

2008 startup competition winners

By Jim Pulcrano, Director, Switzerland and member of the EMBA teaching team

As someone who follows technology startups for a living, I'm constantly surprised and pleased by the innovations that come out of a place like Silicon Valley. Some of them are perplexing products that for the life of me I can't figure out who would use them. Others I simply can't understand. But then there are the many others that are truly inspirational. Ideas, that when you see them proposed as products, just make perfect sense. You ask yourself, "Why didn't I think of that?", or, "I would buy that!", or, "I hope they're successful, because we need that badly".

I'm pleased to say that this year we've seen more of the inspirational variety in the [10th annual IMD Startup Competition](#) winners (and these are mostly Swiss startups). [Benoit Leleux](#), MBA Program Director and I had the luxury of choice this year. We had many more great regional startups to choose from than we had slots for in the [MBA](#) and [EMBA](#) programs. The support from venture capitalists, IMD alumni, the CTI/KTI and Venture Lab programs of the Swiss Government, as well as the two Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology (EPFL and ETH) and past winners of the startup competition brought us a plethora of companies to match up with our MBA and EMBA teams this year:

For those of us who have found ourselves lost on a ski piste, or trying to track down family members who took a different lift, **Skimondo** has developed a cellphone GPS system to help us enjoy our skiing more.

Everyone who has tried to set up a meeting with several people from different organizations has wasted enough time to see the utility of **Doodle's** simple solution.

In addition to wasting time, many of us have probably wasted money as we tried to find the best door-to-door itinerary to get from one city to another, and **routeRANK** has a simple solution for us.

When you're visiting a distant city, or simply shopping in your local market, and you see an object that you want more information about, **kooaba** has developed a way for you to take a photo with your phone's digital camera and use that image to search the Internet for information.

Being an environmentally-savvy shopper, you don't want to be faced with the simple choice of "paper or plastic" (shopping bags), so **BioApply** has developed bioplastics for packaging.

If you're searching for a new way to work with your PC, **deskNET**, with its sobees product, might have the answer.

If you're into PC gaming, then you might find **KrazyLazy's** approach interesting.

Poken wants to change the way we do instant lotteries, using small electronic coins.

Bioinductive bone implants, as developed by **Delta Robotics**, could someday improve the lives of 1.5 million people per year.

Diagnoplex is a diagnostics company that is developing a non-invasive colorectal cancer test.

NovaShunt has designed an automated implantable pump system to move fluids around inside the body.

If you have to spend time in a medical facility, you'll be happy that **HealthOne** has developed an integrated and portable electronic health records system.

If you're in the semiconductor industry, you'll want to learn more about **EpiSpeed's** low-energy plasma-enhanced vapor deposition technology.

picoDrill can micromachine materials such as glass or quartz.

LightHouse Information Technologies is providing mobile Internet security solutions.

miniswys has created tiny piezoelectric motors for applications such as in mobile phone cameras.

Mnemis, spun out of the University of Lausanne, provides a cool teaching platform.

Quantesys serves money managers, providing them with a tool to make better investment decisions.

Sonosax, not a startup but very much an entrepreneurial venture, manufactures audio equipment for professionals and is the only one of our companies to have won an Oscar in Hollywood!

yXo, also in the audio business, allows us to customize headphones for custom fidelity.

Klewel provides solutions for capturing and searching the information in multimedia presentations and recording.

shiftTHINK helps professionals to visualize social networks.

All these companies will work with our MBA and EMBA students in 2008, and hopefully everyone will profit. IMD believes that all executives can benefit from better understanding the mindset of the entrepreneur, whether it's in devising strategy in an unknown market, working with a team of brilliant technologists or executing fast with minimal resources. As Benoit Leleux said, "Working with startups forces the students to solve problems that don't fit with the many nice frameworks and models that they learn in the MBA or that they acquired in the corporate world".

Winners of the IMD Startup Competition

Fulltime MBA program

BioApply

Delta Robotics

deskNET

Doodle

HealthOne

KrazyLazy

Lighthouse Information Technologies

miniswys

Mnemis

picoDrill

Poken

Quantesys

Skimondo

Sonosax

yXo

Executive MBA Program

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