
Start upschool makes first growth stock

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lunedì 18 giugno 2012, 00:00

Update: giovedì 21 giugno 2012, 11:01



Niels Vinck

Ten nervous starters Friday presented their business at least 300 investors and mentors during Rock Start Demoday.

Tight pitches and hard results form the basis for a dance of seduction between the participants of the start-upschool and potential lenders.

It's D-day for tech starters Wercker, Video Avatars, Fits Book, Postcron, Nexi, Idea Dock, Peerby, Imgzine, Owlín and Djukeit. After almost one hundred days knucklebones in the pressure cooker entrepreneurs, the mid-term review in Undercurrent in Amsterdam North.

Where one still is developing, the other is ready for expansion abroad. "The past few weeks have been racing meters made," says mentor Sebastiaan van Hooft.

No sleep

Over three months ago launched entrepreneurs Kneppers Oscar (45), James Digby (28) and Don Ritzen (28) Rock Start. The first batch is now halfway through the program, which Demoday be summarized as: no sleep, lots of fast food and no time for friends.

Instead, start-ups, social and commercial vetted by mentors. The next time they will have to pick out all the stops for new customers and funding. It starts in the Netherlands, but a final trip to Silicon Valley in September there must also contribute.

Crates of apples and power drinks of wheatgrass despite results that Demoday in pale faces. Nevertheless no lack of positive energy, both among the participants in the room. "Think big and do not give up," is the message of Kneppers.

Investment

And that the founders of Argentine Postcron already completed an investment of € 100,000. Investment Vidoze gives the application, which helps people to generate followers on Facebook, a financial injection.

Vidoze investor Ian Zein Postcron coached at Rock-start. In recent months the number of customers knew Postcron thereby doubling to 600, thus the turnover grew to \$ 6,000 per month.

The company focuses on the Latin American market. "In six months, the number of Facebook users in Brazil grew by 16 million," says Postcron-founder Alejandro Rigatuso. At present, the company has enough money to be able to go forward.

Expansion

Publisher Platform Imgzine shows on Demoday to know to be ready for expansion abroad. "We want to go to Germany and the UK, but also to the U.S. and Brazil, says co-founder Bert Cook. "We certainly need € 2 million." The company develops a publishing platform for tablets that must compete with well-known media applications such as Flipboard, Zite and Pulse, which are used on the iPad.

Initially hesitant about participating in the founding Rock Start and specifying an interest of 8%. Imgzine had customers and could well be on their own. "However, participation is absolutely worth it," says Cook. "We were looking for a clear definition of our service, and with the help of the accelerator is successful."

In recent months are also new customers, including Rabobank, Adformatie, De Persgroep and MtMediagroep. With a ballooned network running the start-up breakeven.

Choose

Although Stefano Cutello, founder of Past Book, coming from Milan, he wants nothing more than to expand its business in Amsterdam. "I think this is a great city," he says. Through its medium, users of social media past their digital collection.

He sold his car and motorcycle and put on Demoday his Italian holiday in sales.

"Investors may choose," says Cutello, who wants to collect € 350,000.

"Whether you buy my house or invest in my business." Without marketing budget was Adjusts Facebook in recent months 11,000 new users to process.

The presentation of the Italian is conspicuous by its humor and a huge book with photos of someone chronological Facebook past. Investors thus literally see what they get. "I've seen a lot of pitches," says angel Marc van der Heijden. "You see that a lot has been trained."

Although there is considerable 'dated' between companies and investors, most 'signatures' still take some time. The coming period is to determine whether the presentations also lead to cash.