



Winners of the Swisscom StartUp Challenge ready to take on the global market

The five winners of the Swisscom StartUp Challenge all agree it was “a resounding success”. They have just returned from Silicon Valley, where they took part in a one-week mentoring programme. And they didn’t come back empty handed: they were able to establish valuable contacts with potential customers, partners and investors as well as gain experience and inspiration. In addition, the start-up Geosatis SA is receiving financial support from Swisscom Ventures.

The famous Silicon Valley is home to everybody who’s somebody in high-tech. Last week, the five winners of this year’s Swisscom StartUp Challenge ScanTrust, eSMART, Geosatis, Hoosh and CashSentinel got a chance to mingle with the big players. Swisscom sent them on a one-week trip to the Mecca of the high-tech industry to seek inspiration from the Valley’s innovative spirit and take part in a tailored mentoring programme. This was no walk in the park: their schedule included visits to global players such as PayPal, followed by meeting marathons, pitches and talks with investors as well as further developing their own business ideas. And they didn’t have to wait long for the first sense of achievement. “We have landed some extremely interesting customers,” says Nathan Anderson, founder of ScanTrust. The other start-ups, too, held promising talks with potential strategic partners and have come up with new ideas to further develop their business model for the global market.

The power of networking

Silicon Valley is a hotbed of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. “In cafés, in restaurants – everywhere you go, people are casually talking business, networking and exchanging business cards,” says Sylvain Bertolus, CEO of CashSentinel. Small talk and networking are part and parcel of life here. However, not every contact is worth maintaining, as Beat Schillig, founder of IFJ and local mentor, knows only too well. He advised the Swiss start-ups to stay focused: “It’s easy to lose track in business, which can be hectic. It’s not the number of contacts that counts, but the quality.”



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Press release

Swisscom invests in Geosatis

The five winners agree: the week of mentoring has given their businesses new impetus. Geosatis will also be receiving an injection of capital, as Swisscom Ventures will be supporting the start-up with financial resources from its Early Stage Fund. Geosatis develops solutions that allow criminals to be monitored electronically. Dominique Mégret, Head of Swisscom Ventures, is confident that this is the perfect time to invest in Geosatis: “The company’s technical concept has already proven successful, but in terms of commercial distribution, it’s still early days.” This is where Swisscom can contribute the leadership and financial power Geosatis needs to strengthen and grow. The two sides have agreed not to disclose the amount invested.

Roger Wüthrich-Hasenböhler, initiator of the Swisscom StartUp Challenge and Head of Swisscom’s SME division, strikes a positive note: “This year’s challenge and business trip, the icing on the cake, were a complete success. We discovered innovative start-ups and opened many doors to motivated young entrepreneurs. We will follow their further development closely.”

Further information on the Challenge and the winners at www.swisscom.ch/challenge

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