



Press Release

Funding for Two Big-Data Startup Projects

Economists at the University of Freiburg receive EXIST entrepreneurial scholarships for “Geospin” and “TonalityTech”

Analyzing geographic data and finding the right tone in communication – the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, the European Social Fund, and the European Union have selected the startup projects “Geospin” and “TonalityTech” for funding in the EXIST entrepreneurial scholarship program. The two planned projects offer software solutions for companies. Geospin will receive a total of more than 140,000 euros in a year, TonalityTech 125,000 euros. Both projects are University of Freiburg spinoffs established by assistants of Prof. Dr. **Dirk Neumann**, holder of the Chair in Business Information Systems. The Entrepreneurial Office of the University of Freiburg is already providing support for the two startups.

According to **Simon Alfano**, **Daniel Drummer**, **Stefan Feuerriegel**, **Joscha Märkle-Huß**, and **Nicolas Pröllochs**, a negative and poorly formulated press release can cause a drop of up to 2.7 percent in a company’s share prices. The five researchers from the Department of Information Systems at the University of Freiburg’s Department of Management have thus developed a computer program to help companies formulate their press releases for their spinoff “TonalityTech.” The program uses big-data technology to determine how investors and the stock market will be likely to react to particular words and formulations in financial announcements. This will spare companies the necessity of conducting time-consuming deliberations based on subjective experiences rather than facts. “With the help of our software solution, companies can make scientifically based

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— decisions when communicating with investors to increase the company's value," says Stefan Feuerriegel. "We've already successfully tested the prototype of an add-in for a well-known text editor with more than 30 corporate communications professionals." A leading pharmaceutical company has already ordered the add-in; market entry is planned for December 2015.

Collecting and analyzing geographical data, finding the best location for car sharing vehicles and charging stations for electric cars – **Johannes Bendler**, Dr. **Tobias Brandt**, **Christoph Gebele**, **Niklas Goby**, and Dr. **Sebastian Wagner** from the University of Freiburg's Department of Management have developed a computer program that visualizes, analyzes, and optimizes sales territories. At many companies, various departments create large amounts of data referring to geographical information. "These data have enormous potential for economic utilization that has hardly been exploited at all so far," says Christoph Gebele. "We close this gap by helping companies to understand their own data and put it to profitable use." Geospin's method links company data on customers to additional geographical data, such as traffic volume, demographical data, or information from social networks. For example, the software can visualize sales data on a product or service and analyze which factors have a positive or negative influence on its market success. These factors can then be used as a basis for assessing the size of a sales territory and making suggestions for optimizing it.

The EXIST entrepreneurial scholarship supports students, graduates, and researchers from universities and external research institutions. It provides funding for a period of up to one year for innovative technology-oriented or knowledge-based projects with unique new business ideas and good prospects for market success.

More information on the EXIST entrepreneurial scholarship:

www.exist.de/DE/Programm/Exist-Gruenderstipendium/inhalt.html

The University of Freiburg achieves top positions in all university rankings. Its research, teaching, and continuing education have received prestigious awards in nationwide competitions. Over 24,000 students from 100 nations are enrolled in 188 degree programs. Around 5,000 teachers and administrative employees put in their effort every day – and experience that family friendliness, equal opportunity, and environmental protection are more than just empty phrases here.

The website of TonalityTech:

www.tonality.tech

The website of Geospin:

www.geospin.de

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