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Globe Forum brings new innovation to the market

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*Johan Gorecki - Founder and CEO
Globe Forum*

CIARA O'BRIEN

JOHAN GORECKI is no stranger to innovation. Involved in the development of IP telephony company Skype, the Swedish entrepreneur has since moved on to a new venture with sustainable innovation in mind.

The new project, Globe Forum, is a community that matches entrepreneurs with investors and innovators. Focusing on what it describes as "fast growth" markets, the company provides an online platform for people to meet up with like-minded individuals, and also organises "real world" events for face-to-face meetings.

"We try to gather innovators that work with environmental issues. We are not a group of activists, this is purely business," says Gorecki, who is founder and chief executive of the company.

Despite initial concerns they may have had, Gorecki says the venture is going "extremely well".

"We were a little bit worried because Skype turns to the broad audience. But we knew there were problems having the business society using internet services. Big corporations don't like these kinds of services because they can't track it and it could bring in viruses. So they create firewalls and keep out these kinds of services.

Green issues have become a major talking point in recent years, and Gorecki says that consumers and shareholders are becoming more aware of a company's "green" credentials, putting the industry under pressure.

"They don't want to buy products if they don't see they have some kind of environmental strategy. So we see enormous pressure on the industry to change. They have a huge demand for innovation and they know they will not be the ones to find the solutions. We live in the most interesting times at the moment where the multinationals have a huge need for small innovations," he says.

However, he warned that overcautious investors could be holding back innovation. "From the investment side, from the government side, you need to be proactive . . . I think the Americans are very good at that. That's why we see a lot of good innovations and entrepreneurship go to the States," he says.

Gorecki says that firms can learn much from the development of tech companies such as Google and Skype, and their progress in the market recently. In 2005, auction site Ebay bought Skype for \$2.6 billion, although it marked down the value of the investment last year by more than \$1 billion.

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