



Annual Report

Innovation Promotion Agency CTI 2009



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“venturelab” helps with the breakthrough

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Green is in, even in the travel sector. Jochen Munding spotted this trend and joined in at an early stage. His travel platform, routeRANK is successful and the start-up has since made international headlines. And not simply because routeRANK has repeatedly come up with new innovations and is able to attract well-known partners such as Nokia. “venturelab” has also contributed to this success. Munding perfected his business model and made many contacts at the 10-day intensive “venture leaders” course in Boston, which opened the door to investors and partners.

There are many online travel platforms, but not that many that take into account all factors of travel planning from CO₂ emissions and check-in times at the airport to price. And this is exactly what routeRANK does. Jochen Munding, founder of the French-Swiss start-up: “With a click of the mouse, routeRANK supplies all important details required for travel planning and a complete comparison of different routes. We will also show you how environmentally friendly the travel options are.” Thanks to a partnership with “myclimate” it has also recently become possible to conveniently offset the CO₂ emissions shown online. It is a solution that also appeals to large companies. Nokia, for example, uses the innovative online platform and the environmental organisation, WWF, has incorporated the services of routeRANK.

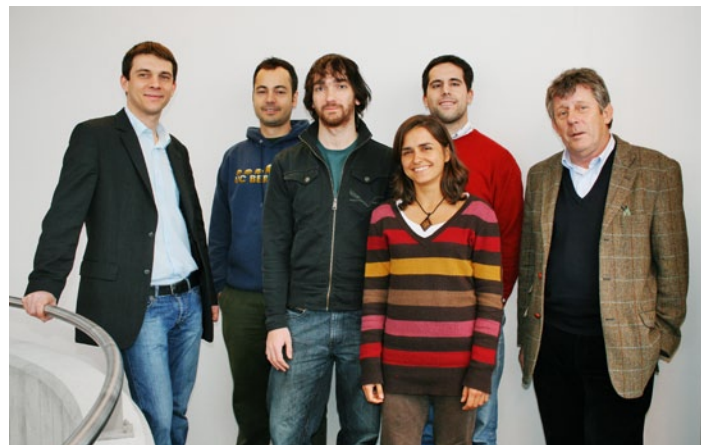
Travel specialists reckon routeRANK has great potential and are committing to the start-up accordingly. Klaus Töpfer, the former executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme, describes routeRANK as “an intelligent tool that enables users to make informed, environmentally-conscious decisions. This system allows informed travel decisions, which are not only efficient in terms of time and cost, but also benefit the environment.”

On the way up, routeRANK also received valuable support from “venturelab”. As well as the “venture challenge” semester course, Munding also attended the “venture leaders” business development programme in Boston in 2006. “That is where I really learned to sell my business idea. Pitch, pitch and pitch again was the motto”, says Munding, and he adds: “This training combined with the contacts that I was able to make through ‘venturelab’ gave routeRANK the impetus it needed and contributed decisively to our breakthrough.”

That the “venturelab” concept leads to success can also be seen in the winner listings from international and national press cuttings. Whether it is TechCrunch, the Swiss ICT Award, Red Herring or specific industry competitions: “venturelab” graduates are nearly always at the top. routeRANK is no exception: As well as the KPMG Tomorrow’s Market Award, the Microsoft ICT Award or the nomination for the “Best Cleantech/Environmental Startup (EMEA)” at TechCrunch routeRANK won “venture kick” start-up capital of CHF 130,000, among other things.

For Munding this was a successful start, which has encouraged him onwards. “We have never rested on our laurels but have always stuck with it and continuously improved our product. This will not change in the future.” This constant “striving for more” is also reflected in the short runtime of the start-up. Jochen Munding, an engineer, started up his company after completing the “venture challenge” semester course. The following year he was already able to bring the first completed beta version onto the market and move into his own office premises in the Science Park with his team. routeRANK also benefited from CTI projects and coaching. Since 2008 routeRANK has been an established player in the market and as Munding reveals, negotiations are currently underway with important partners who will push the start-up on even further.

www.venturelab.ch
www.routerank.ch



Jochen Munding (left) with some of his team (Photo Manuel Flury)