



2012 Annual Report  
**Swiss Post Innovation Management**

**SWISS POST** 

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One click is enough.

Terms in **bold** or highlighted in brown in the table of contents and in the chapter texts are linked.

# Editorial



Dear Sir or Madam,

Innovations secure our future. Swiss Post is on the brink of a new age: in 2013 a public limited company under special legislation with more entrepreneurial freedom will be created from the former federal institute. At the same time we are also facing a range of challenges.

Making constant improvements is part of the fundamental tasks of a company, in particular when the situation changes. Rapid technological development influences new types of communication and it changes our customers' behaviour. This is why fewer letters are written and fewer newspapers are read. Electronic communication media such as e-mail, SMS and social media have an effect on the number of letters and newspapers that are dispatched. There is an annual decline of two percent. Fewer letters are handed in and fewer payments are carried out at our post offices. In the logistics market, higher levels of competition lead to lower margins; the current low interest rates are driving down PostFinance's profits. In addition, our costs also increase due to employee benefits.

There are four options available to us for coping with these challenges: we continue to develop our core business, take advantage of specific growth opportunities, increase cost efficiency and adjust our prices. Innovations play a crucial role in the first three options. We depend on innovations to promote and further develop the core postal business as our most important source of revenue. We are developing new markets with innovative solutions in the electronics sector. Optimising our processes and costs is also a permanent challenge.

Swiss Post has a thoroughly developed innovation culture which enables us to achieve success. Outside of Swiss Post, many people still know too little about our new products and services. We need to be active here.

Innovations should take place throughout the entire Group – in dialogue with customers, colleagues and suppliers. Our Innovation Management supports everybody who is prepared to help actively design our future.

Susanne Ruoff  
CEO  
Swiss Post



## **ActionJam: the Swiss innovation network**

Learn from one another about how to be mutually inspired and develop new ideas together. Swiss innovation experts are incorporating what musicians achieve in their jam sessions into the **ActionJam** exchange platform. The structures, processes, methods, visions and objectives of innovation management form the key subjects. ActionJam was created in November 2012 on the initiative of Swiss Post Innovation Management. Swiss Post is represented on the Association's Board of Directors, which has three members.

# Overview

## We make innovation possible



Dear Sir or Madam,

Innovations are commercially successful developments. Ideas form the basis in this process, yet implementation is the decisive factor for success. In addition to being curious and courageous, participants need to be passionate. We witness this first hand on a day-to-day basis. We are thrilled by the Swiss Post staff's commitment to dealing with the difficulties of successfully launching their products on the market. In addition to the units' innovation measures, we support initiators with suitable tools at Group level and with the resources needed thanks to the Fund for Innovation, New Business and Sustainability (INN). This is how we pave the way and make innovations possible. Good examples of this are vivates, the electronic patient record that allows patients to contact health professionals, and the mobile distribution channel which has allowed Swiss Post to optimally sell its services via smartphones.

Ideas are the lifeblood of Swiss Post. This is because new products and services allow Swiss Post to keep pace with changing customer behaviour and technological developments. This is how Swiss Post ensures its competitiveness. This can only be successful if we use the knowledge of our 60,000 members of staff and ensure that they can facilitate communication. For this purpose we provide tools that are suitable for Swiss Post. In 2012 employees actively made use of these tools: Staff submitted a total of 1461 ideas to Postidea. In 2012 its total financial value exceeded the million mark. In addition, more and more line managers, project managers and specialists are using the idea campaign scheme, which was launched in spring 2012. This allowed them to address specific problems and questions to selected colleagues.

Business ideas are prepared for market in the INN process. Six members of Executive Management are involved in the process. At the KLA INN Executive Management Committee, chaired by CEO Susanne Ruoff, they have a say in which projects will be financially supported and piloted on the market. An annual budget of 1.5 per mill of the expected

Group turnover is provided for this purpose. We have examined over 70 initiatives since the start of the INN process in August 2009. PostVenture also attracted wide interest in 2012 with a special project: The group-wide business plan competition, which targeted important issues for Swiss Post's future operations. 121 employees found inspiration and proposed 172 business ideas. 18 selected participants with promising ideas developed 13 business plans. The winner was chosen by the KLA INN on 20 February 2013. Frédéric Devrient from PostMail won with the idea of combining unaddressed mailings with poster advertising.

Modernly designed workplaces promote innovative ideas. This is why we are converting our office wing on the third floor of the Schönburg building so that there is additional room for networking, meetings and interaction. If the modern interior design stands the test, it will also be implemented in the future Swiss Post headquarters in the Wankdorf district of Berne.

Swiss Post also wants to network with external partners: in 2012 it examined 150 Swiss start-up companies that are active in at least one of the markets that Swiss Post finds interesting. Since autumn 2012 the partnership with the Swiss Start-Up Monitor has allowed Swiss Post's screening network to be more close-meshed than ever before.

We also want to compete and exchange ideas with other major companies in innovation management. This is why we established the ActionJam Association in 2012. It brings together innovation leaders from major Swiss companies. The exchange shows that the way in which Swiss Post Innovation Management operates is ranked among the "good practices" in Switzerland and that we are on the right track.

Do you also have an innovative idea? Get in touch with us. **We are here for you.**

Pierre-Yves Caboussat  
Head of Innovation Management

# Ideas management

## Ideas are vitamins for Swiss Post

In 2012 Swiss Post staff made another significant contribution to developing the company. They submitted a total of 1461 ideas to Postidea. Swiss Post implemented 98 particularly resourceful and suitable proposals. The implementation rate amounts to around 7 percent. This is in slight decline in comparison to 2011, yet the number of submitted ideas rose significantly in comparison to the previous year. However, this is also because staff were not able to submit any ideas for a while during the previous year when the input systems were being reactivated. Postidea has paid off many times over. In 2012 its financial value amounted to CHF 1.01 million and was once again able to make a positive contribution to Swiss Post's performance.

The group and the units work closely together in ideas management. This is how a web platform was created together with PostMail, for example. The web platform shows improvements that were implemented as part of the KAIZEN continuous improvement approach. The ideas that were put in place could be continued and implemented within Swiss Post by other offices. This multiplies the value of good ideas.

The ideas campaign scheme, which was re-launched in spring, is designed for line managers, project managers and specialists. These staff enter specific issues into a web-based tool and direct them at selected colleagues. By the end of 2012, 547 employees had taken part in 16 campaigns and fine-tuned 220 ideas in the process. The PostVenture ideas campaigns are not included in this calculation (see pages 12 and 13).

Whereas at Postidea the initiative comes from individual employees, the exact opposite happens with the ideas campaigns: They are directed at selected employees and specifically request their knowledge and experience. This is why the ideas campaign and Postidea complement one another perfectly as a company suggestion scheme for impromptu idea submissions.

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### The appropriate tool for every idea

Whether small and delicate, complex, or relevant to the Group as a whole: Ideas are the lifeblood of Swiss Post. This is why various tools are available to staff for introducing their proposals and projects.

#### Postidea

Big and small ideas for improving products and processes are guided by existing procedures. This is why they have a simple structure in the majority of cases. In the tradition of a company's suggestion scheme, Postidea is the right lace for impromptu ideas about adjustments and improvements. Submitters of ideas can efficiently complete the input screen without needing training on how to do so. They can also submit their ideas offline if necessary. As a result Postidea proved very successful in 2012, too. More complex business ideas are directly entered into the INN process (see pages 8 and 9).

#### Ideas campaigns

The ideas campaign scheme is useful for people who need quick and high-quality input for specific problems and questions. The submitters themselves can specify who receives the contribution. Input is very easy thanks to a clear on-line assistant. A significant element in the ideas campaigns is interacting with participants. The submitters as well as all recipients read and comment on incoming contributions. This is how communication is created. In addition to the comment function, ideas can be directly assessed using the Facebook "like" button. This is how submitters get comments and detailed feedback about their issues. This is a considerable increase in value.

#### Ideas workshops

Of course, ideas can also be developed without the use of electronic tools. Swiss Post also organises ideas workshops for this purpose.



A very special idea

## **Thanks to light signals, you can be sure to travel with us**

At PostBus stops that are difficult to see and have no lighting there is a danger that people waiting for the bus are easy to miss at night or dawn and that the PostBus will not stop. This is a thing of the past thanks to the new bus stop signal which has two LED lights that flash alternately every 30 seconds when a button is pressed. The new bus stop signal is a stand-alone system and is not suitable for bus stops that are

connected to the electricity grid. The corresponding pilot project is running until April 2013.

The PostBus idea was submitted to Postidea. As a reward, the submitter was given the opportunity to drive the Postidea runabout (Mini Cooper S vehicle model) for a month as and when they wanted.

# INN process

## 34 projects – one language

At Swiss Post, innovation is also a matter for the boss: as of 1 September 2012, CEO Susanne Ruoff has been chairing the Executive Management Committee Innovation, New Business & Sustainability (KLA INN). In her role, Susanne Ruoff has been giving additional importance to promoting business ideas. The opportunity to present promising projects to members of Executive Management as part of the INN process is particularly encouraging for innovative Swiss Post employees.

An annual budget of 1.5 per mill of the expected Group turnover is made available to the INN process for this purpose. In 2012 over CHF 10 million could be put to use from the INN fund. The INN jury assessed eleven ideas in an early round and made a financing decision. In addition, it examined seven further advanced projects and provided each of them with a recommendation for financing for the attention of the KLA INN. The KLA INN in turn assessed twelve projects/initiatives that as a general rule aim to develop a business plan and run a pilot project. In 2012 the INN fund supported a total of 34 projects and proposals.

Some of these are already on the market: Healthcare professionals securely and efficiently networked using *vivates*, Swiss Post's electronic patient record. The focus is shifted to the patients when using **vivates**. They decide themselves which medical specialists are provided with the relevant information online. The eHealth project 'e-toile', which was created during the INN process with the canton of Geneva, formed the basis of the patient record. *vivates* fits in with the 'eHealth strategy Switzerland' which was jointly developed by the Confederation and cantons. This project plans for all residents to gain access to their personal electronic patient record by 2015.

"The Swiss Post INN process gave me the necessary security for beginning implementation in an efficient and target-oriented manner without a great amount of bureaucracy."

Roberto D'Elia, project manager for social media & business







## Simply and quickly to the market

Outline, enlarge upon, optimise, pilot and introduce onto the market. Promising projects designed by Swiss Post staff are run through the INN process; ideally these steps towards market readiness are achieved in less than eight months. The INN process always begins with a simple business or process optimisation idea and usually ends with a pilot project. A jury with representatives from the units (INN jury) and the Executive Management Committee Innovation, New Business & Sustainability (KLA INN) assess the ideas and/or the projects. These committees decide which projects have potential and will therefore be supported financially. Swiss Post Innovation Management accompanies, advises and supports the project managers throughout the whole process. Over 70 projects have been run through the INN process since August 2009.

Five members of Executive Management form part of the KLA INN, which has six representatives. Susanne Ruoff (CEO who chairs the KLA INN), Ulrich Hurni (Head of PostMail, Deputy CEO), Yves-André Jeandupeux (Head of Human Resources), Pascal Koradi (Head of Finance) and Frank Marthaler (Head of Swiss Post Solutions). Thierry Kneissler (Head of Corporate Center at PostFinance) also represents PostFinance on the committee.

Since 2013 the INN jury has comprised 41 members (previously 53). Each Group unit is represented by five members on the jury. There are innovation managers and members of the Specialist Committee Marketing (MAK) and the Specialist Committee Sales (SKMVK) in place. This gives even more importance to marketing and selling the business ideas. Seven members alternate in acting as the jury at monthly meetings.



## Projects from the INN process

A selection

### **Swiss Post Box**

The electronic letterbox

### **Post SuisseID**

The Swiss standard for secure identification and digital signature

### **IncaMail**

Encrypting and safely sending e-mails

### **PubliBike**

Switzerland's leading (e)bike sharing scheme

### **Loyalty Marketing**

Extensive loyalty offer for business customers

### **"pro clima"**

CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral mail shipment for letters, parcels, courier services, catalogues and small consignments

### **Wi-Fi on the PostBus**

Free Internet on the PostBus

### **Fuel cell PostBus**

Travelling without exhaust fumes

### **DirectAnalytics**

In-depth analysis of customer data

### **Health insurance card**

Medical and administrative data available at any time



The **Post SuisseID Mobile Service** is also well received by customers. It enables secure login via mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets. It is thus an advancement on **Post SuisseID**, the electronic proof of identity. This service was also made ready for market via the INN process.

In 2012 a spin-off from the INN process first arose therefrom: **goCommerce GmbH** is an eCommerce agency which helps SMEs to successfully establish their own online sales channel.

It is decisive that all projects 'speak the same language' during the INN process and can therefore be fairly assessed and compared. Swiss Post has established the CO-STAR structuring method for this purpose. In order to increase the awareness of the method and to simplify its use, Swiss Post developed the **CO-STAR Creator** web-based tool in 2012. Thanks to useful tips and tricks, staff can use this tool to better outline their ideas and implement them directly after using CO-STAR, if required. They can also grant selected colleagues online access to their ideas, swap ideas with them and thus take advantage of the possibilities of crowdsourcing.

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### We like the "like" function

The successfully-launched online service **sobu** also ran through the INN process. sobu works in accordance with the principle of "buy – share – earn". The following example demonstrates this: Simone likes to create her own chocolate at **www.mySwissChocolate.ch**. She raves about all the possible flavours, ingredients and blends on social networks. Nadine reacts to her recommendation: she registers with sobu and puts together the chocolate that she wants on the portal at mySwissChocolate. Thanks to sobu, both of them benefit: Simone receives money for her tip, and Nadine gets a discount of five francs on her purchase.

# PostVenture

## 121 inspired employees – 13 interesting business plans


Swiss Post's culture of innovation promotes all schemes and projects related to innovation management. Particular attention was focused on this in 2012 during the PostVenture business plan competition, which was launched by the Executive Management Committee Innovation, New Business & Sustainability (KLA INN) as a strategic measure. It was directed at all members of staff throughout the Group, regardless of their role and previous knowledge. The aim of this scheme was to use and promote the knowledge, experience and creativity of the post office employees in Switzerland and abroad to develop new business ideas. In so doing PostVenture was appealing to employees' entrepreneurial spirit which is vital for converting clever ideas into successful products and services.

This is widespread in all Group units: 121 employees who were interested in developing Swiss Post and in the company's future services and products took part in PostVenture. They found inspiration from six issues that are important for future Swiss Post operations and their business units and created 172 business ideas. Participants worked with advisors from the Institute for Young Entrepreneurs (IFJ) on particularly promising ideas and developed their concepts using the CO-STAR Creator. After a second selection phase, the remaining 18 participants developed a total of 13 business ideas into business plans. During this process they were happy to count on the help of P INN. They used the ideas campaign tool (see page 6) to submit and comment on their ideas. They were also happy to make use of the support from the IFJ by installing their "Business Navigator" software. For the selected participants, this phase, which is important for future market opportunities, was particularly productive: they acquired valuable knowledge and sharpened their entrepreneurial spirit in the process. They occasionally also formulated business plans for a wide range of Swiss Post units that all have interesting opportunities and prospects (see the box opposite).

### Future Swiss Post products and services

The 18 authors of the 13 business plans demonstrated a distinct market and customer orientation at PostVenture. The envisaged products and services respond to the current and future needs of private and business customers. Electronic shopping lists, mobile payment solutions, iLibraries web-based platforms for changes of address and complex analyses of business customer data, for example, fit in with the trend of progressive digitalisation. The same applies to a tool that is intended to enable the identification and authentication of online customers in the future. But even the physical world provides the most resourceful PostVenture participants with a wide range of interesting market opportunities. Here the authors are contemplating climate-friendly private letter boxes or postal workers who render security services on their rounds for third parties, for example.

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“It should not be taken for granted when a company creates projects in the way that PostVenture does.”

André Brühlmann, start-up supporter at the Institute for Young Entrepreneurs (IFJ)

## Festive award ceremony

The creators of the four most convincing business plans were chosen as finalists at the end of January 2013. The Executive Management Committee Innovation, New Business & Sustainability's decision was announced during the last presentation. While the Post-Venture jury combined the technical know-how of internal specialists and experts from the Swiss Federal Commission for Technology and Innovation, KTI, the KLA INN decided which busi-

ness idea was the best. To thank all participants, in particular the 121 employees who took part in the business plan competition, CEO Susanne Ruoff, who chairs the KLA INN, invited everybody who submitted an idea to the award ceremony. It was held on 20 February 2013 in the Champions Lounge at the Stade de Suisse in Berne. The four finalists were introduced at this celebratory occasion and the winning idea was awarded the prize.

# Innovation Partner Network

## Developing innovations together

Swiss Post relies on know-how from external partners when developing innovations. At the same time the Innovation Partner Network forms the hinge between Swiss Post business units, external partners and potential investors. Maintaining and constantly expanding the partner network is crucial here. This is because the more specialist knowledge and technology that is gathered at Swiss Post, the more innovations can be put in place.

Swiss Post is particularly interested in start-up companies that are being established or are in the setting up phase and are active in at least one of the markets that Swiss Post is interested in. In 2012, 24 of 150 monitored companies were observed closely. Swiss Post is planning joint innovation projects with 10 companies.

In 2012 Swiss Post refined the process for screening the interesting companies, which continues until the innovations are jointly implemented. The partnership with the Swiss Start-Up Monitor, which has been in place since autumn 2012, plays a central role here. It grants Swiss Post access to Swiss start-up companies (more about this in the interview below) and thus access to many important Swiss leaders of innovation. Networking with potential investors is also crucial for Swiss Post.

Swiss Post wants to implement projects with external partners as quickly as the internal schemes. As a result, tried and tested tools for ideas management are now being used here via Postidea and the INN process.

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### “We have a win-win-win situation”

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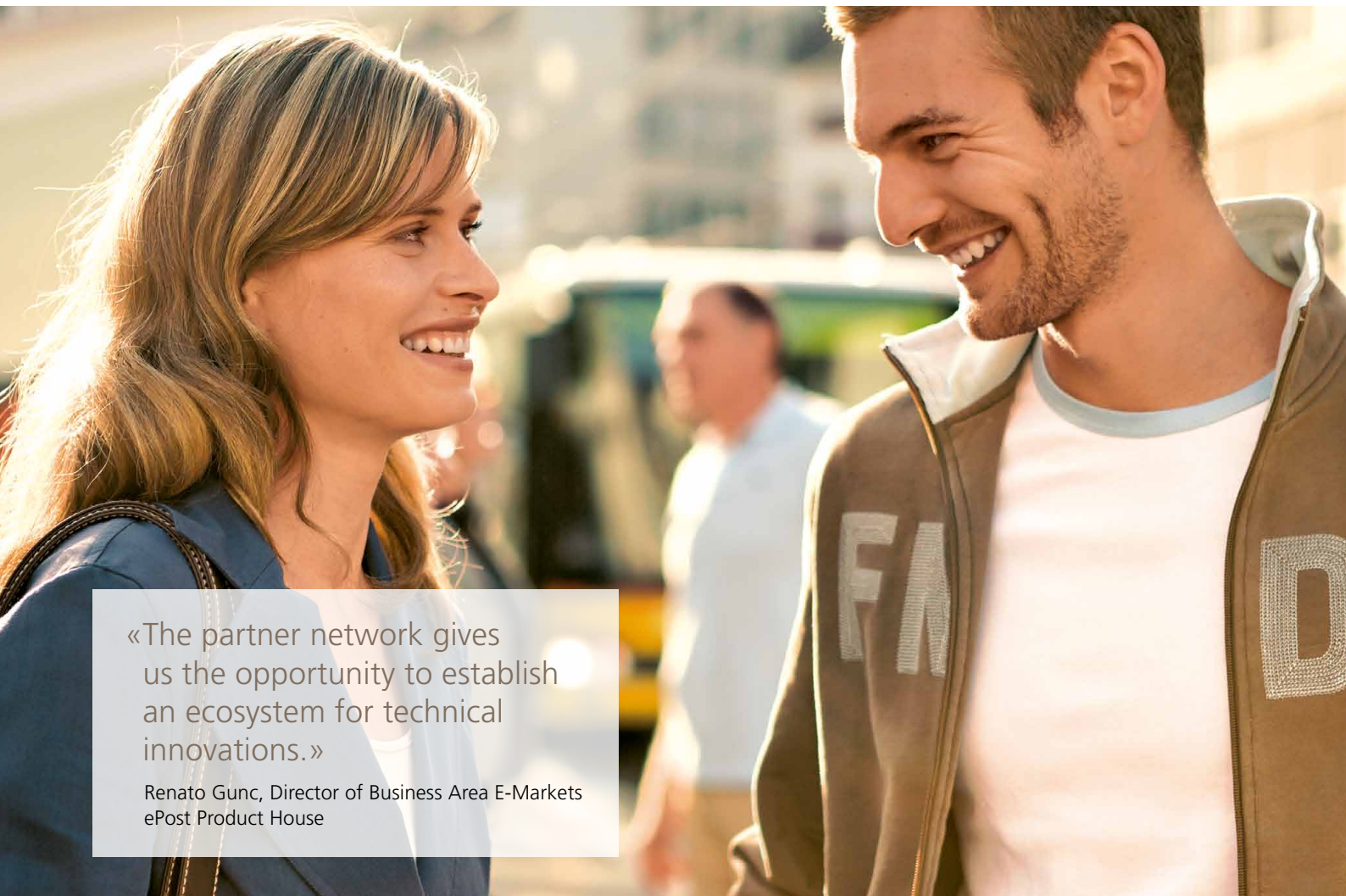


**Switzerland has been a global leader in innovation for many years now. The Swiss Start-Up Monitor supplies reliable and extensive information about the start-up scene. This is the result of joint research by the universities in St. Gallen and Basel as well as the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich. The**

**Swiss Federal Commission for Technology and Innovation (KTI) and the AVINA and Gebert R uf foundations all helped to make the project possible. Swiss Post has been a partner since autumn 2012. Dominik Wensauer, project manager of the Swiss Start-Up Monitor, believes that this partnership is exemplary. This is because it is of great use to start-up companies and thus provides a win-win-win situation.**

**Dominik Wensauer, are all Swiss start-up companies included in the Swiss Start-Up Monitor?**

Our aim is to include over 90 percent of Swiss start-up companies. We can achieve this via active screening in the start-up scene, our contact network as well as start-ups that have embraced the initiative themselves. We also combine the know-how and the start-up data that has been gathered so far from the Institute of Technology Management at the University of St. Gallen, the Institute of Information Management at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the Centre of Economics at the University of Basel. We are also well known in the start-up scene and well networked there. As a result, more and more companies are supplying us with their data first-hand in order to enjoy the benefits of the Start-Up Monitor.



«The partner network gives us the opportunity to establish an ecosystem for technical innovations.»

Renato Gunc, Director of Business Area E-Markets  
ePost Product House

Incidentally, the Monitor only comprises companies that have not been in operation for more than seven years and that want(ed) to implement an innovative and/ or technology-oriented business idea. Over 1250 companies were registered at the end of 2012.

**Does the Monitor follow the development of the start-up companies?**

Yes, the temporal aspects of our work are very important to us. In the mid-term, the Swiss Start-Up Monitor will be the first database to supply in-depth knowledge in terms of the performance and development of entrepreneurs and their start-up companies, success factors as well as the effectiveness of assistance measures in Switzerland.

**Swiss Post has been a gold partner of the Swiss Start-Up Monitor since autumn 2012. What are the benefits of being in this partnership?**

Swiss Post uses the Start-Up Monitor to keep informed about new companies and technologies. We also examine requests from interested start-up companies and establish communication with Swiss Post Innovation Management. Furthermore, we help Swiss Post to assess companies that they find interesting. We also can use our research partners' and the KTI's many years of experience for this purpose.

Partnership with Swiss Post is symbiotic. There are also many benefits for us here: we have access to the Swiss Post innovation unit's substantial know-how. We consider Swiss Post to be a strategic partner. This is because it complements the Monitor's existing structure perfectly and hopefully gets other key companies in the Swiss economy to work with us. Please note that the partnership with Swiss Post is also of great benefit to the start-up companies and thus results in a win-win-win situation. This means that since the start of our partnership, several companies have already been able to discuss possible joint innovation projects in detail with Swiss Post.

# Swiss Post Innovation Management

## We are here for you



Innovation Management  
**Pierre-Yves Caboussat**

058 386 40 41  
pierre-yves.caboussat@post.ch



Assistant  
**Marianne Marmier**

058 386 43 25  
marianne.marmier@post.ch



Ideas Management  
**Lorenz Wyss**

058 386 40 52  
lorenz.wyss@post.ch



Ideas Management  
**Silvio Flückiger**

058 386 40 57  
silvio.flueckiger@post.ch



INN Process  
**Rahel Reichlin**

058 386 43 26  
rahel.reichlin@post.ch



PostVenture  
**Roland Keller**

058 386 43 29  
roland.keller@post.ch



Innovation Partner Network  
**Peter Frei**

079 300 34 58  
peter.frei@post.ch



Innovation Partner Network  
**Thierry Golliard**

079 201 79 70  
thierry.golliard@post.ch

On the intranet  
**[pww.post.ch/innovation](http://pww.post.ch/innovation)**

On the internet  
**[www.post.ch/innovation](http://www.post.ch/innovation)**

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Swiss Post  
Innovation Management  
Viktoriastrasse 21  
3030 Berne

