

# **CONNECT2CAPITAL 2016**

## **A WEST NORDIC VENTURE CAPITAL FORUM**



### **Connect2Capital led to a successful investment for CBC Investment Group**

**2015 was not only CBC Investment Group's first year at Connect2Capital, it was also a very successful one. Aside from the many interesting meetings, their participation led to an investment in the prosperous company Smartster.**

The Gothenburg-based company CBC Investment Group has big expectations for this year's edition of Connect2Capital. They had last year several interesting meetings with exciting companies and one of them led to a successful collaboration. – We met Smartster's founder and CEO as well as a representative from Gothenburg University's holding company, GU Ventures. They presented their idea and we thought it was very interesting, says the investment manager Karl Xavier.

#### **Shaking an old industry**

CBC Investment Group's interest was aroused by how the concept behind Smartster is successfully shaking an old industry: the direct mail industry.

– We are looking for disruptors, among other in IT, who are able to take over and update an old industry. And one of such is precisely the direct mail industry. If you look at the advertisements in your mailbox you can see that it didn't change that much overtime.

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There have been attempts to update the direct mail industry earlier but they failed as the required technology did not exist yet, explains Karl Xavier.

– If you think about the IT bubble, there were many good ideas that did not work in the end. The infrastructure did not exist. There were no broadband, no smartphones or iPads that we now take for granted. Many companies were ahead of their time and collapsed. Smartster's concept works today because we have the infrastructure.

### **International launch**

The digital marketplace Smartster gathers offers from both physical stores and online shops on a single website. The extra cost to print and deliver direct mail to customer' mailbox disappears, especially considering that many people do not even want flyers in their mailbox. The customer gets instead offers following his/her own terms, and participate at the same time in saving the environment.

– If you want you can create an account that Smartster gets to apprehend overtime. You might have a child of a certain age then you will get offers Smartster thinks will fit best. Of course you can also look for a product yourself and see if some offers are available in the stores in your neighborhood.

It goes without saying that with more than 100 000 unique visitors per day it goes well for Smartster who recently launched its service on the Danish marketplace.

– Smartster is currently in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. They are present in around 140 retail chains, have hired new employees and moved to very nice offices in Borås, a major e-trade city in Sweden, says Karl Xavier hoping that this year's edition of Connect2Capital will be as successful as last year.

– We have even more meetings booked this year, so we expect it to be at least as good as last year. And we were very satisfied with last year.

Text: Madeleine Korneliusson

Translation: Pauline Pontois

### **Facts: CBC Investment Group & Smartster**

- CBC Investment Group and related companies owns around 15% of Smartster Group AB making them the second largest shareholder after the founder.

- CBC Investment Group serves on the board with GU Ventures and Dohi Ventures who are among the largest shareholders.

- Smartster has around 140 retail chains and 950 000 offers in Sweden, Norway and Denmark combined. Sweden has today 421 000 offers from 5512 brands.