What is CloudBees?

• Platform as a Service (PaaS) ~= “Cloud Platform”
  – i.e. building custom applications “in the cloud”
• ~35 persons in 7 countries on 3 continents
  – From +9h to -9h time difference
  – Skype is king, GoToMeeting is not far behind
• We are building software/IP, yet we are selling it a service
  – People don’t “see” our software, they use it
• 10’000’s of thousands of users, 100’s of customers
• Pretty much no “assets”, new generation of company
  – Servers, ERPs, etc. – every is “online”, consumed as a service
More on CloudBees

• CloudBees, Inc.’s HQ in “Delaware”
  – Offices in Woburn (Boston, MA) and Los Altos (CA)
• CloudBees International SàRL in Neuchâtel
  – Fully owned subsidiary of CB, Inc.
  – Handles International employees…
    • Payroll, taxes, etc.
  – …And international business
Why the cloud? Example: Lose it!

- Lose it!
  - Mobile application
  - > 12 millions users
  - > 25’000 transactions per minute, at peak time

- And… only 4 employees!
  - 2 in marketing, 2 in software development
  - Complete focus on VALUE, VALUE, VALUE
  - Anything else is handled by CloudBees

- Unmatched productivity level!
  - It wouldn’t have been possible 5y ago, ...
  - This is possible TODAY!
  - How will this impact the current market leaders?
Sacha Labourey

- 1975 - Born in Neuchâtel (NE)
- 1990-1994 – College in NE
  - École de Commerce
- 1996-2000 – 1st Business
  - Cogito Informatique
- 1994-1999 – EPFL (Lausanne)
  - INFO-99
- 2001-2006 – JBoss (NE)
  - GM EMEA, CTO
- 2006-2009 – Red Hat (NE)
  - GM Middleware BU
- 2010- - CloudBees (NE)

- JBoss
  - HQ in Atlanta
  - JBoss Board member with Matrix Partners, Accel Partners, Intel,…
  - Engineers in >10 countries
- Red Hat
  - Engineering HQ in BOS
  - > 100 engineers, boss in BOS
- CloudBees
  - US Company
  - US investor
    - Matrix, Lightspeed, Baseline
  - Offices in BOS + SFO
What’s wrong with Switzerland?!?

Can I build a (successful) start-up in CH?!?

(spoiler: yes.)
1st step: YOU

Are you READY?
1\textsuperscript{st} step: YOU

Actually, are you REALLY ready?
1st step: YOU – Are you ready?

Are you Ready?

– To fail?
– To wake-up at night?
– To do ALL jobs. And more.
– To have no certainty
– To have everybody tell you “later”, “maybe”, “not sure”, “won’t work”, “wouldn’t buy it”

Are you ready to be PERSISTANT! (yet, listen)
## Temptations are great to NOT do a startup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Startup</th>
<th>Big Corp, Inc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Low Salary</td>
<td>• High Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High Risk</td>
<td>• Little Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Huge amount of Work</td>
<td>• Normal amount of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Company can die anytime</td>
<td>• Business is relatively safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No/low infrastructure/facilities</td>
<td>• Fully equipped, well managed, advantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No pat on the back</td>
<td>• Quarterly reviews, career planning, HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All jobs i.e. no job</td>
<td>• Clear job, objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yet, people do create startups...
So, why will you do/join a startup?

• You are going to learn **A LOT**
  – With your brain, but also with your **guts** (build your intuition!)
  – Can’t learn that sitting on a bench
• You’ll be at the front of the **action**
• You’ll get to take decisions that **matter**
• You’ll meet with **people** you couldn’t meet otherwise
• You’ll get a chance to understand the “**business**” at **large**
  – From the initial idea to the money collection
• And **fun** will eventually come

*My opinion? You HAVE to give it a try, at least once. Or twice…*
Do “your own” or join one?

• A “Startup” environment will bring you a lot, but…
• Creating your own IT startup is not the only way to do that
  – Opening a local food store is being an entrepreneur as well, minus the social recognition
• Maybe you should start by joining one
  – Learn from the inside
  – Build your network,
  – understand the dynamic,
  – observe,
  – learn, learn, learn.
  – And then, create your own.
An A-Team is MANDATORY

• Assemble a GREAT TEAM
  – Not just strong individual contributors!
  – No diva

• Size matters
  – Diversity of angles vs. lack of focus

• Find mentors/advisors – this is critical!
  – Bring experience, perspective, connections
  – Sometimes give useful pats on the backs ;)

“A-players bring A-Players,
B-Players bring C-Players”
(a B-player who thought he was a A)
EPFL? You are at risk

• Engineers know too much
• Engineers are never quite ready to release
  – “v0.997beta” syndrome
• As an engineer, never start alone
• You MUST have sales/business DNA
  – Release too-early, expose yourself, get feedback, FAIL FAST!
  – Sell on a vision!
Raising money

• Outside of a few notable exceptions: **American VCs ≠ Swiss VCs**
• More or less “Venture vs. Bankers”
• Risk vs. Upside ratio is very different
  – US: willing to take more risk, but expecting much bigger ROI
• Will you find a Swiss VC who “gets is” and willing to take a bigger risk?
  – Probably, but this is not the average VC
• You need to be ready to raise money in the USA
  – Hence why network is important, company structure, etc.
  – Observe startups in Israel: a lot to learn from them!
So, can I build a (successful) start-up in CH?!?
What is a “Swiss” company?

Switzerland
• ~8m inhabitants
• 41’285 km2
• 4 languages

USA
• ~315m inhabitants (40x)
• 9’826’675 km2 (240x)
• 1 language

www.my-startup.ch

or

www.my-startup.com

?
So, is a successful Swiss startup possible?

• Yes, but…
• Name me…
  – 10 US-based software companies
  – 10 EU-based software companies
  
  harder, huh? Ouch!

• In EU, we have GREAT software engineers
• We just don’t know how to sell software
  – Product marketing, marketing, sales, BD, etc.
Go Global, be global, think global

• For most startups, going global is not harder
  – Especially in IT
  – “We have the technology”
  – More a mindset issue than anything
  – Learn how to be distributed vs. remote
  – Building a “bullpen” is very valuable…
  – … but hiring the people that will make a difference is even more important!
A few advices

- Build a strong united team
- Deliver (too) early, fail fast
- This is NOT about the product (mostly)
- Go GLOBAL!
- Hire somewhere else what you won’t find here
- Be ready “to go West”!
- Be PERSISTENT (but listen to criticism)
Oh, and this is my office BTW…
In front of me…
Here is what I have to my right…
To my left…
Here are my colleagues....
Sometimes we get free candies at the office
Because we are aiming for the moon!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>413 935 km</th>
<th>69 vols</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ce chiffre correspond au nombre de kilomètres que vous avez déjà parcourus au cours de vos voyages.</td>
<td>Nombre de vols que vous avez effectués depuis le 01.01.2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vols autour de la terre</strong></td>
<td>10,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vols à destination de la Lune</strong></td>
<td>1,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vol le plus court</strong></td>
<td>ZRH-MUC (262 km)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vol le plus long</strong></td>
<td>MUC-SFO (9 437 km)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aéroport le plus au nord</strong></td>
<td>London Heathrow (LHR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aéroport le plus au sud</strong></td>
<td>Las Vegas - McCarran International, NV (LAS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Swiss/Lufthansa-only flights since Jan 2011, in ... Economy class)
But all of this travelling can get quite exhausting…
But when I am over the ocean, no worries, somebody is taking care of the office for me.