



## **Interview with Checkin.com**

Shortlisted company in the Star of Innovation category

### **What are the key qualities your company has?**

- Our greatest asset, by far, has been our amazing team - over these five years, we've been lucky enough to gather some of the smartest and hardest-working professionals. Checkin.com's consistently high margins and strong, sustained growth were only made possible by our skilled team, brave enough to develop innovative, high-performance software, which generates immense value for our partners and clients.

### **What prompted your company to go public?**

- An IPO was just one among a number of strategic alternatives we could have opted for. Ultimately, it's because we understood how helpful an IPO would be to the execution of an active merger/acquisition strategy that we opted to go down this particular road. There are, as we see it, a plethora of technologies which exist in a fragmented landscape, but whose consolidation could strengthen Checkin.com's offering into the future. What's more, we've long subscribed to the belief that it's important to forge your own way in the world as a company - an IPO is what allows us to retain our independence, and to set the tone across all our operations.

### **What were the main challenges along the road to becoming public?**

- In all honesty, we were actually quite shocked by how smooth the process turned out to be! Even before we had officially taken the decision to go public, we already had almost everything in order, and where we fell short, we knew that we could rely on solid legal and financial advisors to bridge the gap. One could even say that the IPO was a breeze, at least in comparison with the actual task of building and developing innovative software, while maintaining consistently high growth over the years.

### **What have been the key benefits (for your company) of going public?**

- Our key objective of executing an efficient and dynamic merger/acquisition agenda was certainly greatly facilitated by the IPO. We have since successfully carried out two acquisitions of companies with highly advanced niche technologies, which complemented our existing software. Incorporating these new technologies into our operations further accelerated our growth, by making our software more appealing, with a broader offering and increased demand by the market.

**After going public, what reactions have you had from investors, customers, employees, etc.?**

- Whether it's the media, the investment community, or perspective customers and talents, the response has been super positive all around! Some of the Nordics' most prominent investors took a very early interest in our company's operations, and made the decision to invest. The fact that members of the general public also had the opportunity to support us on our growth journey was a fantastic development as well. We are also especially proud of the fact that we as founders together with our staff own almost half of the company.

**What experience/advice would you want to share with companies that are thinking of going public?**

- We would argue that it's important to contextualise the IPO process - to think of going public not as an end goal in and of itself, but as the start of a new journey. It's up to companies to decide what their main incentive is for going public; once you do discover that motivating factor, though, go ahead and take the leap.

**Where do you see yourselves in 5 years?**

- Checkin.com is at the start of a very ambitious journey. In the years to follow, the way end users interact with products and services will change drastically, and we want to be the key driver behind that change. That means changing the internet as we know it. Long-term, we believe that connecting with a new service online will become as easy as toggling a switch, or checkin.

**Have you had any assistance from the European Union, e.g. funding projects, etc.**

- We were granted a loan by Almi, a Swedish business developer, at a very early stage, which was crucial in getting our business off the ground. All loans offered by Almi since 2001 have been under guarantee by the EU's European Investments Fund.

**In your view, what should the EU be doing to encourage more SMEs to go public? What should the EU be doing to provide ongoing support for listed companies? What three things specifically would you wish for?**

- Firstly, we would really like the EU to support fast growing companies during their growth journey in the same way post-IPO as if they had chosen the private track. Secondly, it is important to make sure that rules and regulations don't discriminate against public companies: for example, employee stock options rules, or investment grants restrictions, should not be worse when compared to at private companies. Finally, we'd urge the EU to retain the regulations and thresholds for IPOs, in order to make sure that well-run companies can go public with ease, while those seeking to make a quick exit have a harder time doing so. Speaking for our company, we already had most of the groundwork in place before deciding to take the leap, and thus had no problems living up to the required standards.