### Global Reach, Local Presence

**Promoting entrepreneurship**

**Large network through partnerships and associations**
Credit Suisse maintains sustainable partnerships, for example with Switzerland Global Enterprise, startups.ch, and the Swiss Venture Club (SVC).

**A reliable partner**
Over 1.6 million private clients, 100,000 corporate clients in Switzerland. Clients benefit from international presence, comprehensive expertise, and strong anchoring in the home market.

**A focus on client needs**
Over 2,000 advisors and approx. 180 branches across Switzerland.
- Mission: Listening, anticipating, providing information, and creating opportunities.
- Local presence fosters close relationships with clients.

**An essential contribution to the Swiss economy**
11,000 suppliers and around 17,000 employees in Switzerland.
- Cooperation with numerous SMEs as suppliers.
- Orders to suppliers in the amount of CHF 2.0 billion.
Entrepreneur DNA as the Code to Success

The code to success is hiding in the DNA of entrepreneurs, and it leads to long-lasting connections, as well as trust and advancement. It also offers two partners the optimum conditions for traveling a private and entrepreneurial path together. Different life stages often demand new opportunities – whether professional or private. As a bank for entrepreneurs, we understand your financial questions and needs with regard to establishing and securing your private and business assets. Because our entrepreneurial DNA also drives us to always find the best solutions and answers for the success of our clients.
Credit Suisse – the bank for entrepreneurs
This is how we can help you and your company
“We are very happy that Credit Suisse is supporting us and helping us to achieve our dreams of making history in Switzerland as a software company.”

Manuel Grenacher, founder and CEO, CoreSystems AG

You can find out more about Manuel Grenacher in the video portrait: credit-suisse.com/entrepreneur
FoxTown –
A Quick Decision

Silvio Tarchini, owner of the Tarchini Group, is best known as the founder of factory outlet center FoxTown in Lugano-Mendrisio. A profile of the active entrepreneur.

Silvio Tarchini was 21 years old when he took over his late grandfather’s timber construction company. Just doing the same thing for the rest of his life, however, wasn’t really his thing. He wanted to see and learn new things. So he left his business to a managing director for a time, and worked for similar companies in the UK and Germany, and then in Milan at a plastics company. “In 1967, I came back to Ticino. I was 23 years old and I recognized a gap in the Swiss market in the area of PVC packaging films,” Tarchini remembers. He used his inheritance to buy a plastics processing company, and founded a new business called Plastar. That same year, Tarchini became a client of Credit Suisse. In 1975, then at the age of 31, Tarchini already owned a 5,000-square-meter factory. Yet again, he began yearning to discover new horizons. He sold his company and went traveling with his wife, open to new inspiration. Buenos Aires held a special fascination for him, because he recognized its potential for commercial real estate. So he moved to Argentina with his family. He had a large office building constructed, with the plan to turn around and sell it three years later. Tarchini explains: “Inflation was around 170 percent, and that was too big a risk for me to continue doing business there. We were lucky.” Enriched by new experiences and back in Lugano, he determined that his homeland was not an attractive region for industrial enterprises because there were no suitable warehousing or manufacturing facilities. He wanted to change that. The first thing Tarchini did was construct an industrial building in Mezzovico, and he soon had a respectable real estate portfolio at his command. In September 1994, he was reading an Italian newspaper and came across an article about factory outlets. He recalls: “The idea took hold of me instantly.” He began to familiarize himself with the topic, speaking with experts, traveling to the UK and the US, and conducting market and feasibility studies. “Three months later, my mind was made up: I would open a factory outlet center in Ticino,” says Tarchini. Giacomo von Wyl, his client advisor of four years at Credit Suisse, notes, “This systematic process is typical for him: When he has a new idea, first he considers everything very thoroughly to minimize risk, and brings in experts. My task is to go over everything again with our internal specialists and call his attention to any additional opportunities and risks.” Silvio Tarchini greatly appreciates this approach: “I need a bank for discussions at the level of equal partners.” Luckily, Credit Suisse functions just as fast as he does, which is essential: “As an entrepreneur, you have to act fast on your ideas, I’m convinced of this.”
“Clients that come to us can expect a peaceful and relaxing experience”

How do you lead a mountain tourism company successfully into the future? Mélanie Eppenberger, Chair of the Board of Directors at Toggenburg Bergbahnen, talks about sector-specific risk factors and about what makes Credit Suisse the ideal financial partner.

Toggenburg Bergbahnen can look back on a period of prolific investments. Without a doubt, the core investment was the opening of the summit restaurant designed by star architects Herzog & de Meuron at the top of the Chäserrugg mountain in 2015. What considerations are behind these new investments?

Mélanie Eppenberger (ME): We invest primarily in projects that counteract the weather dependency of our business and that improve the quality of the experience in the particular region. In addition to the mountaintop building, Herzog & de Meuron also built the three stations for a new cable car, which provides a second access route to Chäserrugg in winter.

The summit restaurant is poised atop the mountain like a giant wooden barn. It is a marvelous sight to behold. What is it that you would like to express with this architecture?

ME: The building is very much in keeping with its surroundings: lots of light and space, yet full of sheltered alcoves. With the simple, natural-finish woodwork, we are deliberately imitating the style of traditional farmhouses and barns in the Toggenburg region. In comparison to other winter sports resorts, the wonderful Toggenburg landscape has remained largely untouched up until now and thrives on the firmly rooted people who live here and their traditions. We focus on the qualities of the region to provide a type of tourism that is in harmony with local culture and nature. Clients that come to us can expect a peaceful and relaxing experience. The architecture of the mountaintop building encompasses all these messages.

Although the new summit restaurant acts as a magnet with international reach, the mountain railway business is a rather risky endeavor. What appeals to you about it?

ME: From a business perspective, it fascinates me to take visions and make them economically successful in reality. I find it extremely gratifying to put a team together and experience the moment when people suddenly understand the vision and get involved with it. Sector-specific factors are certainly an added challenge. It is a task that requires patience, powers of persuasion, and assertiveness.

What would you say are your personal strengths?

ME: As Chair of the Board of Directors, I am responsible for long-term strategies and visions for Toggenburg Bergbahnen. I would say that my strengths include analyzing markets, drawing conclusions from these analyses, and developing appropriate strategies. And I can be very tenacious. Once a decision is made, I see it through.

Credit Suisse is now the house bank of Toggenburg Bergbahnen. How did this partnership come about?

ME: Relationship manager Marc Hintermeister from Credit Suisse contacted us by phone after reading local reports about our projects. This sparked a meeting, which gradually developed into our first collaboration.

What do you expect from a bank like Credit Suisse, which positions itself as a bank for entrepreneurs?

ME: I expect it to demonstrate an understanding for creative visions and to be able to present appropriate solutions quickly and efficiently – even when it comes to complex projects.

There were other banks in the running for the financing of the mountaintop building and the Stöfeli rail-
way. Why did you decide on Credit Suisse?
ME: Right from the beginning, it was an eye-level partnership with a reciprocal degree of professionalism. We put forward a detailed, 400-page business plan, from which the Credit Suisse relationship managers came to all the right conclusions. Credit Suisse is also able to provide us with everything from a single source. We have access to the specialists relevant in the corresponding areas, be it payment transactions, financing, or equities. Credit Suisse was the most successful bank at identifying our needs and won us over by coming up with an attractive overall financing plan within a very short time.

Would you outline these needs in detail?
ME: They include an in-depth knowledge of the industry encompassing the sector-specific risk factors: winter, weather, and currency. Mountain railways require large-scale investments that have a long economic life and a specific set of financial ratios due to the seasonal and weather-dependent fluctuations. These ratios include a sector-specific debt-to-equity ratio. There needs to be an understanding of this and it must be incorporated into the analysis. Because the Credit Suisse relationship managers understood the business so well, they were able to provide us with some very exciting solutions. Some of which took us by surprise.

What did you find most surprising?
ME: The leasing recommendation for the railway was interesting for us. We found it to be highly attractive. In our business plan, we had set our sights on third-party financing through private investors – a traditional approach.

What advantages does leasing give you as opposed to third-party financing?
ME: Leasing provides us with 100-percent financing over a very long term: the ideal setting for a large-scale investment such as a mountain railway. In contrast to third-party financing, with leasing neither the investors nor the conditions or interest rates change. This provides security and stability.

Were there other sector-specific challenges that required a creative solution?
ME: The financial requirements of a mountain railway are not the same in winter as they are in summer and can also vary from month to month within the same season. Credit Suisse’s versatility was also evident in terms of financing current assets. This flexible approach allows us to effectively offset seasonal fluctuations in turnover that are inherent in our industry.

How did the bank’s efficiency manifest itself in terms of the overall financing plan?
ME: It was evident not only in the individual products and services themselves, but also in the resulting mix. We noticed that the individual products were always derived from the perspective of the overall solution.

How important is a long-term partnership with the bank for your company?
ME: A long-term partnership is of paramount importance, given the seasonal nature of our business. The long-term approach is most evident when it comes to the leasing contract. Large-scale investments like a new railway require time to bear fruit in economic terms. It is here that we need a partner like Credit Suisse, who sits in the same boat with us and rows in the same direction.

How important are the relationship managers in this respect?
ME: They are the spearheads of the bank, the ones who do the business and establish trust. In our opinion, mountain railway expert Christian Sutter and leasing specialist Marc Hintermeister form a competent and well-coordinated advisory team. In addition to their high level of specialist expertise and their in-depth understanding of our industry, we were also impressed by their constant availability, whether in the evenings or incognito on our ski slopes. We also appreciate the fact that they respond very quickly to new input from our side.

Credit Suisse offers its clients a strong network. Have you already benefited from this?
ME: We have high hopes for this. That, thanks to its strong national and international presence, Credit Suisse can become an attractive partner in the marketing and communications sphere. Our approach has turned Chäserrugg into an extraordinary and one-of-a-kind tourist destination.
ADVICE

Making a clean sweep – this is the perfect metaphor to describe Borer Chemie AG. This family firm in Zuchwil offers innovative cleaning and disinfection solutions, and managed an almost seamless handover to the second generation.

“\text{If it’s right for the family, it’s right for the company, my father used to say. I never understood what he meant by that before, but now I know,” Markus Borer says in his calm and collected manner. The middle of three sons took over management in 2010 and is a majority shareholder in the company that was founded by his father, Anton Borer, in 1965. No one could have foreseen, back then, that the one-man operation would become a prosperous business with 80 employees, sales partners on every continent, and a subsidiary in China. As is often the case in founding a company, happenstance also played a major role for the Borer family.}"

\textbf{It All Started in a Hair Salon}

What seemed like a simple dinner with a business partner 50 years ago ended with Anton Borer flying to Brussels the next day and returning two days later with a license for a revolutionary cleaning formula. He founded the company PMC (Products for Medicine and Chemistry) in a former hair salon in Solothurn. Since he still owned an electronics company at that time, he hired a qualified managing director to run PMC and get the company established. After that managing director passed away unexpectedly, Anton Borer decided to take over management himself in 1978. “As someone who did not specialize in chemistry, I had to learn the material as quickly as possible,” the ambitious entrepreneur remembers, and adds with a laugh, “I stole my son Carlo’s chemistry books, who was in secondary school at the time, and picked up the necessary technical knowledge through independent study.” He was successful. The deconex® product line, which is currently being further developed in the in-house laboratory, is a testament to the ingenuity of the company founder. Successful tinkering is one reason why Borer Chemie AG is active today in three completely different sectors. At first the company primarily served the chemical industry, providing products for cleaning laboratory glass, but after receiving requests from the watch industry based in western Switzerland, the company quickly expanded its focus to include the industrial sector. At the same time, increased activity in hospitals led to the formation of the Medical division. After the turn of the century, the pharmaceutical sector was also added as part of the Life Sciences division.
The Apple Falls When It’s Ripe

Company founders usually start from scratch. They are often creative, self-taught individuals who drive the company forward with a lot of enthusiasm and charisma. It is therefore difficult for them to let go of their “baby” at some point. Anton Borer officially retired in 2005 at the age of 70. Since then, he has kept one foot in the company as Chairman of the Board of Directors. “The succession management of a family business cannot be underestimated. It is not an easy process for either party,” says Markus Borer, speaking from personal experience. When his father offered him the position of managing director in 2005, he turned it down after careful consideration. “I was 38 years old at the time and I didn’t feel ready to take on that responsibility. Furthermore, I loved the industrial sector and wanted to remain head of that division.”

Looking back, it was the right decision for Markus Borer: “It would have really burned me out to take over the company at that time.” Interim management by an external managing director also gave him the opportunity to observe and experience a different management style. His father never put pressure on him, for which Markus Borer is still thankful. But he still had to learn how to deal with the pressure to perform and, in particular, with his own high standards, because he felt the need to prove himself. He admits outright that there were moments in the past when he would have liked to switch roles with his father and create something of his own. “Having the freedom to decide was a major factor in the successful handover. However, it was also important for me to learn the business from the bottom up and for my entire family, including my two brothers and especially my wife, to support me,” he says.

Strong Partnership

Credit Suisse is also an important partner. It has been Borer Chemie AG’s company bank for 35 years and has always supported the company with valuable incentives. For example, Markus Borer learned about the complex process of succession management at a seminar at Bocken. “You should expect it to take 15 years on average. That stuck with me,” he remembers. The company’s trust in the bank has always remained strong, even in tough times such as the global financial crisis of 2009. Markus Borer especially appreciates the outstanding service provided by the client advisors: “They are grounded people, just like me. They understand their area and don’t impose.” This also includes honest consultation on a level playing field. “We wanted to finance the succession management process with our own funds. Credit Suisse has supported our aspirations for autonomy from the start.” What about current challenges such as the increasing pressure of regulation or the value of the Swiss franc? “Legal limitations result in a lot of administrative work, additional positions, and restrictions on the freedom of action,” notes Markus Borer. These new requirements pose challenges, but also offer a chance to grow. The value of the Swiss franc, naturally, has a major impact on a company with an 80 percent export share. The company copes with this by offering innovative products and process solutions that are tailored to the needs of the client and by implementing strategic measures such as developing its direct business model in Switzerland. However, loyal employees who stand by the company and the boss in tough times are essential.

A Good Sense of Humor

The second generation has been at the helm of Borer Chemie AG for five years now. With virtues such as appreciation, respect, loyalty, reliability, and transparency, Markus Borer is leading his father’s lifework into the future, while always remaining open to critical questions from employees, his brothers, and his father. This remarkable family always brings along a good sense of humor. When the company founder stated a bit sullenly at the end of the interview, “Nothing at this company belongs to me anymore, not even the chair I am sitting on,” his son calmly responds, “But now you can afford it.” Both burst into laughter. One thing is clear: The Borers have good chemistry – in every sense.

Client advisory service of Credit Suisse. The Credit Suisse advisors will assist you in establishing and securing company and private assets. The collaboration between corporate and private client advisors is optimally coordinated. For example, for all financial matters, the client has access to a contact person who can call upon the internal specialists where necessary. In this way, the client is supported by consultants whose actions are based upon a comprehensive and long-term perspective and who offer solutions that are tailored to the overall financial situation.
“What is expected of banks is changing. Today, I need a bank for growth, financing, developing businesses, and gaining expertise.”

Jean Claude Bregy, CEO, poenia holding ag
Company Exchange for SMEs

Referral platforms exist not only for private relationships, but also for companies. With OpportunityNet, Credit Suisse manages one of the largest databases of its kind in Switzerland.

Up until his 60th birthday, Hermann Schneider* had kept putting off the question of who would succeed him at the company’s helm: “I had secretly hoped that one of my two daughters might express interest,” he says. It was his bank advisor who eventually presented the facts clearly and opened his eyes: He needed to act. But how would he find a suitable buyer without shouting his intent to sell from the rooftops? Schneider’s client advisor directed him to Paul Monn, who is responsible for the OpportunityNet platform at Credit Suisse, a referral platform for companies. It brings together potential buyers and sellers of companies, and also links investors to growing companies with financing needs. “My job is, initially, about collecting data and really getting to know the company,” explains Paul Monn. An anonymized profile is created, which is intended for the Credit Suisse advisors of potential buyers. Only Credit Suisse employees can access the anonymized data, which includes economic sector, turnover, number of employees, profits, and if necessary, the asking price and the region. OpportunityNet was created in 2007 as a service for Credit Suisse clients. It facilitates up to 20 matches a year, with a financing or investment volume of over 100 million Swiss francs, and the numbers are growing. “Just one suitable candidate was suggested to me through OpportunityNet, but he fit to a T,” says Hermann Schneider, summarizing his experience. Without this match, his workplaces in Switzerland would have probably been lost, as is often the case when no suitable successor is available. But Hermann Schneider had things turn out the way he wanted them to: The former owner retained part of his shares, and he assumed a limited advisory role in his former company. Now he is looking for a new investment opportunity – through OpportunityNet, of course.

* Name changed by the editor.
Mergers & Acquisitions for SMEs

If the successor for the company does not come from your own family, it can be difficult to search for a suitable buyer single-handedly. As the leading Swiss bank for M&A, Credit Suisse mediates and assists buyers and sellers.

The baby boomer generation is reaching retirement age – for an above-average number of established Swiss SMEs this means that a successor must be found in the coming years. “The timing could hardly be better for it – we are currently in a seller’s market.”

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“Selling a company is like a journey”

A year ago, Thomas W. Jung sold his company with 120 employees. The way the process went exceeded his expectations and led to surprising findings.

You sold your company a year ago. Why?
Thomas Jung (TJ): My wife made a statement a few years ago that got the ball rolling for me. She said: “Our three children have a right to their own life.” From that moment on, I started looking out for a partner who would fulfill the necessary requirements to help me with a sale.

Why did you decide on Credit Suisse?
TJ: The company I sold produces in Switzerland 100 percent for export and is world market-leading in its fields. It therefore made sense to look for a buyer worldwide. As a global organization, Credit Suisse could offer me a network that really covers all continents. And so, despite initial skepticism, I came to Credit Suisse. But then I felt very well advised and looked after right from the start.

What had made you skeptical?
TJ: Acutronic is a typical SME with 120 employees. An SME and a major bank, that didn’t always go together for me – even though Acutronic had already been a Credit Suisse client for a long time and relied on its international banking. But I mistakenly believed that in the case of succession, Credit Suisse was a bank for groups of companies, and that as an SME I had to be looked after by a smaller bank.

But you have overcome that preconception now?
TJ: Yes, I have changed my mind. Credit Suisse knows its way around the SME area and has the corresponding network. It really is a bank for every size of business. The entire collaboration worked out perfectly, in no small part thanks to Heinz Hasler.

A few years ago he had been introduced to me at an event, and from then on I received his newsletter on a regular basis. I observed him and his sales stories and that is how I gained my trust.

What was your experience of the M&A process?
TJ: For me, it was like a journey or like reading a book with its chapters. You venture into uncharted territory, form new impressions, come across places that are very different from how you had imagined them, experience things that you hadn’t expected. Credit Suisse mediated and accompanied me step by step.

Your company stayed with selling to a family firm. The buyer is a Frenchman who lives in Switzerland. How important was careful buyer selection to you?
TJ: Extremely important. A decision like this is made not only with your wallet, but also with your heart. I am not one to take a devil-may-care approach. I sit on the Board of Directors, and so remain involved with the company and the buyer.

Entrepreneur Thomas W. Jung, Member of the Board of Directors and former CEO of Acutronic

Mid Market Investment Banking: M&A for SMEs

As the leading Swiss bank in the field of M&A, over the last five years Credit Suisse has seen through over 130 M&A transactions with a total value of around 265 billion Swiss francs. Small- and medium-sized companies are looked after by the specialized Mid Market Investment Banking department within M&A.
Entrepreneurs & Executives Desk

Yusuf Savmaz, private client advisor, and David Helfenstein, corporate client advisor, look after their clients in tandem. What makes this idea so successful?

The Entrepreneurs & Executives Desk (E&E Desk) is an interesting offer for clients. What is so special about it?

David Helfenstein (DH): An entrepreneur generally has a corporate client advisor and a private client advisor. But in most companies, private and corporate assets are closely connected. It therefore makes sense to advise him not from two separate spheres, but to reflect his reality in the advice as well.

Yusuf Savmaz (YS): Together, David Helfenstein and I can meet the client on an equal footing, because we can cover a huge range of topics that really interest the client.

What topics really interest the client?

YS: The buy-in and buy-out of shareholders, going concern, but also employee participation plans, asset structuring, optimum value transfer into private assets, and taxes are always very important topics.

Couldn’t you also advise on these topics individually? What exactly is the advantage of joint advice?

DH: An entrepreneur whose company is experiencing growth will for example not be interested in investing in investments. He will invest in his business. And by appearing together, we are signaling that we have understood it would not make sense to speak about private investment strategies without also looking at the company side.

YS: The advantage of this is that we can quickly and competently show solution approaches while we are in the meeting, concerning either his private or business assets. We are aware that many entrepreneurs do not have much liquidity, as it is mostly in the company. At the E&E Desk we also focus on these illiquid assets.

How do you go about that? And is that even of interest to a bank?

DH: It is definitely of interest; we think in the long-term. The way we act depends on where the client currently stands in the business life-cycle. A start-up will not yet have any interest in investment solutions, whereas advice on tax development can already be very useful.

YS: We can make our wide network available to a start-up for raising capital. The big picture becomes increasingly important, at the latest when profits are generated. This involves questions like: How high should the dividends be that are paid out, how high should wages be, what should employee benefits insurance look like, and how do these factors affect taxes?

What are currently the most important topics from your daily working life?

YS: A subject that companies are currently very preoccupied with is the Swiss Corporate Tax Reform III. This involves questions such as: How do I best set myself up as an entrepreneur? How will my tax situation change? We are following the political developments very closely and researching the best solutions for our clients.

Networkin is another important subject for entrepreneurs. What do you offer?

DH: Our entrepreneur lunches are very popular, as are the events of our partner Switzerland Global Enterprise, which deal with specialist subjects such as expansion into Asia. Of course we always attend them ourselves, because the events are a good opportunity to get to know entrepreneurs and to strengthen relationships.

Your aim is to offer solutions for entrepreneurs and you claim to understand the entrepreneur. Is that plausible? After all, you yourselves are not entrepreneurs, are you?

DH: One has to understand what the burning issues are for the entrepreneur. I find it easy to put myself in the position of the entrepreneur. My father was an entrepreneur; I grew up in an SME environment.

YS: As a student, when I built up a company myself, I learned what is important to an entrepreneur: For example, the feeling when a bank stands by you, and when the first investor pays money. This entrepreneurial spirit is what inspires and drives unique companies forwards.

The Entrepreneurs & Executives Desk of Credit Suisse

The success story of the Entrepreneurs & Executives Desk was expanded with additional advisors and specialists at existing locations, and new locations at Lake Zurich, in the Zürcher Unterland and Oberland, as well as in Delémont, Fribourg, Neuchâtel, Solothurn, Sion, and Lugano. In total there are now 17 Entrepreneurs & Executives Desks in Switzerland with considerably more advisors who are available to the clients.
Guidance for Small Businesses

If you want to turn an idea for a business into a reality, you start out with a lot of questions. Two internet platforms can help you get your bearings: Business Easy from Credit Suisse and startups.ch.

With the decision to start a business, many questions arise: How should the business model look, what should the company be called, and does it need to be registered? Who is involved, where is the start-up capital coming from, and what about taxes? The Business Easy platform answers precisely these questions, and provides banking services in a modular system with the Business Easy Package. After all, anyone who starts a company also needs a bank. And although the needs of new or smaller companies vary greatly, they all have one request in common: for banking products to be clear and simple. The Business Easy Package meets this need perfectly and adapts to changes and new circumstances for a company on an ongoing basis. At its core, it comprises the most important banking services that a business needs: a corporate account, flat-rate payment transactions, Maestro cards and credit cards, as well as Online & Mobile Banking. The supplementary Business Easy options are based on the varying needs of the client. A company that handles international transactions might need the Forex option; one that needs to settle large supplier invoices before money has been received from customers can expand the basic package with the Factoring option. Beyond these, each entrepreneur in Switzerland has a personal advisor.

Partnership with startups.ch

Like the Business Easy platform, the startups.ch incorporation portal answers a number of questions on the topic of starting a company and provides a wealth of information. With partners like Credit Suisse, it also serves as a less expensive way to directly start your business online, with the partners covering part or even all of the startup costs. It’s no coincidence that a large company like Credit Suisse concerns itself with even the smallest of small and medium-sized enterprises – these small companies are actually quite large, and make up about 90 percent of all Swiss companies. And it’s not unusual for a banking relationship to be as old as the company itself.

Regional Events

Thanks to its social engagement and numerous partnerships, Credit Suisse is able to provide an extremely broad-based network. For instance, Credit Suisse invites its clients to over 1,400 events throughout Switzerland each year. These important networking platforms include specialist gatherings, sponsorships, and social events.

The focus of our specialist events is the transfer of knowledge and discussion among the participants. They are gathering places for entrepreneurs, business celebrities, scientists, and politicians. The specific topics selected for social events such as entrepreneur trips, regional golf tournaments, and cooking events ensure group diversity, thereby enabling in-depth discussion with like-minded people. That often results in new ideas or connections that help further each entrepreneur’s own company. Through our superior sponsorship events, tailored to our clients’ interests and passions, the bank offers unforgettable experiences. For each platform, the guests are carefully selected to offer an extremely interesting network.
“Public policy also represents company interests”

Political and social developments shape a country’s economic environment. René Buholzer explains how Credit Suisse champions the interests of Swiss companies with its Public Policy unit.

In what way does Public Policy represent the concerns of corporate clients in political discussions? René Buholzer (RB): As a bank for entrepreneurs – and in keeping with the tradition of Alfred Escher – entrepreneurial thinking and commitment to a strong financial center and the business location of Switzerland are of considerable importance to us. When we analyze a specific political issue, what this means for the bank’s clients is always factored into our considerations.

What current political issues affecting Swiss entrepreneurship are you dealing with in particular at the moment? RB: Without a doubt, at the forefront would be the implementation of the mass immigration initiative. Other important topics include corporate tax reform and company law reform.

In the context of ongoing political discussions: What potential or risks do you envisage for Switzerland as a business location? RB: Indices such as the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum indicate that we continue to have a sound basis. Some of the challenges include the strong Swiss franc and the trend toward wanting to regulate many areas in detail, which ultimately undermines our liberal economic and labor law. We must also retain our connection to world trade; this is absolutely essential with our small internal market.

What has Public Policy achieved recently that is particularly important for Credit Suisse’s corporate clients? RB: Working together with other players, we rejected initiatives that were harmful to business, such as the 1:12 initiative and the ecopop initiative, and in terms of company law reform, we successfully fought against restrictions on entrepreneurial freedom. Credit Suisse also championed a functioning compromise for the “too big to fail” rules that substantially improves stability in the financial system, yet does not restrict banks’ competitiveness too severely at the same time. Both of these actions ultimately also favor our corporate clients, who benefit from the improved stability and continued wide range of services.

The objective of Public Policy at Credit Suisse (Switzerland) Ltd. is to promote and protect the reputation and interests of the bank in Switzerland. To this end, the unit liaises with various stakeholders in addition to observing and analyzing relevant political and economic issues. Public Policy maintains contact with parliamentarians, administrative bodies, and other economic and political representatives. Finally, it also coordinates work that is undertaken within the scope of Credit Suisse’s membership in business associations, such as the Swiss Bankers Association or nomiesuisse (the Swiss Business Economics).

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Economic Research: a Head Start in Knowledge for Entrepreneurs

Economic Research specialists continuously analyze economic developments to recognize opportunities and identify risks at an early stage. Their analyses and studies are also of particular benefit to corporate clients.

Economic Research

Current economic developments in the world economy and in Switzerland are documented in the quarterly publication “Monitor Switzerland.” It focuses on issues such as monetary policy, the labor market, real estate, as well as the development of individual sectors and regions.

Economic Research at Credit Suisse: There are nearly 30 economists continuously analyzing the economic situation – both in Switzerland and in the global economy – and identifying national trends. To do this, they observe and register changes in GDP, demand, inflation, labor markets, the real estate market, and export destinations. Their results are regularly reviewed and disseminated by the Swiss media.
“With Credit Suisse, we have a team at our side that extracts the maximum value for us.”

François Billig, CEO Acrotec SA

You can find out more about François Billig in the video portrait: credit-suisse.com/entrepreneur
Network for Female Entrepreneurs

“League of Leading Ladies”

Fresh impetus, the latest knowledge, and networking opportunities for female entrepreneurs and businesswomen from all over the world – that is what the annual conference of the “League of Leading Ladies” offers.

It is important to Credit Suisse to promote women in the business world and as entrepreneurs. That is why it is the co-sponsor of the annual “League of Leading Ladies (LLL) conference.” This is held by the business club of the same name. Membership to the club is gained by personal invitation; however, access to the conference is open to non-members and men as well. The event is inspired by the philosophers’ circle of ancient Greece, where leading personalities, authors, and scientists came together to discuss current issues. Under the title “Smashing the Box,” 150 participants recently met over two days in the Hotel Victoria-Jungfrau in Interlaken to share their entrepreneurial visions and discuss the implementation of innovative ideas. At the end, one visitor enthusiastically declared that the two days had been so enriching for her that she wished the conference would last a few more days. The event organizers also had a very positive impression and look forward to the upcoming symposium entitled “Disruptive Times.” Beatrix Fischer, Head of Communication & Marketing at Credit Suisse (Switzerland) Ltd. on the subject: “We support this top-class conference because these women play an important part in shaping the economy, and we would like to find out more about their needs in order to provide them with optimum support with their financial challenges.”

GetDiversity

GetDiversity is striving for a greater proportion of women on boards of directors, and mediates between boards with vacancies and potential female candidates.

For just over a decade, the organization GetDiversity has been working towards equal opportunities in board memberships. Its aim is for 50 percent of candidates to be female. After all, successful companies and organizations have proven that the inclusion of women, with their additional viewpoints, values, and ranges of experience, significantly improves the quality of a board’s decisions. This has been confirmed in a study by Credit Suisse Economic Research. Specifically, GetDiversity is a platform which, on the one hand, supports and promotes women on their way to board membership and looks after a pool of candidates – on the other hand, it advises companies in the search for a suitable candidate. Credit Suisse is the main sponsor of the annual GetDiversity event. The ambitions of GetDiversity are very similar to those of the bank, which are to actively promote women, both externally and internally.

What distinguishes Helvetica Capital AG?

Johannes Suter (JS): Helvetica Capital AG is an investor and advisor specializing in financing and succession solutions with a focus on Swiss SMEs. We don’t simply transfer capital to companies, but provide them with expertise and a network, and we work closely with these companies to support their successful development and the preservation of jobs in Switzerland.

Helvetica Capital AG was formed as recently as 2015 from SVC Ltd.*. How are they still related to one another?

JS: We now manage the portfolio of SVC Ltd. using the same people that were previously responsible for managing the portfolio. Only now we do so under a mandate relationship in the name of Helvetica Capital AG.

What is the specific difference between Helvetica Capital AG and SVC Ltd.?

JS: As a subsidiary of Credit Suisse, SVC Ltd. provides financing of up to CHF 5 million in the form of loans and equity capital investment to companies in various economic sectors. This normally happens without an active influence on the companies’ operating activities. Helvetica Capital AG restricts its activity to investments starting at CHF 5 million in the form of equity capital in selected industries. It works together with successful Swiss entrepreneurial families, the Mobiliar insurance company, and Credit Suisse and its clients to generate funds. As well as furnishing its clients with capital, Helvetica also plays an active role in the partner companies with its network.

What companies are appealing for your portfolio and how are they recruited?

JS: Each of these companies must demonstrate a unique selling proposition – a product, an idea, or a type of production that is unique. We examine numerous dossiers and like to see that, aside from good products, the company also has commitment above all else.

And what happens when a company meets all the criteria?

JS: Then the cooperation starts. This can take very different forms and is not necessarily restricted in time terms, either. This form of cooperation is what sets us apart from the usual financing or fund investment opportunities. The length of the partnership is flexible. It can last for five, ten, or as long as 50 years if this makes sense for the company.

You must come into contact with many successful companies. Do all these companies have a common denominator?

JS: Yes, first and foremost they all have a good idea that they implement with a great deal of passion and commitment. And – this is an essential factor – these companies are able to both resolve their clients’ relevant issues and to instill passion among their employees.

“We invest in unique ideas”

Helvetica Capital AG invests in established Swiss companies. CEO Johannes Suter explains why this makes sense for Switzerland and outlines the philosophy of investors.

Johannes Suter, Managing Partner and CEO of Helvetica Capital AG

* SVC Ltd. for Risk Capital for SMEs (SVC Ltd.)
Connecting Swiss SMEs

The Swiss Venture Club actively pursues the aim of supporting and promoting SMEs as the driving force of the Swiss economy, in order to help create and maintain workplaces in Switzerland.

A platform through which contacts are made, ideas are shared, knowledge is expanded, and success is celebrated together – that is the Swiss Venture Club (SVC). Organized as a nonprofit association and spread across the whole of Switzerland in seven economic regions, SVC organizes networking events for entrepreneurs in the areas of education, finance, politics, and sports. SVC is most publicly present with the Prix SVC, which is given out biannually in each region. The award stands for the jewels among Swiss SMEs, whose significant and lasting economic success as a result of excellent performance has been recognized by the regional independent panel of experts. With these success stories, the Swiss Venture Club has also proven itself in its tireless commitment to Swiss SMEs. For over 15 years, it has been bringing entrepreneurs from all kinds of industries together and offering them the chance to exchange experiences and inspire each other. At the same time, it promotes dialog between business and politics, which is essential for successfully shaping the future.

Varied Events

The members of SVC are private individuals and companies, and both value the diverse range of events on offer. At award-winner meetings of the Prix SVC for example, there is an opportunity to get to know the business of another SME. SVC is financed by sponsors and partners, including the four gold sponsors Credit Suisse, Ernst & Young, Swisscom, and die Mobiliar. All of them, along with other partners, support SVC’s mission to promote and strengthen Swiss entrepreneurship through networking.

“’We want to see development potential’”

Beat Brechbühl has been a member of the Board of Directors at SVC – Ltd. for Risk Capital for SMEs (SVC Ltd.) since it was founded six years ago. In conversation he explains what the perfect investment looks like for SVC Ltd.

SVC – Ltd. for Risk Capital for SMEs is an investment company. What differentiates you from comparable companies?

Beat Brechbühl (BB): For us, it’s not about achieving the highest possible yield. SVC Ltd. was founded after the financial crisis as a subsidiary of Credit Suisse in May 2010, in collaboration with the Swiss Venture Club. Their common goal was to strengthen the Swiss employment and labor market.

So is the focus on promoting entrepreneurship in Switzerland?

BB: That’s right, which is why we try to invest sustainably. The capital should be retained, so that the financing can keep going further. That is why we are more interested in financing established companies than financing classic start-ups.

What distinguishes the companies in the SVC Ltd. portfolio?

BB: The key factor is always that the SME must be located in Switzerland. In terms of the industries and regions, we are very broadly diversified. Other important criteria are: We want a strong management team and stable shareholder base. The business plan must be based on a mature business idea with innovation, and be validatable. A certain market acceptance must also be apparent.

Aside from injecting capital, how else does SVC Ltd. engage with its portfolio companies? For example, does it bring in shareholders?

BB: That is another important difference in relation to classic venture capital or private equity companies. We normally do not carry out active investment management and are very cautious with board memberships, because such involvement could generate considerably higher costs and also raise questions of legal responsibility. This in turn would have to be paid for with a higher yield.

What does the perfect investment look like for you?

BB: We want to see development potential. We also invest when nobody else does, because the risk is too high for example, or the potential return is too small. The perfect investment can be a financing requirement, let’s say for developing a new product that already has a patent. The company does not receive traditional bank financing and we invest a sum for realizing the new product. After four or five years a certain market success is achieved: Turnover and profit have increased, perhaps new employees were hired and now a strategic investor is interested, who wants to participate or even buy the company. That is the ideal time for us to exit – a classic win-win situation: We were able to help at a time when no one else was willing to, we got a return on our investment, a new product was launched, and new jobs were created.

Beat Brechbühl, member of the Board of Directors at SVC Ltd. and Managing Partner at Kellerhals Carrard
Support with Internationalization

Expansion into other countries is associated with new perspectives, but it also carries risks and generates many questions. Credit Suisse supports companies in their internationalization with the help of partners such as Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE).

As a Swiss company, there are many reasons to brave the step into other countries: expanding your own market, reducing transport distances, cutting production costs, or making deviations for currency reasons. As an international bank, Credit Suisse is continuously analyzing the international markets as well as monitoring currency developments and economic trends. It also has a broad network of contacts, which can be selectively passed on to clients. Studies have shown that there is a strong positive correlation between the use of networks and the success of internationalization. That is why Credit Suisse maintains various partnerships – so that it can offer its clients even more know-how and more extensive networks. One such partnership connects Credit Suisse as the only bank to Switzerland Global Enterprise – S-GE for short, formerly Osec. As the official export promotion agency of the federal government, S-GE is tasked with strengthening Switzerland as a business location in a global context. An export help team provides initial information and offers small and medium-sized enterprises the necessary support regarding all kinds of export questions: for example, processing VAT, sending employees on assignments abroad, cross-border traffic in goods and services, CE marking, or use of the Swissness label. Every year, the company also organizes several specialist events, consultation sessions focusing on particular countries, trips for entrepreneurs, and web seminars. Last but not least, with 21 Swiss branches in the most important business centers and a global network of specialists, S-GE offers competent support abroad, as well. With Credit Suisse’s comprehensive product range, covering everything from worldwide payment transactions to international factoring, the needs of clients looking to export can be met in every area.

The collaboration between Credit Suisse and Switzerland Global Enterprise means sound support for corporate clients, from export preparation to global support in the form of:
• country and risk analyses
• expert knowledge
• an international network
• comprehensive financial instruments

Credit Suisse’s strategic partnerships (see list on the cover page) increase the range of possibilities available to bank clients. For example, the bank works closely with industry associations and chambers of commerce. All of these connections that Credit Suisse can offer its clients result in an extensive network, as well as access to qualified know-how and experts with country-specific specialist knowledge.
“We were immediately convinced by the extensive specialist knowledge and in-depth industry understanding of the relationship managers.”

Mélanie Eppenberger, Chair of the Board of Directors of Toggenburg Bergbahnen

You can find out more about Mélanie Eppenberger in the video portraits: credit-suisse.com/entrepreneur
Your Needs – Our Strengths

Long-term partnership
Your long-term outlook is also ours. We support you throughout every phase – from founding to succession management.

Quick decision-making
We make quick decisions, even in business-critical situations. If necessary, we consult our experts.

Private clients and entrepreneurs
We look after both your private and business needs, enabling us to offer you solutions that are tailored to your overall asset situation.

Advice through partnership
Our advisors assume an entrepreneurial perspective and act as your strategic partner.

Comprehensive wealth management advice
We advise you in all financial matters and optimize your business and private assets.

Room for vision
We create more flexibility so that you can make your ideas a reality. To do this, we draw on our global network and our exclusive entrepreneur services.

Our Network for Your Success
We travel the path together.

Do you have any questions about your business or private assets? Please call: