

# Michael Widenius, Entrepreneur



## A short walk trough of the life of an Entrepreneur

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# Questions addressed in talk



- 1) Who is Monty? Brief history
- 2) What led you into entrepreneurship?
- 3) How did you get started?
- 4) What challenges did you face in the beginning and how did you overcome them? Eg Convincing early employees to join you, raising seed & venture capital etc.
- 5) How did you handle the growth of your venture?
- 6) Liquidity event.
- 7) Three key lessons learned through the journey that you would like to share with the audience.

# (Very) Brief history



- Put asphalt on streets in Helsinki to afford first computer
- Started with “Kaj and Monty Programs” in 1977.
  - Kaj Arnö made “educational programs”, Monty games
- Unireg (base of MySQL code) was started 1981 while working for Tapio Laakso Oy
- Started Monty Program Ab in 1982
  - Necessary to be able to work from Finland with TCX in Sweden.
- Did consulting for TCX and customers in Finland & Sweden 1982-1995
- MySQL code was released Dec 1995 under dual licensing.
- MySQL Finland Ab took in investment and hired a new CEO, Mårten Mickos, in 2001.
- MySQL Ab was sold to Sun in March 2008 for 1 billion \$.

# (Very) Brief history, part 2



- Monty & others left Sun in Feb 2009 to work on Maria engine.
- Oracle started to acquire Sun (including MySQL) in April 2009.
- EU approved deal in March 2010

# Monty Program Ab (II)



- Started in February 2009 after Monty's exit from MySQL/SUN
- Shifted focus from Maria storage engine to MariaDB (A branch of MySQL) after Oracle acquired Sun.
- Drives (but doesn't own) the MariaDB development
- Founding member of the Open Database Alliance (ODBA)
- “Virtual company” (no offices) with 20+ employees all over the world. All original 'core' developers of MySQL are employed. (Full optimizer team, 3 of 4 MySQL architects, etc)
- Very technical company (only development, open source consulting and L3 (bug fix & advanced) support)
- Uses the Hacking Business Model ('Company is owned by the employees')

# Why MariaDB was created



## “Save the People, Save the Product”

- To keep the MySQL talent together
- To ensure that a free version of MySQL always exists
- To get one community developed and maintained branch
- Work with Drizzle (and other MySQL forks/branches) to share knowhow and code

After Oracle announced it wanting to buy Sun & MySQL this got to be even more important.

# What am I doing now ?



- CEO of Monty Program Ab
- Founder, owner and part time employee of Open Ocean Capital, an investment company.
- Board member in a couple of investment cases.
- Founding member and chairman of Open Database alliance.
- Creating a high class restaurant, “Crazy Monty” around some totally new concept.
  - Ambitions is to create the best restaurant in Finland.
- Founder of Konseek, an online auction house.
- Building a new home (AI + ECO)
- Building a new vacation house.
- Speaker at many different conferences.
- Taking care of family and friends.

# Thanks



## Q & A