

# Why NYSE Euronext supports the Benelux Technology Fast50 Award



Nyse Euronext is happy to sponsor the Benelux Technology Fast50 Award. Indeed, we are convinced we have to support growth companies as they are excellent for the economy: growth is a driving factor behind value creation and growing companies are the main creators of jobs. All economic studies prove that SMEs are much more likely to hire new employees than large conglomerates. Of course, it is easier to grow when you are small: a doubling of the revenues can be achieved after a start-up has successfully launched a new product or service. It is much more difficult to double the sales for a mature firm. . .

The success of a company is linked to many factors such as creativity, detection of niches in the market, managing teams of colleagues . . . But visibility is often a critical factor: obviously, after the first concept and realization of workable prototypes, companies have to market their new product and visibility is important to bring the product to the market. But even before the stage of commercialization, visibility can be crucial for young companies. They may have to raise capital: many tech companies organize funds raising before they have revenues. Visibility will also be useful to attract talent: the job market is not perfectly efficient and many companies cannot easily find the young graduates or the experienced professionals they need to prosper.

Companies that take the challenge of participation to the Benelux Technology Fast50 Award have understood the value of visibility: their name will be associated with a competition dedicated to the best performers! They will have to present themselves under the best profile. They have to accept to be put into the limelight. Their accounts will be scrutinized. Their competitors will better understand what they stand for. They will learn a lot in the process and the lessons learned will be useful for the business life also – even if they do not win the first prize!

Candidates to the Fast50 Award are also likely to be interested in a listing. Indeed, an Initial Public Offering (“IPO”) has many similar aspects: issuers also have to accept transparency: the listing requirements include a full description of the activity, of the organization and of the accounts. The managers also have to work hard to prepare the IPO and to defend their case in front of one of the most difficult audiences: the investors. And one of the main benefits of a listing is definitely the visibility provided by the operation. Funding can be provided by several other sources such as banks, business angels or venture capitalists but a listing on the stock market will attract unique media coverage, not only at IPO but during the whole life as a listed company.

Hence, NYSE Euronext has confirmed to Deloitte its interest in promoting the Technology Fast50 Award in 2010 and after: we want to promote growth companies and possibly help them achieve the ultimate step by getting a listing. Technology and growth stocks form the bulk of our newly listed companies!

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