

About Netzwerk|nordbayern

netzwerk|nordbayern acts in its core activities as service provider and networking forum for business entrepreneurs and growth companies in Northern Bavaria. The goal of the organization is to create an effective networking platform and to provide, at no charge, a comprehensive range of services designed to promote the growth of companies.

In the areas of business planning, financing and training, netzwerk|nordbayern offers a number of valuable support services in the form of seminars, coaching, financing and, not least, assistance in building up useful contacts. An important part of this is the Northern Bavarian Business Plan Competition (BPWN), which has been organized by the network for ten years as a “compact learning tool” for entrepreneurs and founders of new businesses. All services are free of charge: "No equity, no fee" is one of the key principles of the network, which is financed by a public-private partnership, and is an excellent example of regional business development. netzwerk|nordbayern is supported by the the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Transport and Technology, as well as by a number of private business sponsors.

In addition to the activities in Northern Bavaria, netzwerk|nordbayern has been developing consulting activities for other regions in setting up Business Plan competitions and other measures to enhance entrepreneurship. Projects include the Business Plan competition in Saxony and the Business Plan competition in Lithuania. Another project for the “Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH” (an international agency for sustainable technical development) in Mongolia has started in early 2005.

Northern Bavaria

Northern Bavaria is regarded one of the most important economic regions in Europe, having 5.2 million inhabitants, almost 100,000 students, and 140,000 companies. By offering support and encouragement to new business start-ups, Northern Bavaria is both responding to the challenges posed by structural change, at the same time as keeping up in the worldwide technological race. Northern Bavaria includes cities such as Nürnberg, Erlangen, Regensburg, and Würzburg.

Results of the netzwerk|nordbayern activities

Of the 1299 teams which participated in the first nine years of the Northern Bavarian Business Plan Competition, 412 started up a new business and are still alive. By 2006, the combined revenues of these companies reached € 254m, employing 2,613 people. Over € 108 million venture and business angel capital has been invested in 94 single deals with the help of netzwerk|nordbayern up to now.

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Northern Bavarian Business Plan Competition – The learning program

Growing companies... strategic planning, business founding, financing, growth; these are keywords in the Northern Bavarian Business Plan Competition (BPWN), which has been held annually since 1999. It is targeted at both new entrepreneurs as well as established businesses. The drive behind their participation can be the start-up of a new company, the expansion of an existing one, or the handover to new management of an existing family-owned business. BPWN offers support in writing a suitable business plan, which is then at regular intervals evaluated by a jury of senior entrepreneurs, bankers, consultants, etc. The competition is organized in three phases, with the entry conditions for each phase becoming progressively more demanding.

Participants can benefit from the intense training program and individual coaching with regard to their specific business concepts. In addition, they are encouraged to make use of the netzwerk|nordbayern platform which has numerous events and networking opportunities, thus providing ample opportunity to build up contacts with other entrepreneurs, banks, venture capitalists, consultants, or other regional institutions.

Business Angel netzwerk|nordbayern - Money for rapid-growth companies

Originally formed as a pure Business Angel Network, the Business Angel netzwerk|nordbayern has grown to become a financing body for growth-oriented businesses. Within the netzwerk|nordbayern, the Business Angel netzwerk|nordbayern is the first port of call for SMEs and business start-ups seeking financial support. The primary goal is to facilitate financing for innovative entrepreneurs in the region through a combination of private and public investors; the work includes both the guidance of entrepreneurs through the financing process as well as the matching with suitable financing partners. The netzwerk|nordbayern acts as an independent and neutral agent, charging no fee, commission or other remuneration, e.g. shares. There are currently approximately 70 Business Angels, 97 venture capitalist organizations and public investors listed. The Business Angel netzwerk|nordbayern has been active in the board of EBAN (European Business Angels Network) since 2001 and as a member of BAND (Business Angels Netzwerk Deutschland) since 2003.

Training in netzwerk|nordbayern – Knowledge transforms the idea into a success!

In addition to support in the areas of planning, financing and networking, netzwerk|nordbayern offers a comprehensive training program. This is targeted primarily at company founders, entrepreneurs and other

decision-makers with ambitions to growth their companies. The content has been focused on four thematic areas:

- > Marketing and sales
- > Business planning and management
- > Financing

The training sessions offer a combination of business theory and praxis-oriented knowledge. Some of the trainings have been structured to reflect the three-phase concept of the Northern Bavarian Business Plan Competition (BPWN).

Global Collaboration – Successful knowledge transfer helps to be one jump ahead

In 2002/2003, netzwerk|nordbayern was helping the local organization team of the “Sächsische Aufbau Bank” to establish the first regional, business plan competition covering all industries in the German state of Saxony. The competition, called “futuresax” (www.futuresax.de), was a big success from the start, and has developed to one of the largest regional competitions in Germany since then. The concept employed is very similar to the Business Plan competition in Northern Bavaria.

Till July 2005 netzwerk|nordbayern helped to establish the first business plan competition in Lithuania, which was at that same time the very first activity of this nature in one of the new EU member states. The competition, called “Verslo plano turnyras” (www.versloturnyras.lt), is mainly organized by four regional technology parks, the effort is headed by North Town technology park in the city of Vilnius. The concept follows the Northern Bavarian model in principle, but has been adapted to cope with a shorter timeframe and specific regional situations.

In 2006/2007, netzwerk|nordbayern has entered, on behalf of the German GTZ, in a co-operation with the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce & Industry to build up in Mongolia a comprehensive network (MEN – Mongolian Entrepreneurship Network) to initiate and give sustained support, chiefly by means of intensive learning and coaching programmes, to the formation of future oriented Mongolian enterprises, and to accelerate the growth of those already in existence. The enterprises were accompanied intensively during the process of founding and growth and co-operation between the participants in the network – the entrepreneurs, the founders, the investors, the universities, institutions etc. was initiated.

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