

My Piece of XING



Name: Sönke Martens

Position: Senior Manager Corporate Development

What's the name of your Piece of XING? Corporate Development

Who's in your team? Johannes Haus and Martin Hügli. Johannes is one of the "early adopters", having and adopted XING as employer a long time ago. He was deeply involved in shaping PremiumWorld and the Job Marketplace and likes analyzing business models in just a few seconds. Martin just found his way to us and is a strategic mastermind we just couldn't let go after his internship. I arrived here in the team over a year ago.

What do you produce and how do you measure it? Besides a lot of PowerPoint slides we also try to provide some real value. We are responsible for the company's concepts, projects and structure necessary to access new revenue sources. We serve the Executive Management by dealing with the following questions: How do we make money (business model)? What corporate structure will be necessary (M&A, co-operation, development)? This includes initiating long term strategic initiatives, short-term projects, and co-operations of all forms. There is a set of business goals with clear KPI we contribute to, not forgetting AMHS (average member happiness scoring), etc.

Who do you support and how do you know you're keeping them happy? We deal to a great extent with external partners. Besides trying to keep up values such as openness, hanseatic business ethics and reliability, we also know that nothing works without some humor - life is too serious as it is! Internally we basically support our Executive Board and often help out with ad-hoc initiatives that need to be taken care of.

What are you most proud of in your piece of XING? The team spirit, the smart and fresh colleagues and the fact we have a lot of fun even after office hours, e.g. over one or more cold caipirinhas in the bar next door.

What is the best thing you have done so far in 2007? I installed the Quick Launcher for XING Mobile.

I most like to start my day in the office by ... boiling water, filling the calabaza and preparing a nice mate tea. Then there is a 20 min reading session to see what is going on in the internet world - and it's a lot!

My desk wouldn't be complete without ... a thermos flask, yerba mate, notebook, a 2nd screen, an impressive pile of paper and all this covered with a considerable dust layer (d'oh, I need to clean up again).

I most like spending my lunch breaks ... Ponti, Opera, Blockhouse, Cha Cha - it's all just across the plaza. We have a nice corporate lunch culture, so you are mostly booked out for some days in advance. Sometimes I see old friends in Hamburg or hang out at the beautiful Alster lake.

I value those moments during the working day when ... a new employee is introduced and you think: a) gosh, we are still growing like hell, great!, b) another nationality we haven't had before, cool! and c) now it's really a lot of people and a lot of names here, so what was yours again?

My team is particularly special because ... we are a melting pot for Swiss, Rhineland and Frisian culture, so we can all speak German in a way the rest of the team won't understand. My team mates told me that "special" is a polite form for crazy or weird in Switzerland. Yes, we are sometimes special.