



# nexus

EXPLORE ... FOCUS ... INSIGHT ... CONNECT

APRIL 2018



## OBSERVING THE WORLD INNOVATING FOR TOMORROW

**Four destinations – four different approaches on how companies have tackled the challenges of a globalizing world. All four delegations have witnessed the creation of new technologies and got insights into how innovation is key in striving for a bright fu-ture for any nation. Here are the stories of Insight China, Focus India, connectUS, exploreASEAN on what they learnt and experienced during their onsite trip in 2018.**

### CHINA – THE NEW MECCA FOR INNOVATION

In today's world, business has changed to the point where technology and innovation cannot be avoided. Everything is in one way or another connected and shows a technological idea behind it. Payments are done electronically. Communication occurs over devices. And even driving has come to a point where human skills are no longer needed.

Living without the internet or a smartphone has become quite unimaginable; staying connected a basic need.

In this year's project, Insight China had the chance to experience the advanced technological influence in China by visiting many high-tech leading firms such as Lenovo, Huawei and Tencent, most of them are located in Shenzhen, the new "Silicon Valley" of China. With Tencent, Insight China experienced the huge

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hype of WeChat, originally similar to WhatsApp, WeChat's functionality is today much more than just a simple messaging app and is increasingly becoming a major player in the industry of social media. It is used for various purposes on a daily basis across whole China, be it for cashless payments, transportation, online shopping, geo-location sharing or simply messaging and staying connected with friends. An app which revolutionized itself and allows all users to go out of house with nothing but a simple smartphone.

Insight China was also introduced to the newest 5G Network by Huawei (learn more on page 10). An in-depth interconnectedness as well as more data publication are the consequences. HDI Videos can be watched within seconds, businesses gain more efficiency and private households in rural areas obtain the same high speed connection as in the urban centres.

China is stepping forward and demontsrtaing outstanding speed regarding technological and economic development. What has been a future vision in the past, has now become reality. And it seems, that we are just at the start of our technological era! NL



Tencent Tower in Shenzhen. Photo: JH

**INNOVATION IN THE SILICON VALLEY**

Innovation is everywhere we go. In the contemporary global world, the importance of creating and improving ideas is constantly increasing. But what is the meaning of innovation? Not only new products and devices but also ongoing adaption to changes and reforming methods.

Silicon Valley is one place where innovation and technology develop at an outstanding rate. In addition, this place is the paradise for start-ups. Opportunities and possibilities seem to be limitless. The area is vast and rich and gives start-ups a platform to find investors and raise significant funding. The connectUS team had the chance to visit Adobe, Renault and the Swisscom Outpost.

Adobe, best known for Photoshop and Acrobat Reader has 15'000 employees of which 40% work in San Jose. The building and its facilities encourage creativity and enable self-realization. Furthermore, employees receive incentives for turning an idea into reality. Diverse offices and conference rooms are stylish designed to bring employees to new ideas or to help them overcome mental blocks. The company expects high commitment from its employees.



The connectUS delegation visiting Adobe. Photo: Adobe employee

The Swisscom Outpost was established in 1998 and provides opportunities to empower new digital services to the market. The spirit of innovation and new technologies in this area was noticeable and we understood even better why organisations such as Swisscom Outpost take the opportunity to act out new ideas in the Valley.



Infront of the Swisscom Outpost building. Photo: MH

The connectUS delegation also visited Renault, one of the largest car manufacturers in Europe. Renault is dedicated to driving innovation, imagining the car of the future, and shaping sustainable mobility. Renault's main focuses are on autonomous and assisted driving, zero-emission vehicles, and connected cars. In a shared facility with Nissan, the Renault Innovation Lab houses an advanced research center specializing in connected services, autonomous driving, and new businesses in mobility and advanced user experience. Renault aims to learn from and actively contribute to the Silicon Valley start-up ecosystem by launching several partnerships with start-ups, universities, and labs each year. MH

## INDIA - THE WORLD'S FASTEST GROWING TECH HUB

India might have been known as a low-cost software developing nation, but this image is in urgent need of an update: The world's fastest-growing large economy is a place where visions of the technological future are already being turned into reality, where a rising start-up generation is leapfrogging for international market lead, and where passion and abundant talent are strong enough to overcome any barriers. Being home to an array of fast-growing million cities, India is tackling urbanization challenges with a comprehensive smart city initiative. And the global business community is responding by moving innovation development to India strengthening tech hubs such as Bangalore or Pune (read about Bosch India on page 6).

In these same cities, the Focus India delegation was able to witness large-scale innovation management at the innovation hub of Accenture (page 7), learned how technological innovations can help overcome social challenges (page 8), and understood how India can make the difference in the success of global companies. As Laszlo Posset, Managing Director of T-Systems ICT India Pvt. Ltd., stated: Companies initially came to India for low-cost labour – but they stay because of the high quality. NK



Focus India delegates visiting a Sulzer plant in Pune.  
Photo: NK



The Focus India delegation experiencing innovation at Accenture.  
Photo: NK

## TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

Technological advancement in South East Asia is moving faster and progressing further than many would believe. While many commentators have in the past focused on deficits in technology, education or living standards, exploreASEAN 2018, focusing on Technopreneurship, saw numerous examples of innovative companies leveraging technology to create new businesses.



Michael Schnyder, Stefan Sarbach with exploreASEAN Project Team, PR Team and Lecturers. Photo: exploreASEAN delegate

Go-Jek, an Indonesia company, focusing on providing various services including online payment processing, all available through a mobile application, has made this point clear. The company hires freelancers, who are willing to pick up for example food deliveries or buying groceries for the customer. Go-Jek enables many people to increase their income and raise the general standard of living. An example of an entrepreneur having a great idea and using technology to its advantage.

Swiss organizations can benefit from the technological advancement in Asia as much as local companies. As Stefan Sarbach, Director Business Development & Partner of Zühlke Singapore, said: "More and more innovations come and go to the ASEAN region and if you want to be global, you need a location within South East Asia." Furthermore, he mentioned that Zühlke's added value is the Swiss quality. Summing up, combining Swiss quality with ASEAN's technological advancement results in great innovations. JT



Stefan Sarbach, Director Business Development & Partner Zühlke Singapore. Photo: JT

# CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

## Insight China



This year, Insight China had the opportunity to fully immerse itself into China's history and culture. From traditional sights to international cultural exchanges, this year's programme was filled with highlights. The onsite seminar reached a high point when climbing up the Great Wall of China, one of the seven wonders of the world. The delegation was luckily blessed with beautiful weather and had a wonderful day marching on the ancient series of walls and fortifications, a truly Chinese cultural icon. Not only learning about China's history, but also fostering the international exchange between Swiss and Chinese students was a superb highlight. As matter of fact, Insight China had the chance to visit two universities, the TSNU and Shenzhen Technology University. The delegation was warmly welcomed by their students and staff and enjoyed a rich and varied programme filled with a lot of interesting insights about China as a country, its culture, and values and traditions. The Insight China delegation appreciates having gained such valuable experiences and returning home with newly made friendships and shared in-depth cultural knowledge. NL

## connectUS connectUS

„Try all different kinds of food when you go to Mexico.“ That was the most frequently mentioned recommendation which the connectUS delegation got prior to the departure to Guadalajara. For the first dinner in Mexico, the cab driver suggested going to La Chata, a well-known restaurant next to Hotel Morales. The friendly waiter gave some advice on the menu as well as their wide range of beers and Tequila. It was a great time eating local food, chatting with the staff, and enjoying some exquisite drinks. The next day the delegation had a joint dinner at El Mexicano, which - as the name already suggests - serves local dishes, accompanied by Mexican live music. A big shout-out to Simon Renevey for organizing this event. During a food tour on day 4, the delegation still discovered some new delicious dishes even though a lot of different food have been tried while staying in Guadalajara. Later that day, the whole delegation was spontaneously invited by an Intel Director to his birthday party. In short, the food was great and the people very warm and open-hearted which made the stay in Mexico an unforgettable experience. MG

## Focus India



India is a country of diversity, and so is the Indian culture – colorful, loud and silent, lush and modest. Seeing the Taj Mahal, one of the new seven wonders of the world, which took everyone's breath away, surely was a cultural highlight. The delegation also had the chance to immerse themselves in the Indian culture while getting Henna paintings, a Yoga lesson, and first steps in Bollywood dancing, an afternoon which resulted in much joy and nimble moves. Beyond these activities, the students were able to witness the ecosystem of Dharavi, the largest slum in Asia. An impressive experience which eliminated stereotypes, but also made everyone reflect upon the present living conditions in India. Special bonds were tied with primary school students at the Good Shepherd school in Bangalore, where Dalit children (also referred to as the untouchable caste) are given special chances through affordable education. NK

## exploreASEAN exploreASEAN



In Hanoi, the exploreASEAN delegation not only had the opportunity to see the Vietnamese culture but also taste it. Each Vietnamese dish has its distinctive flavour. Common ingredients include fish sauce, soy sauce, rice, fresh herbs, fruits and vegetables. Traditional Vietnamese cooking is greatly admired for its fresh ingredients, minimal use of dairy and oil as well as reliance on herbs and vegetables. Hence, it is not surprising that Vietnamese food is considered one of the healthiest cuisines worldwide.

At the training restaurant KOTO the delegates enjoyed an interesting cooking class, where they have been taught three different traditional Vietnamese dishes. KOTO is not just a regular restaurant but an organisation with purpose – the training model of KOTO enables at-risk and disadvantaged youth to set foot into the gastronomy with significant positions. Through our KOTO experience, one can truly say the delegation had the chance to experience the Vietnamese culture from another perspective. JT

# CULTURAL IMPRESSIONS



The eA delegates are taking cooking classes at KOTO in HCMC. Photo: JT



IC Delegation at the Great Wall of China. Photo: JH



The delegates are preparing traditional Vietnamese dishes. Photo: JT



Ice-Breaking activities at TNSU. Photo: JH



Daniele and Samira during the Good Shepherd School visit. Photo: NK



Delegates in traditional Indian dress in front of the iconic Taj Mahal. Photo: NK



Wall Street Walk Tour. Photo: MH



Views from the Empire State Building in New York. Photo: MH



Food Tour in Guadalajara. Photo: MH

# SMART CITIES – MORE THAN A BUZZWORD AT BOSCH INDIA



The Focus India delegation in front of the RBE Institute. Photo: NK

**In Bangalore, the centre of India's high-tech industry, the Focus India delegation visited Bosch India, a day which left a lasting impression. From smart cities and machine learning to industry 4.0, Bosch provided insights in various exciting fields. The theory could even be observed in action: a highly-automated production site fascinated both experienced engineering students and the delegates new to the field.**

When infrastructure paired with technology is used to increase the operational efficiency of a city, by making best use of information, improved services can increase the wellbeing of the citizens. Bosch India turns smart city visions into reality by concentrating on the following areas in their innovative field of smart cities: Traffic management, Transport management systems, Parking management and Citizen Safety & Security. Implemented actions include the installations of traffic violation devices and air pollution monitoring.

The Focus India delegation had the opportunity to learn about technological topics on 2 April 2018, when they were invited to the RBE Institute (Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions) in Bangalore. Various presentations by prestigious Bosch experts also endeavoured questions about machine learning, artificial intelligence and industry 4.0. On the same day, the delegation was able to visit a Bosch plant, where mainly fuel injection systems are produced – in a highly automated way.

Delegate Sacha Benz, stated: "I have not seen such a holistic Industry 4.0 approach within any factory I have ever visited!"

Bosch has been present in India for more than 90 years, and enjoys high brand awareness due to the gradual acquisition of the famous MICO group (Motor Industry Corp.). The company employs around 30'000 employees in India with an outstanding average tenure of 15+ years and attractive possibilities for their employees, such as local vocational training. Thank you for a inspiring, educational day Bosch India, it truly illustrated a wonderful example of how this years' topic "think DIGITALLY. act SMART. succeed GLOBALLY" can be applied. NK



Visiting a plant of Bosch outside of Bangalore. Photo: NK



**Shama Baldi,**  
Research Assistant at New trends and Innovation competence center

Enriching, Inspiring, Memorable! Wow, It has been amazing to travel India with interdisciplinary delegates. Being such a diverse country, every day was a new learning and the curiosity delegates had in knowing more was eye-opening. There was so much to learn and share with each of them. The most beautiful part was that we could witness both 'Rich' and 'Poor' sectors of Indian economy. Kudos to the project management team for their efforts.

Portrait. Photo: DW

# ACCENTURE'S INNOVATION ARCHITECTURE

The Focus India delegation had the privilege to visit Accenture's latest Innovation Hub in Bangalore. Accenture allows its visitors to perceive emerging industry trends, as well as to experience the latest technologies. This is made possible thanks to the 4000+ committed employees, driving innovation and in many cases collaborating with the clients on the premise.

During a session with HR Manager Neeraj Trehon, the Focus India group learned how Accenture India, receiving 300'000 applications and welcoming 20'000 new hires yearly, is placing itself as an employer of choice in the competitive recruiting environment in India. The delegation was then introduced to Accenture's innovation architecture. Their mission statement is: making future real today. To achieve this goal, Accenture divided its innovation architecture into six pillars: Accenture Research, Accenture Ventures, Accenture Labs, Accenture Studios, Accenture Innovation Centers and Accenture Delivery Centers (see graphic).

## Accenture Labs

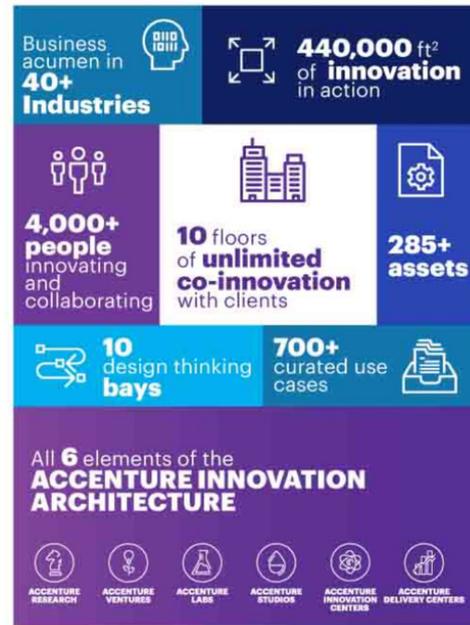
The delegation was ready and eager to experience the future behind the doors of the Accenture Labs, which offered hands-on experiences on many innovations: one of them was pepper the robot, which is a humanoid robot given the ability to recognize human emotions. Whilst walking, some delegates were stopped by another moving humanoid robot, remote-controlled by a person that is visible and hearable on the robot's screen. Speaking about the future, this robot might replace journalists in area of conflicts.

Besides these fascinating innovations, the delegation had an insight into a recent project in farming, which applies IoT technology. The aim of "precision farming" is to facilitate the work of farmers and to increase their efficiency. Smart connected devices, e.g. drones, and sensors enable various analysis on mobile applications, monitoring the location or health status of cows, their quality of milk, and so forth.



Presenting a precision farming initiative in the "IoT-Valley". Photo: NK

## ACCENTURE INNOVATION HUB IN BENGALURU



Source: <https://newsroom.accenture.com/news/accenture-opens-groundbreaking-innovation-hub-in-bengaluru.htm>

## Accenture Studio

Accenture attaches importance to user experience (UX) design, which is focusing on analyzing customer journeys and providing solutions and innovations through design thinking.

The delegation met one of Accenture's UX design teams, consisting of twelve employees with different working background, including managers, psychologists, engineers and designers. Wearing different hats when creating a new product allows the team to not only focus on the functionality, but also on the design, the usability, and the behavior of the end users – always putting the customer first.

Thank you Accenture, for enabling the Focus India delegation to experience technological innovations in the making and ensuring this visit was a highlight of this year's onsite seminar. IS



The Focus India delegation at the Accenture Innovation Hub in Bangalore. Photo: DW

## SWISSNEX – A PLATFORM FOR START-UPS



Focus India at Swissnex Bangalore. Photo from Swissnex

On 4 April, the Focus India Delegation had the privilege to spend the afternoon at swissnex in Bangalore. CEO and General Consul of swissnex, Sebastian Hug, gave a warm welcome and elaborated on how swissnex connects Switzerland and India in the fields of education, research and innovation.

India's challenges in education, medical facilities and finance can mean significant opportunities for the locally thriving startup scene (as well as for Swiss innovative companies). Thanks to the swissnex network joining the dots, the Focus India delegation was able to witness several innovative startup pitches:

**“The swissnex network connects the dots and enables start-ups to expand”**

Dr. S.C.G. Kiruba Daniel from JKN Nanosolutions, introduced us to his startup operating in cleantech. Their slogan “Innovate to save earth” reflects their business model well. In India, up to 80'000 people per day die because of polluted water supply. JKN Nanosolutions developed a product based on nanotechnology, for rapid and complete treatment of waste water and textile effluent. Their product is not only affordable, but capable to clean waste water or even sludge within 30-60 seconds.

Arun Agarwal, founder of JANITRI made us aware of how important it is to know the lives, sorrows and challenges of the population for whom your startup creates a solution. He visited uncountable hospitals to understand the needs of women, new-borns and nurses in the rural areas of India. His startup managed to provide solutions such as an intelligent labour monitoring tool, to improve maternal- and child health. Their vision is to achieve a state where no mother or new-born dies

during pregnancy period, birth and post-delivery until the age of five.

The final presentation on this enriching afternoon was held by Simon Schmidli, Head of Marketing and Strategic Alliances at ProcessBee Technologies. Shortly after graduating, the former business student at the University of Fribourg got the chance to work for an Indian startup. He introduced us to the EdTech startup ProcessBee, developing learning games which simulate a business environment. Students cannot only apply their knowledge in a real-time atmosphere, but also acquire new skills and knowhow.

The afternoon at swissnex gave the delegation excellent and highly enriching insights. It was inspiring to see the passion and dedication the speakers put into their ideas and how their startups are already contributing to an even brighter future for India. AS



Simon Schmidli, Head of Marketing and Strategic Alliances at ProcessBee Technologies. Photo: DW

# COMPANY VISITS



Delegates at Sandmaster in Jakarta. Photo: JT



A great interactive visit at Joint Partner Blaser Swisslube in Delhi. Photo: NK



An amazing company visit at silver partner Jakob in HCMC. Photo: JT



Delegates at Lenovo in Beijing. Photo: JH



At the Swisscom Outpost in San Francisco. Photo: TR



ConnectUS at Intel in Guadalajara. Photo: Intel employee



Robot Pepper with Delegates. Photo: NK



Focus India delegates at T-Systems in Pune. Photo: NK

# HUAWEI – CHINA’S TELECOMMUNICATION GIANT



Huawei Headquarters in Shenzhen. Photo: JH

Grown up from modest beginnings in Shenzhen in 1987, Huawei began as a manufacturer of telephone systems. Cultivated by the city’s burgeoning electronics industry, Huawei would become one of the world leaders in telecommunications networks by 2012, despite a ban by the US government and its consequences. The Chinese electronics provider has become a globally renowned brand and a serious competitor for Apple and Samsung. With a market share of more than 10 percent, Huawei is now the third largest smartphone brand in the world. Europe in particular is receptive to Huawei, where the company is growing exemplary by offering improved products and a new brand image.

## Will 5G be made in China?

In today’s world, more information becomes digitalized, and public and private sectors are experiencing an enormous change. This shift leads to an expeditious development of mobile broadband (MBB) and Internet of Things (IoT). By 2025 the prediction is that there will be 100 billion connections around the world, not only between people but also between organizations and things. This new extent of interconnectedness arises new needs for communication networks.

China’s telecommunications giant Huawei, which has intensified its cooperation with major telecommunications operators in

Europe and Asia, is on its way to taking “a frontrunner position” to lead the global race for the next generation of 5G networks.

## Huawei’s Lead in 5G Race

To provide this interconnectedness between the whole world, Huawei is working on the development of the 5G network. Improved versatile broadband, as an early application, will thereby empower quick advancement of 5G systems. With its tremendous innovation enhancements, the 5G system will turn into a system stage that will quicken new industry applications.

The fifth generation mobile network is due to be launched in 2020. The idea of 5G is to be able to network everything in the world. Not only people with their smartphones, but also things. For example, when vending machines automatically ask the delivery service for supplies, or when moisture sensors on the trees in the city forest automatically start the irrigation system. 5G should also be involved in road traffic and connect moving cars with smart traffic signs. With the help of intelligent networking concepts, 5G should make it possible to establish new service concepts and production methods on a large scale. JH



## Terry Inglese

What really impressed me about the Huawei Company visit is the fast development of different typologies of social applications available through the cell phone. For example, in the framework of “Smart, City, Smart Life and Smart Industry” the company provides tools that bring the internet to rural areas of China and is offering applications especially designed for finding missing animals which might have been lost while grazing through the fields. “Connected cows are cash cows” is the motto, because if the animal is lost, you lose your income.

Portrait. Photo: NL

# EMPOWERING YOUNG TALENTS TO DEVELOP THE WORLD



Delegates with SZTU students. Photo: JH

The Shenzhen Technology University (SZTU), which is located in the Pingshan District of Shenzhen, has been founded with strong financial support and favourable policies from the Shenzhen Municipal Government. They are planning to expand their campus area to about 150 hectares.

Not only in Shenzhen, but in China in general, there is an urgent demand from the advanced manufacturing industry. The SZTU intends to produce talents such as senior engineers and designers. Furthermore, the SZTU strives to be an open and innovative university with global outlook, while still having Chinese characteristics. To achieve this, the SZTU operates in cooperation with industries and research institutions around the world. Up to now, the SZTU established relationships with Universities of Applied Sciences such as FHNW in Switzerland and FHNS in Germany.

## Switzerland as role model for China?

By gaining knowledge from experienced universities in connected sciences and innovation, SZTU will execute an advanced apprenticeship framework in instructing. It depends on upgrading the limit of designing, practice and advancement.

SZTU will investigate another instruction method of connected sciences by joining endeavours amongst ventures and universities, amongst generation and educating and furthermore amongst training and learning. SZTU is furthermore planning to become an application oriented university following the Swiss example such as FHNW.

Insight China had the great opportunity to visit the SZTU and spend a whole afternoon at the campus with its students. During a Campus Tour the delegation had a great insight into the daily activities of the SZTU students, by visiting their own brewery, library and laboratory. It is impressive what this university has to offer and how developed they are in their education. JH



Visiting SZTU. Photo: NL



Campus Tour at SZTU. Photos: NL



The design diagram of SZTU. Photo: JH

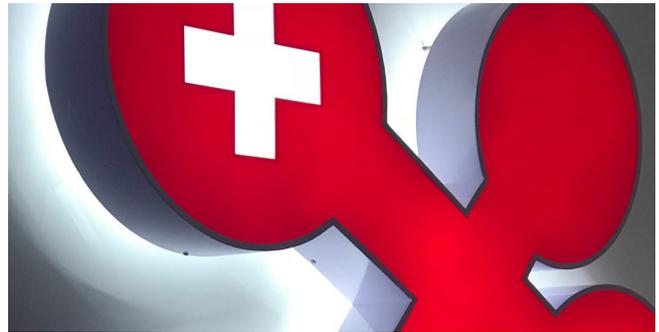
# YOUNG SWISS IN CHINA - SWISSNEX

The vast and rapid growth of China in the fields of Science and Technology make it a country worth thinking of doing business there. Swiss firms need to take China's competitiveness into consideration and be an active market participant. Swissnex hereby acts as a central role in fostering the presence of swiss firms in the Chinese industry.

Swissnex connects the dots between Switzerland and China in science, education, art and innovation. They share their offices, host out-of-the-box events, connect thought leaders and offer a global perspective and local expertise. The core values of the swissnex network are connecting, advising, promoting and inspiring.

## MORE AND MORE STUDENTS FROM SWITZERLAND

Today, the number of students who want to study or work in China is increasing significantly. In order to enhance the experience, one must be ready and well-informed about the country, its customs and the educational possibilities it proposes. Therefore, swissnex becomes an important contact. They assist Swiss students and interns in China by regrouping all relevant information, about studying, working and living in China in one place for them.



swissnex China in Shanghai. Photo: NL



Dr. Felix Moesner, CEO, MBA, swissnex China in Shanghai. Photo: JH

# FANCY SOME FREY CHOCOLATE ON THE BUND – M-INDUSTRY

Over the last few years, China's e-commerce has developed significantly. As the country's purchasing power grows, the Chinese population increasingly appreciate safe and high-quality products. This is one of the main reasons why M-Industry has entered the online business in China. The company sells its products in partnership with the Chinese e-commerce platform NetEase Kaola under the name "Orange Garten". Thanks to M-Industry's high Swiss production standards, the company is optimally positioned to meet the demands and needs of the Chinese population.



Patrick Glauser, Head of Operations & Business Development China - M-Industry. Photo: JH

To learn more about M-Industry and its business in China, one important stop at the onsite trip was dedicated to M-Industry in Shanghai. Through Mr. Patrick Glauser, Head of Operations and Business Development in China, the delegation gained great insight into M-Industry's customer-oriented, high-performing and innovative business.

M-Industry belongs to the Migros Group and produces over 20,000 high-quality food and non-food products. The focus lies in quality and reliability. By now, M-Industry has eight foreign businesses outside of Switzerland and exports its Swiss products by now in around 50 countries.

## ENTERING THE MARKET IN CHINA: A HURDLE TO SUCCESS

For doing business in China, M-Industry has to overcome some hurdles from time to time. Due to constantly changing regulations and trends, it is not always easy to cooperate in China. Therefore, M-Industry responds to local requirements and produces solutions in an optimum amount of time. Thanks to its local presence, M-Industry is able to identify market requirements and trends at an early stage and develop concepts and innovations. JH

# A SWISS COMPANY MANUFACTURING IN VIETNAM – JAKOB ROPE SYSTEM



exploreASEAN delegates listening to Ralf Schneider, COO of Jakob Rope Systems. Photo: JT

## Reasons for choosing Vietnam

**It is a fast-changing, highly competitive and innovative environment. New technologies are introduced so often that it is almost difficult to keep track. Entrepreneurs and their organizations have to focus on their technological advancement in order to stay competitive.**

However, for Jakob Rope Systems, a manufacturer of stainless steel ropes and products in the area of rope and hoisting technology and silver partner of exploreASEAN, the technological advancement alone was not good enough anymore. The company needed more in order to keep their competitive advantage. In Switzerland, they faced one major challenge - very high production costs. As a result, Jakob Rope Systems chose to move their main production of webnets to Vietnam.

Currently, Jakob Rope Systems plans to enhance productivity and strengthen their Swiss value. Therefore, they are investing into a second, bigger manufacturing plant in order to achieve their objectives.

The decision to open a manufacturing plant in this particular country derived from various factors. Despite a few drawbacks, such as fast-changing regulations and a relatively high inflation rate, the country is politically stable. Furthermore, labour costs in Vietnam are much lower than in Switzerland, which allows the company to have lower overhead costs. It is important to note though, that Jakob Rope Systems is very concerned for its employees hence, the organization offers them health insurance as well as pension funds, two rare employee benefits in Vietnam.

Moreover, Rolf Schneider, COO and project manager, pointed out that Vietnamese are very skilled regarding handwork. All the threading is done by hand, and hardly any machines are used during the manufacturing process. Finally, the country offers abundant material for production, although Jakob Rope Systems imports still the most material from Switzerland.

Visiting the company overseas has been very fascinating. Not only did we get in-depth business insights but also were we able to see how different a manufacturing plant overseas can look like. VA



exploreASEAN delegates visiting the production plant of Jakob Rope Systems. Photo: JT

# BEHIND THE SCENES OF NHA BE TEXTILE COMPANY



ExploreASEAN delegates at Nha Be Textile Company in HCMC. Photo: JT

**With Nha Be textile company (NBC) the delegates of exploreASEAN had the special chance to experience how clothes are made - from a piece of fabric to the finished suit. This day gave us not just interesting insights into the clothing industry but also changed the perspective on future shopping behaviour.**



Finished coats by NBC. Photo: JT

Since NBC's great strength is building strong relationships with its customers, the company is almost unrivalled. NBC has experienced an enormous growth within their industry, consisting of 37 business units and a workforce of over 25'000 people. Through their expansion of their local brands and their investment into the new project of building a lingerie factory of Victoria's Secret, NBC continuously strengthens its competitive advantage.

The delegation has not anticipated that NBC is the producer of such a vast number of famous brands. ZARA, Calvin Klein, Michael Kors as well as H&M are just a few well-known brand names that NBC works with.

Since they serve customers with many different demands in terms of quality, their work is based on individual agreements and implementations with each of these customers. With responsibility, comes control. NBC prioritises Free on Board shipping (FOB) terms which are cost effective for the corporation and minimises risk of in-transit losses.

Nha Be textile company works together with well-known designers and brings the latest fashion trends to Vietnam. However, a major challenge in this industry is to establish a "Made in Vietnam" brand image on a long-term basis. This problem affects also NBC as their local brand makes up for only 5% of all produced clothing. JT



Factory worker at NBC. Photo: JT

# VISITING ITB ENGAGING WITH FELLOW STUDENTS

The delegation enhanced their cross-cultural experience with Indonesian students. The program which was organized by Andika Pratama, International Office Director, was optimal to share knowledge on differences in Switzerland and Indonesia in regards to education, customs as well as food.

In the initial session of the program our famous Swiss modesty has been quickly outshined by the Indonesian openness. From differences in traditions of marriage to the simplicity of obtaining a driving licenses, a vivid discussion arose between the Indonesian and the Swiss students. We were able to present the findings of this valuable exchange to each other and could profit from new cross-cultural insights.

Especially the strong sense of belonging in Indonesian families was astonishing for the delegates and proofed the disparities between the individualistic and collectivistic context of the Swiss and Indonesian culture. Whereas in Switzerland it is cherished to be unique and stand out from the crowd, the Indonesian base important life decision in harmony with their social environment.

Quoting Qinthara Nataadiningrat, an ITB student:

**“It can be clearly seen that the Swiss are very on time, well organized, and follow the regulation of the country, while in Indonesia this is completely different.”**

We have also learnt that within the Indonesian education system it is common to pursue the bachelor degree right after high school. “Most students are around 18 years old when they start university. Also, most of us do not work while pursuing our degree”, Kintan Salsabilla pointed out. “We just focus on our education.” All in all, the experience of this day represented perfectly our vision - building bridges for young talents. JT



exploreASEAN delegate, Irem Aylakdurmaz, with ITB students Qinthara Nataadiningrat and Muhammad Alfajri Photo: JT



Exchanging cultural experiences with ITB students Photo: ITB student



Andika Pratama, International Office Director at ITB. Photo: JT



## Alexandra Yankam-Feller

Exploring 3 countries in the ASEAN region during our 17-day visit was an inspiring experience. The program was thoughtfully put together: a great mixture of company visits, exchanges with universities and students, cultural events and sightseeing activities. I believe the most valuable experiences, however, lay in the intercultural challenges, in our developing as a group of dynamic individuals, and in getting to “taste” all our differences and similarities outside of our comfort zones called home. A big thank you to the organizing team and all participants for a truly unique and unforgettable journey!

Portrait. Photo: JT

# Project Team Review

## Insight China



Photo: NL

### Thomas Loser

A year ago, I hesitated with handing in my application as project team member. Honestly, I have never looked back since. The past 2.5 weeks in China were more than I was ever hoping for. All the hard work and dedication yielded an almost immeasurable return. I firmly believe that every single member of our delegation has returned as a more complete person. I will profit from this experience on many occasions and forever cherish the memories of this time.

## Focus India



Photo: DW

### Amanda Strub

I am very thankful for having had the opportunity to plan and lead the onsite seminar. To provide the delegation with an authentic and broad insight into this incredibly diverse and huge country, their way of doing business, and the Indian culture, was my aim. Seeing how even the most critical delegates opened up to the Indian culture, interacted with locals, and showed incredible interest in the country and the way they do business, was one of the many highlights of the onsite seminar.

## connectUS



Photo: MH

### Adrian Kaufmann

To apply for the project team for one of the international students projects was one of my best decisions during my studies at FHNW. As the project was organized from students for students, we were able to apply the theory we learned in various lectures in practice. It helped me to understand, what is needed for a successful execution of the project and that every single detail is important to have a happy delegation. If I encountered any problems on my way, I always could ask the other members of the project team. Together we were able to overcome all challenges.

## exploreASEAN



Photo: JT

### Kaltrina Buqa

exploreASEAN 2018 was an extraordinary and unforgettable experience. Together with my colleagues we managed to organise an insightful trip and created many memories together with our amazing delegation. It was far more than just the trip itself, it was a journey of surprises, emotions and learnings. We had the chance to explore foreign cultures, receive insights into innovative companies and get in touch with officials. Being part of the management team allowed me to learn how to problem-solve with confidence, stretch out my comfort zone and transform a simple idea into a wonderful organised seminar.

# GOOGLE – TIME TO GET CREATIVE



Group picture at Google. Photo: Google employee

**The delegation of connectUS had the opportunity to experience how it feels like to work for Google as they ran through a Google Sprint during the workshop at the offices of Google New York.**

On Wednesday morning, 11 April 2018, connectUS visited the offices of Google New York. Being warmly welcomed by the host for the day, Erik Troberg, the delegation's day began with a rich breakfast offered by Google. After everybody serving themselves, Erik started his presentation about Google Sprints, where he further explained what phases a Google Sprint contains, what tasks to fulfill within each phase and best practices to do so. The presentation was meant to be the theoretical basis for connectUS' workshop where they actually would run through such a Google Sprint in a shorter version.

As soon as Erik finished the presentation the delegation was able to directly apply the learned theory because the workshop started immediately with the first phase – „Understand“. Beforehand, a written case has been distributed and with it several personas that described the problems of the case from different points of view. For those different personas people created sticky notes with attempts of rephrasing those problems in order to understand each persona. Within the phase „Decide“, delegates decided in a democratic manner on what problems, or in this case sticky notes, to focus on.



Workshop at Google. Photo: TR

Afterwards the phase „Iterate“ followed where people sketched their first drafts of possible solutions in a game called „crazy 8's“. In this short game the delegates sketched 8 different solutions on one A4 sheet within 8 minutes. On the basis of those sketches a further developed draft has then been established. Having finished this more elaborated draft, the phase „Test“ began where certain „Testers“ received a first insight into the possible solution. Of course this phase is meant to gather data about what to improve or even change within the draft. Jumping right into the next phase „Prototype“, in which the gained data from testing the solution has been implemented into the draft what then makes it a prototype that can be shown to higher audiences such as for example the board of directors.

After the tremendously interactive workshop, Erik took connectUS on a tour in the Google building of New York. He showed several levels of the building with wisely picked insights into the infrastructure of Google New York. One of them was one of their conference rooms which are equipped the same all over the world in order to make people feel like they are sitting in the same room during a videochat conference. At the end of the tour a nice group picture has been taken and it was time to say goodbye. Under the bottom line this visit has been one of the greatest for connectUS and the interactivity has been highly appreciated by all delegates. TR



Brainstorming at Google. Photo: TR

# DOCUSIGN – INNOVATION IN A SENSITIVE MARKET



Learning about digital contract. Photo: TR/MH

**Switzerland seems to be reluctant to innovations in the sector of electronic signatures and smart contracts. The more interesting it was for connectUS to learn more, at DocuSign in San Francisco, about what would be possible in this sector and how far developed it is within the United States.**

In an interesting presentation Bryan Fong, Senior Product Marketing Manager at DocuSign, introduced DocuSign as a company and its products in further detail. DocuSign is changing how business gets done by empowering more than 250,000 companies and 100 million users in 188 countries to sign, send and manage documents anytime, anywhere, and on any device. DocuSign replaces printing, faxing, scanning and overnighting documents with the easiest, fastest, most trusted way to make every approval and decision digital.

Furthermore, as the presentation was held in an open and interactive manner, topics like the implementation of DocuSign's products in Switzerland have been discussed. Switzerland is known for its conservativeness when it comes to contracts. Think about contracts of employment or assurance contracts with various pages and various steps of approval and one can see that the Swiss love to sign documents by hand. But

do people in Switzerland really love to sign everything by hand? Of course documents that need to be signed usually are of a more sensitive nature in terms of containing payment or health information or in general, personal data. But still a respectable amount of people ask themselves why it is not possible to directly sign a contract or a new assurance policy on ones phone. This may be a matter of laws and regulations in Switzerland which need to be reformed in order to allow a company like DocuSign to launch their product as well as make it legally binding. Nevertheless, DocuSign is simplifying and speeding up the whole process of signing, sending and receiving a document by digitalizing it. Now just imagine that your application to a certain job just has been accepted, would it not be great to directly sign the new contract on your phone or tablet? Yes it would! And within the United States this is already possible with the product of DocuSign. Even major assurances and banks in the United States accept the mentioned digital signature.

In the end, Switzerland needs to make a move towards digital innovation and start reforming laws and regulations because digitalization will come no matter how prepared one is for it. TR



At DocuSign. Photo: DocuSign employee

# CONNECTUS VISITS A NEW DESTINATION



Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education in Guadalajara. Photo: MH

## Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM), Guadalajara

One of the biggest topics was about “driving innovation”. The connectUS delegation was amazed when arriving at the university in Guadalajara - a huge complex surrounded by green fields, tennis courts, cafes, sports facilities, and art spaces. It was obvious that the university wants to support the students being innovative, unique and creative. The students are offered space to brainstorm and implement their ideas. Some classrooms were differently furnished and revolutionize old teaching methods. The campus was founded in 1991 and is evolving constantly to meet student’s needs. The design of its facilities is based on the newest technological developments helping the university build a reputation an image for high



Group picture on the Campus in Guadalajara. Photo: ITESM employee

quality academic programs and buildings. Dr. César Cárden’s evocative presentation emphasised the importance of promoting students and offering them appropriate possibilities to fully unfold their potential. The delegation was absolutely astonished at the generosity of companies in Guadalajara, who are investing in these universities and supporting the students and therefore invest in the future.

Dr. César Cárden’ was interested in the education system in Switzerland. So, Simon Meier and Adrian Kaufmann introduced the dual education system and explained the possibilities for students in Switzerland. Nevertheless, the delegation agreed, that they have never seen before a university which offers such an opportunity for practicing innovation and technology such as in the ITESM. The campus was founded in 1991 and is evolving constantly to meet student’s needs. The design of its facilities is based on the newest technological developments. The university built up an image for high quality concerning their academic programs and buildings. MH



Introduction of the ITESM Campus. Photo: MH



## Sarah-Louise Richter and Janina Berga, Accompanying Lectures of ConnectUS

“We found it invaluable to see the contrasting cultures of USA and Mexico, which in turn allowed us to view Switzerland from a different perspective. It was also great to experience that innovation as such is not necessarily a “flash of genius” but rather something that can be fostered purposefully using various methods.”

Sarah-Louise Richter and Janina Berga. Photo: unknow

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