

# CODE \_n

## **Crowdfunding kicks off at CeBIT: Changers.com and carzapp win special prize at CODE\_n**

Startups can get their hands on up to €250,000 in venture capital through Seedmatch

**Hannover, March 6, 2013 – Together with Seedmatch, the CODE\_n innovation platform announced the winners of the special crowdfunding prize awarded at this year's CeBIT. As of today, the Berlin-based startups Changers.com and carzapp have the opportunity to acquire up to €250,000 in venture capital. The starting gun for the crowdfunding activities was ceremoniously fired at CeBIT today. Until May 5, private investors have the chance to invest in the young companies via seedmatch.de. Investments starting at €250 are welcome. Both companies will present their business ideas in Hall 16 within the scope of CODE\_n at CeBIT through Saturday, March 9.**

Once a young company has been founded, it needs one thing above all else: money. There are many ways for startups to get their hands on it. A relatively new way to do this is through crowdfunding. The idea: Instead of fewer, larger investors, many individual people can invest small amounts of money to generate a large investment sum. This allows everyone to participate in supporting innovative business models and profit from the young companies. At the same time, startups are given access to a platform that allows them to gather venture capital in the very early stages of their company's growth.

Seedmatch is Germany's first and most dynamic crowdfunding platform for startups. As a partner to CODE\_n, Seedmatch has awarded a special prize to two CODE\_n participants for the first time ever. "We see two highly innovative companies in Changers.com and carzapp. They are ideally suited

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to crowdfunding,” explains managing director, Jens-Uwe Sauer. “We are certain that both companies will quickly exceed the funding threshold of €50,000,” says Sauer. In total, they are looking at a possible venture capital sum of up to €250,000.

The crowdfunding for both startups was initiated with a special award ceremony at CeBIT held today (March 6). For 60 days, private investors will have the opportunity to invest in the two companies online. “Access to financing options in the early days after a startup has been founded has a significant impact,” explains Ulrich Dietz, initiator of CODE\_n and CEO of GFT Technologies AG. “We are so pleased that we could help two of our finalists gain access to such lucrative funding options through CODE\_n.”

Private carsharing through carzapp and social energy through Changers.com

Berlin-based carzapp was already a finalist at last year’s CODE\_n contest. The company has developed a solution to private carsharing which allows all car owners to rent out their vehicles when they aren’t being used. What makes carzapp so special? Access to the car is granted through a smartphone app – there is no need to meet for a face-to-face key handover. “In addition to the financial aspect of the crowdfunding, we are hoping to attract larger numbers of potential carzapp users through the crowd, as well as extend the scope of viral marketing. We’d love to share our success with our users,” explains carzapp’s founder and CEO, Oliver Lünstedt.

The platform Changers.com, developed by the company BlackSquared and also based in Berlin, runs the first marketplace for private carbon offsetting in the USA and Europe. The main idea: Everyone can generate and store their

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own energy using portable devices. These measure the energy production and, thus, the CO2 savings, and feed this data directly into the online community. Users earn credits that can be exchanged for prizes. Changers.com makes tracking energy usage child's play while raising awareness among users. "The idea behind crowdfunding fits perfectly to our approach – to a certain extent, we are providing crowd energy," says Markus Schulz, founder of Blacksquared. "Everyone does their small part to reduce carbon emissions, but this starts to take on a whole new dimension through the larger community, which can spark a rethinking of our behavior in society as a whole."

#### **About CODE\_n:**

CODE\_n is an international platform for digital pioneers, innovators and groundbreaking startups. Initiated in 2011 by GFT Technologies, it was established with the aim of promoting excellent talents and their unique business ideas, networking young entrepreneurs and stimulating innovation in this vigorous setting. That's why CODE\_n stands for "Code of the New," the DNA of innovation.

Ernst & Young and the Deutsche Messe are proud business partners. CODE\_n will bestow the CODE\_n Award in 2013 for the second year running. This year, it will take place under the motto: "Smart Solutions for Global Challenges" The competition is looking for IT-based initiatives for sustainable energy supply and use .

Further information is available online: [www.code-n.org](http://www.code-n.org).

#### **About GFT:**

As a strategic technology partner based in Germany, the GFT Group helps companies optimize their business processes by providing intelligent IT solutions and highly skilled specialists. GFT is one of the world's leading IT solution suppliers for the finance sector.

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Under the motto “inspiring IT”, GFT enables financial institutes to quickly and securely utilize modern technologies. GFT combines established technological experience with comprehensive industry expertise in order to develop, implement and maintain customized IT solutions.

With its subsidiary emagine, the GFT Group enables companies in selected growth sectors to quickly and flexibly staff their technology projects. emagine combines comprehensive business understanding with established technological know-how. Moreover, emagine has an international network of highly qualified IT and engineering specialists.

For over 25 years, the GFT Group has stood for technological expertise, innovative strength and outstanding quality. Founded in 1987 by its current CEO, Ulrich Dietz, GFT achieved consolidated revenue of around EUR 272 million in 2011. The GFT Group is represented in seven countries by its 22 local facilities. A global team of over 1,300 employees and 1,300 external consultants implement complex IT projects across various countries. The GFT share is listed on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (Prime Standard: WKN 580 060).

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