

What do you enjoy most about your work and why?

I love many things about it – probably the best thing is being able to create something new almost every day. Designing your products without having to answer to anyone else or justify your decisions against some board or other, that's the best thing about it. Of course you should be able to convince your colleagues that it's something worth doing, but even if they didn't like it you'd have the last say. In the end, of course, your users decide how good your ideas were, and that's who you really have to listen to. Other great things are the flexibility of being your own boss and freely allotting your time, plus the ability to put together your own team and work with people you really like and have fun with.

Where does your passion come from? What drives you, inspires you, excites you?

It's still the creating of things I'm afraid. I love designing products, discussing user interfaces with our designer, and seeing new features being implemented and then hopefully welcomed by our users. I'm a real stickler when it comes to details in design and wording but it's great when you finally get it right. What excites me most about the product development process is finding the simplest, most beautiful user interface for a given problem, that gives the user the best experience, which is what it's all about.

Someone reading this wants to start a tech company. What's your best advice for them?

I just answered this question in another interview with the Nike slogan, which is of course not very original or clever, but in my opinion still the best advice for a budding entrepreneur: Just do it. Because if you don't try you won't succeed of course, and even if it takes two to three attempts, it will be worth it. But I think quite often even the first attempt works out, if you do something you're passionate about and that solves a problem for you. Like Mike Arrington said somewhere recently, "Best startups generally come from somebody needing to scratch an itch".

What are a few tech startups that you're really excited about right now and why?

Not sure if this qualifies as a startup, but in Vienna we have a new car sharing service called car2go (a Daimler subsidiary) that has 500 Smart cars parked around the city that you can rent for 29 cents (Euro cents, that is) per minute, all in. This works really well and I use it a lot. myTaxi is another very nice mobility service. Apart from that I think it's high time someone invented a really good new payment service and threw Paypal from its throne. Technically, we really struggle with the Paypal service at MindMeister and I'd love to see someone better take over. Maybe square can do it.

What tech tools (websites, apps, gadgets, etc.) do you rely on both for work and in your down time?

Apart from the ubiquitous social sites that you can't avoid nowadays even if you wanted to (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc) we're using Dropbox for file sharing, Zendesk for our support, Skype for chats and calls, and of course we create lots of MindMeister mind maps. Personally I also use Evernote, 1Password, and RunKeeper. So nothing too special there, maybe because I don't have much time checking out all the new tools. I recently found airbnb for private apartment lettings which worked really well I have to say.