



Frank Thelen is a European serial founder, tech investor and TV personality based in Bonn, Germany. Since 1994, he has started and run technology- and design-driven businesses. He is the Founder and CEO of **Freigeist Capital**



FOUNDER

- 1994** ○ *Softer Solutions*: Frank founded his first company Softer Solutions at the age of 18 in 1994. The company provided an innovative framework to produce high-end multimedia CD-ROMs, as a faster and more flexible alternative to the popular Macromedia Director.
- 1996** ○ *Create Media*: In 1996, Softer Solutions merged with Pro PC and published several Multimedia CD-ROMs under the Create Media brand. Create Media also created and ran some of the first major websites in Germany, including hallo.de and bilder.de.
- 1997** ○ *Twisd AG*: In 1997, Frank received 1.4 million DM venture capital to create and sell a Linux-based router (LIC: LAN Internet Connect) to connect local networks to the Internet. LIC was one of the first devices to allow management via a web interface. LIC was based on a highly-customized Linux Kernel optimized for security. Twisd also developed one of the first web application frameworks (APL) as a Zen C++ module. The company prepared for IPO in 1999 but went bankrupt with the dot.com bubble burst.
- 2004** ○ *ip.labs*: Founded in 2004, ip.labs develops and licenses an online photo service platform (IPS) to create and order photo products such as prints, greeting cards and books from digital photos. ip.labs became cash flow positive quickly and never needed external investors. After five years it became the worldwide leader in this market and was acquired by the Fujifilm Group in 2008.
- 2011** ○ *doo*: Founded in 2011, doo received \$10m in funding from e42, DuMont Venture and Target Partners. The initial product “the document app” won renowned awards, including being selected as “App of the Year” by Apple. It was one of the first AI-centered document management systems and offered native apps with real-time cloud sync. However, after two years in the market, the consumer traction did not meet the expectations of the management and investors. Frank was forced to pivot from a large platform vision to a one-purpose app that generated revenue, namely Scanbot.

- 2014 ○ *Scanbot*: Scanbot launched in 2014 and today it is the leading document scanner app for iOS and Android. The Scanbot team has developed proprietary technology, e.g. to detect documents on all surfaces, recognize document types and smart filters to enhance the scan quality. Besides the consumer Apps “Scanbot” and “Unfade” the company offers an SDK to license the technology to 3rd-Party Apps. Apple has awarded Scanbot “Best of 2014”, “Best of 2015” and “Editors’ Choice” awards.
- 2016 ○ In 2016, Frank handed his role as Scanbot CEO over to Christoph Wagner to focus on startup investments in his role as CEO of e42.
- 2017 ○ Frank founded Freigeist Capital with Marc Sieberger, Alex Koch, Christian Reber und Marcel Vogler. [Visit Freigeist.com](http://www.freigeist.com)



INVESTOR



Lilium Aviation



Scanbot



Unfade

doo

doo (formerly viovendi)



Hole 19



Outbank



Von Floerke

stravel

iTravel



meinespielzeugkiste

FOOD



ANKERKRAUT

Ankerkraut



Little Lunch

Lizza
Low Carb Pizza

Lizza



Heimatgut

FIT
TASTE

Fittaste

LUICELLA'S
Ice Cream

Luicella's

**Pumperl
gsund**

Pumperlgsund



3Bears

EXITS



Wunderlist » Microsoft



ip.labs » Fujifilm



Mytaxi » Daimler

kauf·DA

KaufDa » Axel Springer



Goalunited » Travian



Medicus » Rote Liste



Zen Shopping » Shop.co

42reports

42Reports » DILAX



TV PERSONALITY

- 2014** ○ In 2014, Frank joined the Sony Pictures prime-time TV show “Shark Tank”, broadcasted in Germany on VOX as “Die Höhle der Löwen”. The international show is running as “Shark Tank” in the US and “Dragons’ Den” in the UK and has become one of the most successful international TV shows. The first season had 2 million viewers and Frank was investing with Vural Öger, Jochen Schweizer, Judith Williams and Lencke Steiner.
- 2015** ○ The second season of “Die Höhle der Löwen” achieved even better ratings and had 2.3 million viewers. Winning the German TV award “Deutsche Fernsehpreis 2016” for the best factual entertainment show. The show was also nominated for the “Grimme” award and the award of the German TV Academy in the entertainment category, as well as winning the “Ernst-Schneider-Preis” for innovation and economy in an entertainment show.
- 2016** ○ Frank returned as a jury member in the third season of “Die Höhle der Löwen”, which had 3.3 million viewers, a refreshed jury and more startups. Furthermore, Frank has also appeared in “Hart Aber Fair”, “Markus Lanz”, Neo Magazin Royale (Jan Böhmermann) and other TV shows.
- 2017** ○ With season 4 Frank became the longest serving “Lion” while building the most successful Startup portfolio from the show. In this season Judith Williams, Dagmar Wöhr, Carsten Maschmeyer and Ralf Dümmel are joining Frank in the jury. Georg Kofler joined two episodes of this season as stand-in for Judith Williams. Season 4 reached 21% market share and is now the most successful self produced show on Vox. Frank also appeared on a number of shows, including: "ARD Morgenmagazin" and the n-tv Startup Show.



AWARDS & HONORS

- 2011** ○ Recognized as a Hidden Champion by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Hermann Simon.
- 2012** ○ Dr. Angela Merkel presented Frank with the 'Innovate 4 Society' award from Microsoft.
- 2013** ○ Apple selects doo as “App of the year”
- 2014** ○ Scanbot is TNW’s App of the Year
 - Apple selects Scanbot as “Best of 2014”
- 2015** ○ Grimme Preis nomination for “Die Höhle der Löwen”
 - Ernst-Schneider-Preis for “Die Höhle der Löwen”
 - Scanbot is nominated as “Editors’ Choice” by Apple

- 2016 ○ Deutscher Fernsehpreis “Best Factual Entertainment”
- 2017 ○ Nomination for the German “Deutscher Fernsehpreis 2017” in "Best Factual Entertainment"
- Elected member of the “Bundesversammlung”



TESTIMONIAL

- 2014 ○ Microsoft - „Make it Happen“
- o2/Telefonica- #meinbusiness
- 2015 ○ Deutsche Telekom - Top Apps
- Microsoft - „Make it Happen“
- Chivas Regal - The Venture
- 2016 ○ Jimdo - Build your new site!
- Chivas Regal - The Venture
- Tesla Motors - Model S Story
- Liechtenstein - Impuls Liechtenstein
- 2017 ○ Jimdo - Mach was eigenes
- Amazon - Amazon Pay



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Best of Keynote events

- The Next Web (Amsterdam)
- #cnight (Berlin)
- NOAH (London)
- Startupcon (Cologne)
- Impuls (Liechtenstein)
- f.ounders (New York)
- IdeaLab! WHU (Vallendar)
- bits & Pretzels (Munich)
- Pioneers Festival (Vienna)
- Handelsblatt Konferenz (Berlin)
- Neumacher Konferenz (Hamburg)
- The Next Now! (Berlin)
- K5 (Berlin)
- B2B Keynotes: Amazon, Microsoft, Telekom, DHL

SUMMARIZED

Frank Thelen is a European serial founder, tech investor and TV personality based in Bonn, Germany. Since 1994, he has started and run technology- and design-driven businesses. As the Founder and CEO of Freigeist Capital, he focuses on early-stage investments like Liliium Aviation, Wunderlist, myTaxi, kaufDA and Little Lunch. His track record of founding disruptive companies now spans two decades. His products have reached 200+ million consumers in 60+ countries, gathering prestigious awards along the way, such as the 'Innovate 4 Society Award', presented to him by Angela Merkel. In 2014, Frank joined Sony Pictures prime-time TV show “Shark Tank”, broadcasted in Germany on VOX as “Die Höhle der Löwen”.

FOUNDER

Since 1994, Frank has founded seven technology companies and his products have reached more than 200 million consumers in over 60 countries. His last startup doo has received 10 million US dollar venture capital. His first major exit was ip.labs, the global market leader for online photo services, acquired in 2008 by Fujifilm Corporation. With doo, Frank released one of the first AI powered Apps and received numerous awards, but didn't see the expected growth and engagement. In 2014, the doo service was discontinued, pivoting to 'Scanbot', today's market leader for document scanners.

INVESTOR

As of 2010, Frank has invested in a growing number of startups, such as Liliium Aviation, Wunderlist (now Microsoft), myTaxi (now Daimler) or kaufDA (now Axel Springer). As a juror in Sony's prime-time TV show "Die Höhle der Löwen", he supports founders with capital, knowledge and his network to build and scale successful companies.

TV PERSONALITY

Since 2014 Frank takes part in the jury of Sony's prime-time show 'Shark Tank'. The show is broadcast in Germany on VOX as "Die Höhle der Löwen". The international show received many prestigious awards like Emmy, Deutscher Fernsehpreis and Ernst Schneider. Frank has also been featured in many other TV-Shows.

BRIEF

Frank Thelen is a European serial founder, technology investor and TV personality. Since 1994, he founded and managed technology and design-driven companies. In his role as the founder and CEO of the venture capitalist Freigeist Capital, he concentrates on investments in the early phase. Its products have reached over 200 million customers in over 60 countries. Frank was the seed investor in startups like Liliium Aviation, Wunderlist, myTaxi, kaufDA and Little Lunch.

VERY BRIEF

Frank Thelen is a European serial founder, tech investor and TV personality. As the Founder & CEO of Venture capitalist Freigeist Capital, he focuses on seed investments like Liliium Aviation, Wunderlist, myTaxi, kaufDA and Little Lunch.