WITH CONVICTION Why nothing works without honesty

WITH FORESIGHT How Baloise Insurance benefits from customer complaints

WITH OPENNESS What makes Eclipse Scout so successful
Honesty can be painful. That goes for difficult situations, but also when we know that our competitor is not placing all his cards on the table, or if we already know what will be inevitable tomorrow, but still say what we think today.

But that is not all: To act in line with the way we think is essential to us. Sustainability is our goal and honesty is the path to it. Interestingly, we are learning in the course of our projects that the honesty of our customers’ sales and contact center is also appreciated by their customers. Companies that admit to process errors and dedicate themselves to long-term improvement are appreciated. Apologizing for individual errors and quickly rectifying them are two behaviors that are respected and which contribute towards promoting a company. Honesty towards the customer is what is important in both cases.

But are we really always honest at BSI? While sometimes, quite rarely, we may neglect to say something important, these are omissions: We never consciously intend to speak anything less than the truth. That’s both in your interest, and in ours.

Christian A. Rusche

CEO BSI
We would go crazy without lies

As an ethicist, Markus Huppenbauer has researched the topic of honesty. For him it is clear: Honesty is absolutely necessary – but not all the time.

Keynote

Prof. Markus Huppenbauer, PhD, was born in Klosters, Switzerland, in 1958, grew up in Ghana and studied philosophy and theology in Zurich. From 1999, he was an assistant professor and from 2006, a full professor of ethics on the Faculty of Theology at the University of Zurich. He assumed management of the University Priority Research Program in Ethics in April 2005. He conducts research on ethical leadership; in this context, he is also preoccupied with the topic honesty – as a personality trait that is essential for a leader. Prof. Huppenbauer co-authored a guide book together with Barbara Bleisch in 2011 entitled “Ethical Decision Making” (Ethische Entscheidungsfindung). It shows how value conflicts can be settled in practice.

Hand on your heart: Are you an honest person?

Markus Huppenbauer: (laughs) I think I am more or less an honest person – as honest and dishonest as anyone else. It seems important to me to first define what honesty actually is.

So let’s do that.

I will define two terms. There is a very narrow understanding of honesty that I do not find particularly helpful, except perhaps in a legal setting, when it comes to finding the truth. Honesty, in this sense, means that someone speaks true and accurate sentences. It is the other area that I find more interesting.

And that would be?

When it comes to the question of whether someone is an honest person. This has to do with honesty as a personality trait, as a virtue. An honest person is trustworthy, handles things that are not his own honestly, does not cheat. This is less a matter of making true statements, but has more to do with behavior. Honesty towards oneself is a special case; one we’ll surely discuss later.

Can honest behavior be taught?

I think so. Honesty is a matter of upbringing. So that means that no one is really born honest?

Neither honest nor dishonest. I compare it with bravery, courage or fairness. While there might be biological propensities for these traits in the broadest sense, in principle we must first develop these virtues.

What factors matter in the process?

We grow up in a certain family, in a certain environment. Our concept of honesty is correspondingly varied. It is shaped culturally.

You grew up in Ghana...

... yes, but only for the first six years. That is too short a time to really be able to say much about it. But you also do not have to go so far to see the conceptual differences when it comes to the topic of honesty.

What do you mean?

Someone who was raised in a German-speaking, Protestant environment probably has a different understanding of honesty than someone raised in a more Mediterranean, Catholic environment. Differences of this sort are to be recognized, but not evaluated.

How important is honesty in society?

It is a fundamental value. Without a certain degree of honesty, of trustworthiness, we would not survive. The importance of honesty begins early on in the family, and is also an essential factor in economic terms. I have to be able to trust that my business partner will honor a contract, that retailers label their products accurately, that one hundred grams truly is one hundred grams. We depend on honest communication. If we did not trust it, be unable to trust it, then our social and economic relationships would collapse. We would all go crazy.

Does that apply to all forms of society?

In principle, yes. Of course, there are societies in which you have to be more careful, more discrete. But that doesn’t matter, because everyone knows. In China, for example, there is a theory of warfare that involves being sneaky and outsmarting the opponent in a refined manner. Now: Is that dishonest? I’m not really sure in this case. It is almost an art form.

So that means there are also likable liars?

I’ve considered that; right now, I cannot think of a public person to whom that would apply. However, there are people who I would say are fooling themselves – which nevertheless does not make them unlikable liars. We all know someone who says: “Starting tomorrow, I am going to make sure I have a better work-life balance.” And when we hear that for the tenth time, we know that we no longer have to take them seriously. We know: Here is someone who is not being honest with himself. But he isn’t really hurting anyone.

We would go crazy without lies
What differentiates honesty towards yourself from honesty towards others?

When it comes to honesty towards oneself, I don’t have to consider anyone else. At the same time, it is much harder. When it comes to honesty towards others, they react to my honesty, emotions are evoked. It’s more complicated when it comes to my inner honesty. It is easier for me to fool myself. We all have blind spots in our perception – but when other people get involved, these blind spots are more quickly corrected externally. For example: If I speak poorly about politicians – “they are all cheats” –, the chances are that someone else will correct this impression. But in my inner perception, this incidental correction does not happen. That is, unless I tell someone what I think about myself.

What form of honesty is more important?

Both areas are equally important, and neither of them is easy, because we have expectations about the truth, both from ourselves and others. We need to be honest with ourselves to develop internally. Those who are not honest with themselves remain rooted to the same spot. What’s more: We all have areas of our lives in which we are more honest than we are in others. In our professional lives, for example, you need to be totally honest from a certain perspective, while in other areas, it is no one’s business.

You say that we do not need to be honest in certain situations. What do you mean by that?

For one thing, it is a question of being polite. If my wife asks if I like her hairstyle, then it is a good idea to say yes. And yet, an untruth in this situation could come back to haunt me, if perhaps I don’t care for the hairstyle and she should decide to style it that way again the next time. But the fact is: Politeness gives us the right to be more or less precise in our handling of the truth. That is because it’s less a matter of having an objective perception than it is to maintain an interpersonal relationship.

So when is it okay to lie?

In commonsense situations. These are even legally protected in Switzerland. For example, if you apply for a new position, you are not compelled to disclose that you are pregnant. When it makes sense to do so and to protect your own interests, you may lie. In science circles, a classic example is used to illustrate this.

Please explain.

In a totalitarian nation, someone must hide in his house because he is part of a family that is being persecuted because of their ethnicity. One day, the police show up at the door and claim to have heard that a family is hiding there. Now there is a problem. If there is a superordinate, imperative to tell the truth, then the police must be told where the family is hiding. You’ll see right away: That simply doesn’t work. It directly conflicts with the conviction that the family must be helped.

So that means there are rules that supersede the prohibition of lying?

That’s right; in this case, the compelling need to protect this family. This represents a classic moral dilemma. Kant, the famous 18th century German philosopher, believed that even in such a case you should not lie. However, hardly anyone believes that today. The lying prohibition is important, but there are moments in which it is even morally necessary not to tell the truth.

Who determines when this is the case?

We do. Society. And there are differences here too. In some cultures it is clear that you do not have to tell the truth if you spent the night with a lover in a hotel – simply because everyone knows. While in other societies, quite the opposite is true: You have to confess that you have had an affair, because it is a matter of integrity.

It seems to me that there is no such thing as absolute honesty. So why is it nevertheless held up as such a high ideal? Is it really?
I think so. You are right. Honesty is highly valued.

We expect the person we are facing to be honest, don't we?

Of course. And why is that? Because we have to be able to function, in a relationship, at work, in sports. If I cannot be sure that my fellow humans are honest, then things would be very difficult. I would have to check up on what they say and do all the time, which would be an inefficient way of living. And that would be very expensive for a business: So it costs less – both economically and psychologically – in every way, to be honest.

Whereas: If I don't like a certain coworker, it makes sense not to rub his face in it.

How does one prove that one is an honest person?

This is really important: Look at them like a loyal hound and keep a poker face (laughs). No, seriously: That is a classic situation. First, I have to give something – my trust – in order to see if anything comes back – ideally, honesty. Whereas: If I don’t like a certain coworker, it makes sense not to rub his face in it.

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So you have to pay honesty forward?

Exactly; at least to some degree. Of course, naivety is not recommended and you should not be surprised if you are fooled now and then. But if you trust someone a few times and receive honesty back in return, then you can assume: That is an honest person.

That makes it worse, when it turns out to be wrong years later.

Yes. That is really bad. And why? Because there is an existing history of trust. And when this turns out to be incorrect, then it is shocking.

Are there people to which society attributes less honesty, and from which less honesty is expected?

(laughs). Well, there are politicians and journalists. They have, or at least one gets the impression that they have, a rather loose definition of honesty.

And: Is that an advantage or a disadvantage for those concerned?

That doesn’t really matter. In that specific case, a politician has a problem if he is suspected of being dishonest. Voters basically assume that the party and representatives they vote for are honest – just all the others aren’t.

To what degree does age influence our honesty?

Do people grow more honest as they get older?

I really think so. I notice that I say certain things more clearly today and can also offer criticism. Earlier, I would whitewash such things politely. When it comes to interpersonal interactions, it is entirely a sign of maturity if you can dare to open up to another person at times.

How much courage does honesty require?

I think it takes a great deal. Of course, there are people who simply say what they think with no sensitivity. That, to me, isn’t courage, but clumsiness. But to really tell the truth in a conversation, such as how I perceive the person I am talking to, takes a lot of courage and fine sensibility. To simply hit someone upside the head with the truth is not really a form of honesty that I find socially helpful.

Is that the point at which honesty is no longer a virtue?

Well, it is exaggerated. Honesty is a value. But you have to pay attention how you experience and communicate it. Truth for truth’s sake is not necessarily helpful in everyday life – at best it is interesting from an academic standpoint.

By the way: You say that honesty is not a particularly popular research topic. Why?

We are talking about academic ethics here. I don’t know. Some values and standards simply do not make sexy research topics, even if everyone knows that they need them and are important. There is an array of virtues – such as excellence or integrity – that are attractive, with which one can get ahead in life. Honesty, on the other hand, is more like humility or thriftiness: It has more to do with self-control, is difficult and requires work on yourself. That is not very attractive to a lot of people. And perhaps that also has an effect upon the choice of research topics.
The current winter release took on three core issues: reduction of complexity, greater flexibility when customizing and investment protection. Here are just a few highlights:

The new cockpit was introduced in the last issue and now it is here. It is configurable and combines nearly two dozen key data indicators into a virtual flight cockpit containing the equalizer, radar, tachometer and gearshift, which provide information about sales, contacts, leads, target customers and markets. Aggregated data turns the cockpit into a central sales management tool for team and sales managers. Authorized users can choose which data and time periods are to be shown and also how they are to be grouped and what they are compared to.

BSI CRM 12.7 also provides a hierarchical graph display of the actions with assigned target groups and reactions in the marketing module. With a single click of the mouse, marketing managers can access information about the status and success of their campaigns. The depiction of process chains as so-called “swimlanes” enables users to find their way in complex business processes. The administrator can take the next step, make changes, delete or add – all on the fly and with no IT skills required.

Complexity reduced through visualization

BSI CRM 12.7 visualizes people, companies, departments and projects in networks. These graphs can be displayed organically, hierarchically or orthogonally. Nearly anything is possible, from a simple company structure, to multi-layered relationship networks. All graphics can be saved or exported as a PDF with a click of the mouse. BSI CRM 12.7 also provides a hierarchical graph display of the actions with assigned target groups and reactions in the marketing module. With a single click of the mouse, marketing managers can access information about the status and success of their campaigns. The depiction of process chains as so-called “swimlanes” enables users to find their way in complex business processes. The administrator can take the next step, make changes, delete or add – all on the fly and with no IT skills required.

Flexibility through configuration

Flexibility when customizing saves costs, increases independence and makes releases less expensive. In BSI CRM 12.7, all value lists, forms, fields, columns and reports, as well as text, parameters and the user administration can be configured without specific IT skills. The new structure enables the administrator to configure and control nearly every aspect of the application. The entire configuration – and also parts of it – can be exported and imported. This makes it possible to create custom templates for specific industries or to make customer adaptations.

Investment protection through release capability

All configurations in the administration view are 100 percent release-capable, which means they are retained during updates. The multi-tenancy capability was expanded even further, so that the configuration of each individual element can now differ from tenant to tenant.

And that’s not all...

The marketing module now makes it possible to create so-called landing pages with no IT skills required. Users can conduct simple e-mail promotions that link to websites on which customers can find additional information, fill in forms and provide feedback. This information flows back to the promotion – everything managed directly from the marketing module.

Outlook for BSI CRM 12.8

After the classic Java client, the new Web solution, BSI CRM 12.8, will completely support all mobile devices and tablets – with new controls optimized for these channels. What’s more, graphic elements will be configurable by the user, e.g., charts can also be integrated into document templates – a practical feature for regular details reports. And you can also place your own complex rules in the rulebook – again with no IT skills. And if that’s not enough, a major new module will be added: Order Management.

This release is dedicated to the user and the administrator. Many new ideas have flowed into it and make working with BSI CRM on a daily basis easier and more pleasant.
Impressions from seven BSI locations
Whether Berne, Zurich or Munich, every one of the seven BSI offices welcomes visitors with the same friendliness and openness. The latest offices have been designed in the same way: Light-filled rooms, warm orange tones and contemporary décor are combined with the special features each location has to offer. The BSI logo functions as a decorative element in various forms. And no office can be without a well-stocked snack bar and a selection of cold soft drinks. Come visit us!

The flying Super Sheep
While searching for a mascot for our Eclipse Scout framework, we had no luck in the advertising giveaway catalogues, so instead we had this sweet Super Sheep with cape produced for us. The elastic front legs function as thrust for distance flight competitions. And you won’t soon lose your new friend thanks to the Velcro on his front paws. Our Super Sheep are always in great demand at Eclipse events, but that’s understandable, really; who can resist those eyes? Have you always wanted your own stuffed animal? Then have one custom-made!

Tip: Since iOS 5, you can assign different vibration patterns to your various contacts. This way you can tell who is calling just by your phone’s vibration. That can be practical when you are in a meeting and have your iPhone in your trouser pocket. To learn how to do it: http://goo.gl/97PJ2

Nicolas’ Apps
Software Engineer, BSI

NOTFUNNY (iPhone, free)
Either you think Joscha Sauer’s cartoons are funny or you don’t. It’s indisputable, however, that the app is excellently made. You can browse through all of Joscha Sauer’s cartoons and there are over a thousand of them now. That also includes lots of older ones which cannot be found in his books.

TRVL (iPad, free)
A free English language travel magazine for iPad. The reports are just the right size and illustrated with great photos. New editions can be downloaded directly in the app. Makes you want to travel.

Nicolas’ Apps
Software Engineer, BSI

Immobilien (iPhone, app)
With the Immobilien app from comparis.ch, available in English, French, German and Italian, you can search through the rental ads on all leading real estate portals in Switzerland. It’s perfect for keeping an eye open for apartments available while on the go. I used it to find my new apartment. :-) Available only in German.

Small gifts retain good customer relations. It’s the thought that counts! In this section, we present innovative product ideas for effective give-aways.

Product: Super Sheep stuffed animal
Price: CHF 6, including printing on cape
Logo: Printing on cape
Source: www.bbtrading.ch

Tip: Since iOS 5, you can assign different vibration patterns to your various contacts. This way you can tell who is calling just by your phone’s vibration. That can be practical when you are in a meeting and have your iPhone in your trouser pocket. To learn how to do it: http://goo.gl/97PJ2

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TRVL (iPad, free)
A free English language travel magazine for iPad. The reports are just the right size and illustrated with great photos. New editions can be downloaded directly in the app. Makes you want to travel.
Complaints are a major stroke of luck for companies and are valuable. They are indicators that benefit internal improvement processes, while also offering an opportunity to prove to customers that good service can be provided right when help is needed, to make them happy again, win them back over, and to regain their loyalty,” explained Cordula-Inès Schweizer, who went on to add: “Insurance companies are difficult to identify with emotionally. As customers, their primary contact with us is through bills, or perhaps a call or two each year. And when they do contact us, it usually has something to do with a claim, which means that negative emotions tend to be associated with insurance companies. But loyalty to a brand or company is something that is highly emotional. That is precisely why it is so important that when something does not go well, that we do it especially good job at fixing it. It is easy to surprise the customer in such a situation, because expectations are so low.”

If complaints are handled fairly, appropriately and appreciatively, such “last chances” can, according to Cordula-Inès Schweizer, be turned around and become authentic loyalty boosters. Success in this regard is measurable: Resolving rates for customers who have had their complaints handled well and quickly are double the rate for those who have not complained.

Professional complaint management centrally and with professional software

To be able to process negative customer feedback from all customer departments seamlessly and on time, Baloise Switzerland bundled its complaint management at a central location and introduced a professional software application. “We first had to extract complaint management from the various departments. Ultimately, our customers see us as one company, despite our different divisions and departments. Then we considered how we could set up the process chain in terms of IT. It was clear from the start that we could not work with Excel or Word in this case,” reported Ionel Onofrescu.

The “Lean Six Sigma Green Belt” was also in charge of the evaluation as the overall project manager. Offers were tendered by many different vendors. In the end, the decision was made in favor of BSI. “BSI delivered a great deal of experience in this field. The facts were convincing. The application was fast, the usability was high and the underlying technology was sophisticated. And the human aspect was immediately comfortable,” reminisced Onofrescu.

Pouring complex processes into software and filling gaps intelligently

Things got started in the summer of 2010. Step by step, the complaint management process at Baloise Switzerland was poured into the new application. Complaints are received by e-mail, fax, letter or photo at the central inbox. The documents are searched through in central scanning by keyword and complaints are automatically allocated to a mailbox. This is where the BSI complaint management tool, which is based on the ticket module in BSI CRM, kicks in: It automatically extracts all new documents from the mailbox and sets up a business case. With the help of BSI’s Process Wizard, the complaints are enriched with additional data from Baloise Switzerland’s partner system, such as information about products purchased or the customer rep’s contact info. The business case is transferred by the complaint manager to the pending file of a specialist, who makes the detailed clarifications and responds back with a solution proposal in short order. Everyone involved can see all the data on a screen that corresponds to his particular role. As soon as the business case is handled and the complaint has been settled, it goes back to the complaint manager, who closes the case and informs the customer by letter or e-mail.

Last chance to boost loyalty: complaint management at Baloise Insurance in Switzerland

Taking negative feedback seriously can prove to be a matter of survival for a company – particularly for insurance companies. Just why Baloise Insurance sees complaints as opportunities is explained by Cordula-Inès Schweizer, Head of Retention & Complaint Management. Ionel Onofrescu, the project manager in charge at Baloise Switzerland, talks about how the software tool that reflects this philosophy was evaluated and then set up centrally.

“I’’T’S A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO SEEK SOLUTIONS.”

Jonas Mendler, Software Engineer at BSI, remembers the implementation phase: “A lot of interface work was needed at the beginning. That was certainly a challenge, but one that we were able to handle thanks to our internal colleagues at Baloise Switzerland. This cooperation with the other people on the team was a good experience. What was new for me was the system landscape’s security environment, which is very typical for insurance companies. This meant that we had to carry out nearly all work on site, since we had no remote access to the Baloise Switzerland systems. Ultimately, however, this significantly contributed to the rapid completion of the project.”

Employees like the new system

The BSI complaint management tool went live at the beginning of 2011. The new software was well received by the staff right from the start. “Our coworkers were pleased because the processing of complaints is now centrally managed so that everyone can concentrate on their main duties. The user-friendliness of the system was a major contributing factor: New employees can actually start with it right away,” summarized Ionel Onofrescu. And customers are also satisfied: Baloise receives a great deal of positive feedback on complaints that were handled well, which the Baloise Complaint Management Team collects on a big bulletin board – the “Wall of Fame.”

Release 2 is already in the starting blocks

Baloise Switzerland is already planning the next release of the complaint management tool. Towards this end, the project manager is compiling user feedback on Release 1. “In Release 1, we designed the tickets to be similar to e-mails, with a reminder function in Lotus Notes. This optical similarity to familiar tools made starting with the BSI complaint management tool very intuitive. In Release 2, we will take the opportunity to use more functionalities from BSI Ticket. We intend to achieve even better data quality through stronger process support and additional mandatory fields. The support from and teamwork with BSI is very constructive in this regard. There is simply a great atmosphere. I am looking forward to Version 2,” reported Ionel Onofrescu.

“COMPLAINTS ARE A MAJOR STROKE OF LUCK FOR COMPANIES: THEY ARE VALUABLE.”

Cordula-Inès Schweizer, Head of Retention & Complaint Management, Baloise Insurance

Concluding with a bit of advice?

“I advise our competitors to do complaint management,” said Cordula-Inès Schweizer with a smile. “No, seriously: It is essential that complaints be taken seriously. I am watching a shift in culture in progress: Our world and the people in it are growing more demanding. Expectations on companies and services are growing. And customer dissatisfaction with a service is initially something negative. And if a company is lucky, they hear about it. A rule of thumb states: from among 25,000 dissatisfied customers, only 1,000 really complain. The other 24,000 express their dissatisfaction to ten other friends. And this whole process is only magnified by the Internet. More people will express their dissatisfaction on the Web and more and more people will hear about it. I think that the exchanging of opinions will take place primarily in networks in the future – keyword: Generation Y or digital natives.”
the development and integration of our products, not difficulty. Matthias Zimmerman counters this assertion last year and has become one of the largest and most active open-source communities today. The Eclipse platform consists of dozens of projects, which together with the global Eclipse ecosystem based upon them, comprises an incredible variety of components and solutions. Eclipse is both the leading software development environment for Java and C/C++ and also a high-quality, freely accessible platform for applications. Only projects that meet clearly defined quality standards are included in the annual release coordination by the Eclipse Foundation. Forty-six million lines of code from 62 project teams and 49 organizations were released with the Indigo Release Train on June 22, 2011. One of the 11 pre-defined Eclipse download packages was specially prepared for Scout application developers.

**Convincing skeptics**

Why BSI Scout is released as an open-source solution is one of the most frequent questions received by Matthias Zimmermann, Co-Project Manager for Eclipse Scout at BSI. Many skeptics are of the opinion that open source and the licensing business – BSI’s bread and butter – can only be combined with difficulty. Matthias Zimmermann counters this assertion by stating: “Our core business today consists of the development and integration of our products, not the marketing of our framework. The publishing of Scout creates added value both for our customers and for BSI. The developers involved in the community view each other’s code. The corresponding social control is a powerful motivator to continuously improve the code quality, to seek robust solutions when implementing new requirements and to avoid dangerous ‘shortcuts’. We have long since successfully used Scout for our commercial products. With the open-source licensing of the underlying Scout framework, we ensure its long-term future, increase the long-term investment in our product made by customers and profit from the ‘coolness factor’ of the Eclipse community among current and future employees.” Zimmermann adds: “When revenue is generated through service, the finding of suitable vendors and helps ensure the availability of the appropriate personnel. The decision to use Eclipse Scout as a framework in this environment is not purely altruistic. The worldwide dissemination of Scout as a platform for crucial business applications offers BSI future starting points for new customers and services.

**Simple, robust & flexible**

Although, Scout is still a newcomer in the Eclipse community, the framework already has a total of ten years of development experience behind it. As the basis for the business applications BSI CRM, BSI Contact and BSI CTMS, it is in use worldwide among BSI customers from various sectors. Andreas Hoegger, Eclipse Scout Co-Project Manager, explains: “We build all our projects upon Scout using the corresponding Scout SDK tool. Some of our customers are already further developing our products on their own with Scout. However, for the time being, we also encourage them to use the framework for their own applications based upon it. Scout is also well-suited as a client strategy to consolidate a historically grown landscape consisting of a wide variety of applications. These have typically been developed inhouse and are based on a variety of technologies, which makes the maintenance and further development of them nearly impossible.”

Matthias Zimmermann adds: “In comparison to conventional Eclipse tools, the productivity of developers is quintupled using Scout. The development tool supplied with Scout, Scout SDK, makes it easy to learn and enables Java developers to build complex, multi-layered business applications in short order. The resulting code is robust and can be flexibly adapted to meet the requirements.”

These advantages are certainly playing a role in the rapid spread throughout the Eclipse community. Eclipse Scout already passed the 30,000 downloads mark back in March 2012. The active forum is a further indication of the active interest in Scout.

**A ticket for the future**

The number of companies using open source is steadily increasing. Open source has long since brushed aside its ‘homemade’ image. Increasing numbers of IT heads are recognizing the advantages of open technology: investment protection, vendor independence and enhancing the business contribution of the internal IT department. Especially for applications that are developed inhouse, the use of open standards and frameworks helps reduce the cost of development and maintenance, the finding of suitable vendors and helps ensure the availability of the appropriate personnel. The decision to use Eclipse Scout as a framework in this environment is not purely altruistic. The worldwide dissemination of Scout as a platform for crucial business applications offers Scout the capability of Eclipse Scout is put to the test in ‘Bahbah Chat,’ a small chat application.

While the flagship product, BSI CRM, is certainly a powerful business card for Scout, easier to comprehend are smaller, freely available applications that demonstrate the various aspects of Scout applications. For example, the Web-capability of Eclipse Scout is put to the test in ‘Bahbah Chat,’ a small chat application.
Rebekka, in your “The fashion nerd” blog, you write about your current fashion favorites, your outfits and the latest news. What makes you a “fashion nerd”?

The blog is all about my love for fashion and IT. Fashion accompanies me every day, it cheers me up, and it lets me express my creativity. The “nerd” part stands for my apprenticeship as an IT specialist at BSI. I started the blog in March 2011. I’d read other fashion blogs for a long time and after a while I thought it would be fun to blog myself.

You do a good job of it. Are your click statistics important to you?

Well, I write for myself first, like a hobby. Sometimes, I also take a look at the stats in the internal tracking to see what’s working and what isn’t. Of course, it feels good if the numbers and comments increase.

How important to you is fashion on a daily basis?

There are days when I start thinking the night before about what I’m going to wear the next day – down to the last detail – and then I often toss it all aside and wear something else. But there are also days when I just wear “normal” stuff. At work though, you should really dress appropriately. I tend to wear the wilder things on the weekends. When I read some fashion bloggers, I sometimes think: Do they really wear that? It seems kind of fake to me.

On the one hand, you love fashion and on the other, you’re studying to become an IT specialist – they don’t really have a lot in common.

What made you choose this career?

I don’t think so! I did a trial traineeship as a seamstress and as an IT specialist – some friends of mine were already working in that field. I find both professions to be quite similar: You create an end product that people need every day, one that makes them happy. I was always really interested in technology and a career in IT seemed to offer a good platform for the future.

How did you end up at BSI?

You can feel the friendly atmosphere here as soon as you walk through the door. In other companies, you work next to each other, but at BSI you work together. I like that.

What do you like best about being an IT specialist, and what gets on your nerves?

I like being able to see what the end product is and how the customer works with it. You don’t often get to see that in IT. But I do like solving problems. I don’t like projects that are moving ahead smoothly and then suddenly get stalled. These two extremes are often very close together. If problems come up, I can ask anyone at BSI – that just goes without saying. In other companies, you’re only allowed to ask your mentors.

What would you advise other young women who are considering getting into software development?

Give it a try! IT might be an unusual choice, but it’s a great profession. As a woman, it’s fun working here. 

Rebekka Stoffel is currently completing an apprenticeship as an IT specialist. In her free time, she likes to blog about her biggest hobby: fashion. In her interview with “meeting bsi,” Rebekka explains what made her a “fashion nerd” – the name of her blog – and how she found herself on the path to becoming an IT specialist, and of course, what she likes about BSI.
“The telecommunications market is complicated enough. All the more reason why we love the simplicity of BSI CRM.”

Lina Vielberth, M-net Telekommunikations GmbH