



Interview with Trifork

Shortlisted company in the Star of 2022 category

What are the key qualities your company has?

- Trifork's core assets are craftsmanship and innovation, and our goal is to improve the world with software. We are fuelled by our curiosity for new technologies, from which we create value for end users and enterprises. We've positioned ourselves at the forefront of innovation, and we deliver full-circle solutions covering 'Inspire', 'Build' and 'Run' services. Trifork has a fully scalable flat organisational structure, granting us a high degree of autonomy, and empowering employees at all levels to exert influence. It's this structure which guarantees a high degree of diversity, in terms of technology and human resources alike. Our relationships with our clients, with our partners and with our colleagues are based on trust, respect and equality. Trifork's R&D activities empower start-ups to develop innovative software products, and the components necessary to expedite and improve the solutions our customers have come to rely on.

What prompted your company to go public?

- Society finds itself in the midst of a digital transformation, and we believe Trifork can play a central role in driving digitalisation processes internationally, as our solutions are already among the most widely-used in Denmark, a highly-digitalised society. By becoming publicly listed, we felt we would be able to fund our international growth prospects, and to cement our position as one of the most innovative IT solutions providers, for public and private consumers alike, in Denmark, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the UK. Since 2007, our average annual growth rate has been 24%, and with an ambitious growth strategy in place, an IPO was a natural next step for Trifork. We were also convinced that listing would bolster the Trifork brand, and improve our ability to attract and retain talented employees.

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

- Going public requires a company to adhere to a number of principles, regulations and compliance standards. Since 2007, Trifork has adhered to IFRS reporting standards, and these principles were already well rooted in our organisation. Consequently, most of the reporting processes for the listing were already in place, and the barrier to entry was lower. The main challenges were rather to be found in building the optimal communication channels with new investors and highlighting the uniqueness of Trifork.

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

- The IPO garnered more public awareness for our business, and as a result, we've been able to get in contact with a lot of exciting new companies - potential customers and investors both. Since the valuation of our share price is now market driven, shares are more attractive as an asset, when it comes to acquisitions and employee equity programs. It has also given us the opportunity to use the stock exchange as a platform for potential future capital events.

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

- Our company has never enjoyed such high public visibility for our branding. The increased focus on transparency, and compliance in general has solidified our credibility among new customers and investors. We have received tonnes of positive feedback with respect to our improved communication of the targets and actions we're setting in place to improve sustainability worldwide. Inbound interest from new international investors keeps increasing and, by having a listed share, we now have been able to improve employee share programmes.

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

- If you initiate the listing process, you need to maintain as much control as possible within your own organisation, and carefully coordinate every aspect. You'll need a very clear picture of how you intend to use every one of your advisers, and what their deliverables are. Most importantly, stay true to your vision and corporate strategy, and take full responsibility for all important decisions.

Where do you see yourselves in 5 years?

- Trifork is already among the leading actors in the digitalisation agenda within our sphere of work. We play an important role in addressing both local and global challenges, and we do so without neglecting our environmental and social responsibilities. We see ourselves growing into a global organisation, with several additional branches across Europe, and an expansion of operations into the US. We intend to perfect our 'Teal' organisational structure, as we seek to remain at the cutting edge of innovation, driven by our passion for serving society and improving the world through software. In the last 15 years, we boast an impressive 24% compound annual growth rate, and we expect to maintain this level of growth into the future. In the medium term (three years), we've set a target growth rate of 15-25% per annum - a combination of 10-15% organic growth plus acquisitions. We have yet to set in place objectives which stretch beyond this timeframe.

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

- A handful of our start-up companies have, on occasion, received support from EU innovation funds for the development of specific markets and/or products, and in several instances our consolidated companies were granted financing from other EU funds to support the development of specific solutions. For the IPO process itself, we did not receive any direct financial support from the EU.

In your view, how can the EU encourage more SMEs to go public? What should the EU be doing to provide ongoing support for listed companies?

- If the EU truly wishes to encourage a greater number of SMEs to opt for public listing, they'd need to develop clearer regulations concerning listing rules, especially around dual-listings. Perhaps it would be beneficial to have an EU-appointed independent adviser, who can offer support to companies before they've had the chance to select their own advising teams. The EU could also set up conditional funding via innovation

growth funds, as stepping stones towards an IPO: these funds could be tied to meeting certain financial reporting requirements, a useful tool in preparing an organisation for how to behave as a listed company. Last but not least, the EU could follow the example set by EIS in the UK, and work to put into place preferential tax rules in relation to investment in companies which do complete the listing process. In terms of supporting already listed companies, the EU should always strive to reduce administrative burdens, to ease cross-border business operations, and to resolve any bilateral conflicts - in our case, this conflict was with the Swiss government, which prevented us from completing a dual listing, as we had planned.