knodel, this sounds somewhat more businesslike and modest. He talks about stimulus, resonance and the right frequencies: „We perform vibration analyses, develop measuring technology and provide services in this sector.“

„This sector“ is big. „Anywhere that it vibrates, we're working there,“ says Knodel: „The automotive industry, rail technology, aerospace, medical technology, entertainment electronics, but also in science and research.“ In the widest range of industries there's a need to know how something vibrates when it's stimulated. The reasons for this are varied: where can I save on material? Where do I have to reinforce my component? How does the human ear work? What loads can my object withstand?

Sensors, microphones or lasers are used to capture structural-dynamic properties, which are then evaluated by software. These are the words of Maul-Theet itself: it translates the complex data captured by its measurements into readable and comprehensible graphics or animations. For example, Maul-Theet per-

forms hydro-acoustic measurements in U-boats for the Bundeswehr and develops testing stands for Siemens gas turbines. Even when the Burj Al Arab in Dubai remains stable in strong winds, this has something to do with the work done by Maul-Theet.

plains: „By correlating these points we can measure the vibrations of the wall: Is it bulging? Is it contorting? Is it making wave forms?“ In particular, this scanning system can measure objects to which it is difficult to attach sensors. One special feature: it runs with all conventional single-point la-



Matthias Keil, Wieland Knodel (from left)

However, the structural dynamics market is competitive, and innovations are important. „So we do a lot of development work ourselves,“ says Wieland Knodel, as he enters the room behind the football table. In here is the latest invention of the eight-man company: the VibroLaser ScanSet.

A network of red laser points flits across the wall, with Matthias Keil capable of altering their arrangement at will on a PC. The Head of Development at Maul-Theet ex-

ser vibrometers – and this is considerably cheaper than a complete system, assuming that a laser is already present.

„Our location here is not only desirable for product development“, says Knodel. „We have short distances and there is a good mixture of software companies and manufacturing industry.“ He is also happy with the infrastructure in Schöneberg. In contrast to Berlin-Mitte, „everything flows“ can also be applied to the traffic here. (suh)

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Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf



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Senatsverwaltung
für Wirtschaft, Technologie
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