

Digital Single Market

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Have You Got Entrepreneurial Chutzpah?

The winners of this year's inaugural Europioneers Awards certainly do. These European entrepreneurs showed that it takes more than a good idea and hard work to make a successful tech venture. It also takes daring, business acumen, a flair for marketing and the right conditions for believers and investors to grow a venture into a leading ICT company.

Europe has recognised that it needs to promote entrepreneurialism. Throughout this edition of *netinnov future*, you can read about the actions being taken at the EU level to create the right regulatory and market conditions for entrepreneurs to prosper in Europe – real business accelerators.

Here is where we show how a little bit of show business also helps. Tech entrepreneurs in the USA, for example, are like 21st-century rock stars, and the new Europioneers Awards sought to recreate some of that showbiz feeling, while not ignoring the serious business side. Europe needs innovators and new business ideas made possible by the internet to help pull it out of a deep economic slump.

So it was in this setting that the European Tech Entrepreneur and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards took place in 2013. Some 1200 nominations were registered, from which online voters could then choose their favourite candidates. This resulted in ten finalists, all founders of exciting tech companies:

- **Sebastian Siemiatkowski, Niklas Adalberth and Victor Jacobsson - Klarna**
- **Alexander Ljung and Eric Wahlforss - SoundCloud** (prize-winner)
- **Michael Acton Smith - Mind Candy**
- **Jens Begemann - Wooga**
- **Mikael & Niklas Hed - Rovio**
- **Daniel Ek - Spotify**
- **Jon Reynolds - SwiftKey** (prize-winner)
- **Christian Reber - 6Wunderkinder**
- **Daniel Marhely - Deezer**
- **Hiroki Takeuchi, Matt Robinson and Tom Blomfield - GoCardless**

A panel of experts was convened to decide the winners, which were announced at a gala show in the

Netherlands.

More info

- Europioneers – <http://europioneers.com/> [1]

“Ten hours of audio are uploaded every minute and 180 million users come into contact with SoundCloud audio every month.”

(Whiteboard Magazine, ‘How we built SoundCloud’ interview with SoundCloud co-founder Eric Wahlforss, revealing some valuable tips on building a tech startup)

Europioneers winners 2013



In 2013, the European Commission hosted its inaugural **European Tech Entrepreneur of the Year Awards** in which the best tech entrepreneurs were celebrated during a ceremony in Amsterdam on 24 April. Vice-President of the European Commission, Neelie Kroes, and Amazon CTO, Werner Vogels, presented the awards.

The grand prize went to the Swedes Alexander Ljung and Eric Wahlforss, co-founders of SoundCloud, an online audio distribution platform, based in Berlin, enabling its users to upload, record, promote and share their original sounds.

A prize was also given to the **Young European Entrepreneur of the Year** and this was taken home by Jon Reynolds, co-founder of SwiftKey, a natural-language app for smartphones and tablets which uses ‘artificial intelligence’ technologies to predict the next word the user intends to type.

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