INNOVATIVE  On the path to success with cow stocks
CONVENIENT  To the next CRM level with Indigo
CONSISTENT  A seamless customer experience with cross-channel
BSI mission

“OUR MISSION IS TO DEVELOP SOFTWARE.”

If we all died, our customers would miss our software. We make software, good software, at the price and date promised. We help our customers be better than their competitors and to win over more happy customers.

Digitalization is sweeping through all facets of life like a stormy autumn wind. New technologies are changing our lives faster than ever and causing fundamental, traditional patterns of behavior to falter. These changes will have a major impact on how we communicate, consume and maintain our relationships in the future. And yet there are essential needs that withstand every storm like old bulwarks: quality and transparency, trust and stability.

No industry is spared by the whirlwinds of digital change. This issue presents how classical businesses deal with the challenge. In the Swiss Alps, a herd of highland cattle is better connected to the Internet than some Swiss citizens. «Natur Konkret» is a great example of the new economy. With originality and the use of cutting-edge technology the company not only solves an agricultural problem, but also created a new business model (page 4).

Walbusch, the fashion company, is developing into a cross-channel merchant that allows its customers to choose their preferred communication and sales channels. The focus is on creating a seamless shopping and service experience (page 14).

The health insurance Sanitas is convinced of the disruptive power of digitalization and is therefore assuming a pioneering role in the industry; wholly in the spirit of “better to seek answers today than to have none tomorrow” (page 16).

With great parental pride we introduce our latest release: BSI CRM Indigo. And like all parents, we know that our own child is the most beautiful. Read all about it starting on page 10 and decide for yourself. We welcome your feedback.

We wish you enjoyable reading!

Your publisher, Catherine B. Crowden
The farmer Guido Leutenegger is dedicated to the production of high-quality meat in harmony with nature. Towards this end, he uses Scottish highland cattle that graze on unused alpine meadows. “They are robust, adaptable and undemanding. There is no other breed of cattle with which you can attain such great quality of meat despite the sparse feed,” asserts Guido Leutenegger in justification of his choice. His “Natur Konkret” operation has really grown since its founding 25 years ago: 800 highland cattle, 200 wooly pigs, and 3,000 chickens graze and grub in Kreuzlingen and several alpine meadows in the mountains of Ticino. The products produced are more than just “organic.” Plenty of free range and natural pasturage comprise a recipe for success. Leutenegger dispenses with the addition of concentrated fodder entirely.

Customers can buy chicken legs, eggs, entrecôtes, sausages and meat in the company’s shop in the village of Maseins in Graubünden. Or in the webshop. Here, customers can shop wherever they are and whenever they prefer and have the goods sent directly to their home in a freezer box.

It’s a win-win situation. “We can deliver throughout Switzerland and don’t need to invest in shop locations,” according to Leutenegger.

The cow as stock
Speaking about investing: Not only do sales channels represent a considerable investment for farmers, their animal herds do as well. Guido Leutenegger has chosen an unusual business model to finance the growth of his operation: the cattle as stock and the customer as a partner. He was inspired with the idea during the financial crisis when talking to a colleague who is a banker. "I wanted to offer people a simple investment: Invest in a cow – receive meat," offered Leutenegger in explanation of his financing model. It’s so simple, so attractive. For CHF 2,500, people can purchase a cow and then receive an annual dividend for ten years: meat worth CHF 350. “The dividends are easily redeemed in our online shop. The customer can choose from a wide product range. And decide when it is to be delivered.”
Greater customer loyalty through cow stocks

Cow stocks have meant added planning security and economic independence for Guido Leutenegger. Last but not least, the creative farmer benefits from greater customer loyalty, because his customers draw the payout of their investment over several years. But it’s not just about locking in customers for Guido Leutenegger: “It’s about turning customers into participants. Customers feel connected to the operation. They own a real share in the company – and they have something that’s concrete, defined and physical: an animal they can touch. Not a theoretical construct as is usual in the stock market, because a cow isn’t just something that exists on paper. On the certificate for your own cow there is a 12-digit number, which can also be seen on the earmark on the respective animal. Guido Leutenegger is certain that customers appreciate the transparency and sustainable investment. “It’s a real commitment to something that you can visit, inspect and even pet.”

“IT’S ABOUT TURNING CUSTOMERS INTO PARTICIPANTS.”
Guido Leutenegger, farmer

The customer loyalty aspect seems to be effective since stockholders and individual buyers not only buy regularly in the online shop, they also powerfully advertise for the company and its products. They identify with the company and therefore actively promote it. Advertising and marketing run by themselves – for example Leutenegger’s Facebook page “Natur Konkret”. Not only do people speak favorably about the tasty products, but really cheer Guido Leutenegger on and defend the company from competitors’ attacks. It’s a classic example of how valuable credible recommendations and loyal customers can be.

The cow and the Internet of Things

Leutenegger also impresses with his forward-looking thinking in his day-to-day farmer operation. After a long test phase, his first cows have been equipped with a GPS tracker. Rather than clanging cowbells, the furry necks of his highland cattle are ringed with a collar fitted with solar cells and a GPS tracker. It’s a business model based on the Internet of Things (IoT) - the linking of the digital with the physical world. The GPS tracker makes it possible to track the cow in real-time on the Internet. The advantage? “The cow can be located faster with GPS tracking, customers always know precisely on which alpine meadow their cow is currently grazing and what route it has already traveled today.”

Farming 4.0

GPS-controlled tractors, drones for field surveillance, an oestrus sensor in the cow with an SMS alarm, computer-controlled field fertilizing: The march of digitalization in agriculture is unstoppable. In the aforementioned cases, it primarily serves to boost efficiency – greater harvests per area and animal. Digitalization also offers new possibilities when it comes to customer relationships. Particularly small operators and niche providers benefit from this change, explained Guido Leutenegger. That’s because customer behavior hasn’t only changed towards furniture dealers, banks and electronics manufacturers. Exactly as with other consumer goods, customers want to search for, compare and purchase agricultural products online - right from their couch at home or on their smartphone on the train, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This also applies to Guido Leutenegger’s customers: “90 percent of customer orders and customer contacts take place through the webshop and e-mail.”

“IT’S A REAL COMMITMENT TO SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN VISIT, INSPECT AND EVEN PET.”
Guido Leutenegger, farmer

This is not only practical for customers, but also for Guido Leutenegger. Orders are automatically saved in a central system and show the entire customer history. Furthermore, he is notified about incoming orders by e-mail and can view them on his smartphone. Even if he happens to be on a mountainside in Ticino. Digitalization also assists with marketing. Websites and webshops offer farmers the ability to sell their products directly. Guido Leutenegger has made use of them for years – with success. On his modern website with a webshop, customers and investors can find all the information they need about the products and services.

Internet of Things (IoT) is the network of the digital and physical worlds. Until now, people were the only link between these two worlds. Today’s possibilities mean that things can be connected directly over the Internet, for example home lighting, bicycles, supermarket shelves and kitchen appliances. Or even cows. The University of St. Gallen demonstrates business models with IoT in an entertaining video:

[youtube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgQ_PHbQgpy)
Digitalization: helpful, but has its limits
Is digitalization the ultimate solution for all business models? Are physical communication channels dead? Are people superfluous as a workforce? “Digitalization is a good tool in many areas, but nothing more,” according to Leutenegger. A lot of things can be depicted, measured or marketed digitally, but people won’t be replaced in the process. “The GPS tracker on the cow, for example, won’t replace the alpine cowherd,” Leutenegger asserted.

Especially when it comes to customer relationships, digitalization isn’t necessarily the path to absolute customer bliss. Because GPS tracking from the couch over a browser cannot be compared with the experience of standing on a mountainside in Ticino and petting one’s own long-haired, curved-horned highland cattle. There’s a reason why cow stockholders often stop by to visit their furry investments. “Visitors are welcome anytime. It’s an especially impressive experience when the cattle are pastured in the alpine meadows.”

The future
How will the agricultural model develop in the future? With more automation, less human work and more digital control, monitoring and planning. The agricultural sector has proven it’s certainly not lagging behind other sectors when it comes to digitalization. Networked software and the Internet of Things remain central: for the managing of machines, fields, animals as well as suppliers and customers. Hardly any farmer knows all his animals by name, not to mention his customers. Integrated systems have become indispensable, particularly when it’s a matter of long-term customer service, being able to recognize their needs and offering them the right products and services. And how are things going for Guido Leutenegger’s business? “Our story is far from over – we’ve only just begun. Our goal is not primarily to grow ourselves, but to expand the label. We already have 80 farming families, primarily from the mountains of Ticino, who are now also operating according to these production methods.” It’s not a matter of achieving growth simply to become larger. It’s not just about getting ahead yourself, but achieving something for society and to further the philosophy: sustainability in harmony with nature and animals. And it goes without saying that happy customers remain top priority. We can truly look forward to the further innovative ideas with which Guido Leutenegger will surprise his investors and customers in the future.

“DIGITALIZATION IS A GOOD TOOL IN MANY AREAS, BUT NOTHING MORE.”
Guido Leutenegger, farmer

Guido Leutenegger is dedicated to biodiversity.
He leases alpine meadows in Ticino and keeps heritage chicken and pig breeds.

Guido Leutenegger
Guido Leutenegger is a trained teacher and was president and operating manager of Pro Natura Thurgau for ten years. He founded his company “Natur Konkret” back in 1990 with the goal of establishing a balance between the protection of nature and animals and the production of high-quality food. During his many years of political activism in cantonal, municipal and city legislatures, he kept a hand in the running of his company and was also politically active for environmental issues.

His first agricultural undertaking didn’t involve meat production, but biodiversity – the diversity of animal and plant species. A gravel island in Kreuzlingen was becoming overgrown and causing the city work and money. Guido Leutenegger took on the challenge of dealing with this problem by natural means. From that day on, grubbing wooly pigs and grazing highland cattle prevented the island from becoming overgrown again. What had been an eyesore became a nature reserve and today provides a habitat for numerous bird species and amphibians.

He became a full-time farmer starting in 2003 and his herds began to greatly increase. By leasing alpine meadows in Ticino and with heritage chicken and pig breeds, he has remained true to his dedication to biodiversity, while at the same time producing top-quality, ecological meat.

His business meanwhile has 15 employees and 80 partner farms – along with 800 highland cattle, 200 wooly pigs and 3,000 chickens.

www.natur-konkret.ch
BSI CRM Indigo: esthetic, intelligent, infinitely convenient

TEXT: UWE FUNK
PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

With the most beautiful update in our company history, we are catapulting our standard product BSI CRM to a new level. The most obvious changes are the new user interface and the intelligent visualization of data. Besides these, BSI CRM Indigo awaits with new functions that support you in your everyday work.

Software that you use to master your workday must be clear and easy-to-use. Just like BSI CRM Indigo. Our users are always our top priority, which drives us to design BSI CRM to be even simpler and cleaner. We questioned each and every function and improved procedures. The result was the most beautiful update in our company’s history. Many new functions await you which fit like a glove – regardless of whether you work in sales, marketing, customer service or management.

Accelerate CRM processes
Whether in customer communications or in guided handling of complex sales tasks: The assistant guides you through your processes step by step. With the multifaceted process-modeling possibilities you remain flexible and can easily react to changing market conditions.

Customer intelligence – and the system thinks along with you
An upcoming contract expiration, too many pending business cases or increasing communication frequency are indicators for a certain customer behavior. Simply leave it up to BSI CRM Indigo to react to various incidents. Wouldn’t it be good if BSI CRM Indigo autonomously planned a customer visit if none has taken place for a long time? And wouldn’t it be great if the representatives received an SMS if a new order exceeds a certain volume? With the intelligent rule engine in BSI CRM Indigo, we apply the knowledge of the entire company profitably for your sales success.

Focus on the work
Would you like to compile your personal work package? Then set your specific companies, orders, people, communications or business cases in the new “Focus.” You thereby receive a clear list of your pending activities that you would like to work through today.

Visualize your data
BSI CRM Indigo visualizes your data with many new graphics: interactive maps, pie and bar charts, colored tables or relationship networks help you direct your glance to the essentials and to maintain the overview at all times.

Office and BSI CRM Indigo
BSI CRM Indigo is entering into a new symbiosis with MS Word and MS Outlook. It has never been easier to generate documents with Word and to load data and templates directly from your CRM system. Invoices are generated and letters written with just a few clicks. Our text modules make your work easier so that you have more time for your customers.

Of course, the exchange with groupware functions smoothly and automatically. Synchronization of the contacts, the transfer and displaying of e-mails and tasks belong equally to the standard of BSI CRM Indigo as does the access to one’s own and the authorized calendars.

The new BSI CRM Indigo supports you with many new functions and improved procedures. Your experts are prepared for customer contact faster and more comprehensively and your customers will notice this immediately: no follow-ups, no repetitions and no odyssey through customer service. Your customers feel they have been understood right from the start. All this is possible with BSI CRM Indigo.
Swiss CRM Forum

This year’s Swiss CRM Forum in the Kongresshaus Zurich appeared under the new banner of the “Marketing Leadership Conference.”

The BSI Lounge invited guests to relax and have a snack.

We were especially pleased with Walbusch winning the Swiss CRM Award for its seamless cross-channel CRM, extending from the checkout to the contact center. We warmly congratulate Bernhard Tiger and his team for this success and are proud that our software contributed to the success of the project.

New, new, new

A renovated office in Baar, relocation of the Berne office to the Länggass district and the opening of the office in Dusseldorf’s Medienhafen. You are welcome to visit us at all our offices at any time.

Swiss CRM Forum in the Kongresshaus Zurich appeared under the new banner of the “Marketing Leadership Conference.”

Office Baar

Office Berne

Office Dusseldorf

Nicolas’ apps

Nicolas’ apps

Software Engineer, BSI

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Nicolas’ apps

Ping Pong (iOS, fee)

My most frequently used app in the summer of 2015, besides the Aare river temperature app. Designed with lots of love for detail, the app lists all freely accessible ping pong tables in Berne. Who is going to program something similar for Zurich, Munich and other locations?

Street View (iOS, Android, free)

You can easily create 360° photos with this app from Google. Even if you don’t have a camera set up for this. The app is a power guzzler, but the results are worth it if you follow the tips provided. You can see my first attempt at goo.gl/BCv1gQ, which was taken from a rooftop terrace in Berne’s old town.

Zaccaria Pinball Master Edition (iOS, CHF 2.–)

Thanks to Dani we have a pinball machine in Baar and in Berne. The model in Berne “Pinball Champ ’82” is even available as an app. If you want to play against us: download the app and send us a screenshot with your high score (normal mode without changes to the physics etc.) at marketing@bsi-software.com.

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Office Baar

Office Berne

Office Dusseldorf

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Cross-channel customer support is evolving from an option to an obligation; the pure call center is dead.

Meeting BSI  I  Customer Contact Management ensures a consistent customer journey at the fashion retailer. At Walbusch, the contact center, online shop and stores all go hand in hand: The project for the acquisa Best Practice Award 2014 was nominated for the Golden Handset Award 2015.

Excellent service from the contact center to the checkout counter: The consistency of the operative ordering and service processes at Walbusch were awarded with the Swiss CRM Award 2015, the ICC Quality Award 2014 and the acquisa Best Practice Award 2014 and was nominated for the Golden Handset Award 2015.

Mr. Egger, with the introduction of a central CRM solution for all sales and communication channels, Walbusch accomplished the digital transformation from a former catalog mail-order merchant to a modern multi-channel company. What lies behind this transformation? With the Customer Contact Management project “KKM”, we have merged the online and offline worlds. Today, our customers can get information in the contact center, shop online, pick up or exchange items in the stores, redeem their newsletter vouchers on the phone and so on. Our employees have the same 360° customer view, including the customer history, at every point of contact.

You say that the “pure call center is dead.” What do customers expect from a fashion company in the digital age?

In my view, one can no longer afford to merely offer customers a pure call center that is not linked to the stores and the Internet. Our customers are very well informed when they call customer service or go to a store. This knowledge head start over our employees can only be compensated for with a comprehensive system. The systems should not lag behind, but must be able to optimally support employees.

The customer journey of networked customers

Text: Claudia Gabler  
Photos: Walbusch

At Walbusch, the contact center, online shop and stores all go hand in hand: The project for customer contact management ensures a consistent customer journey at the fashion retailer. Cross-channel customer support is evolving from an option to an obligation, the pure call center is dead. Bernhard Egger, CEO of Walbusch Austria and Switzerland, explains why that is.

What fundamentals must be established to create this seamless customer experience?

Decisive for project success is that the top management clearly declares customer orientation as the primary goal. Another important success factor is to involve staff and to accompany them through the change process. Many have been focused on a single channel for 20 years of their lives. Now, they are no longer employed in customer service or in a store, but at Walbusch. In this context it’s important that everyone understands the benefits for customers that result from the merger. Only when the customer benefit is clear can you talk about the technology.

Customer contact management has now been productive for nearly a year at all touch points. How would you sum up the first twelve months?

We were able to completely meet our goals all down the line. In addition to the mentioned 360° view with the related qualitative advantages, there are also a few hard facts to consider: For example, we managed to significantly increase the success rate in phone sales. The number of customers reached per hour and employee also grew as a result of process management. We cut throughput times, such as for credit checks, in half, which in turn contributed to a positive customer experience and our efficiency.

How does Walbusch profit from the integration of the cash registers in the CRM system?

The integration has had a very positive impact on customer satisfaction. We can now accept mail-order returns directly in the stores and book them to the customer account. Vouchers can be redeemed across channels. Customers’ orders to stores run more efficiently internally and essentially faster for the customers. As soon as the order merchandise arrives at the store, the outbound call is automatically started. If the customer cannot be reached by telephone, the system initiates customer correspondence by e-mail or by letter. This process considerably simplifies work for store staff. They also appreciate that all mail-order bills and vouchers as well as all customer information and communication can be viewed directly. By the way: Training time for employees on the cash register system has been reduced by a quarter compared to the previous system despite the multiplicity of multichannel processes.

Has customer services also been able to benefit?

Without a doubt! First-contact resolution especially has increased significantly. This has in turn led to drastic drop in the volume of internal e-mails. This is a major qualitative improvement. The process for unclear cases has also grown significantly more efficient. The electronic transfer of customer cases within the department and in customer service represents vital support when it comes to controlling and handling. Furthermore, outbound telephony is now linked with the more extensive processes in KKM, contributing substantially to service efficiency. Automatic correspondence is directly managed through the process. What’s more, postage costs have been noticeably reduced through more practical e-mail correspondence.

Would you already call the project a success?

Yes, we defined 20 goals in the business case created together with BSI at the beginning of the project. We have already reached 18 of them. BSI’s costs were as budgeted and the planned requirements were all implemented. We were slightly above plan with our internal costs. In terms of time, we managed to complete 90 percent on time. The other 10 percent will follow in the second release. That was alright with us, because quality trumps speed. We were able to meet all our project requirements and requests with BSI. Our customers will show us whether we have done everything right.
Mr. Diquattro, Sanitas is one of the first insurance companies in Switzerland to actively promote digitalization. Why is it important to you to be a pioneer in this area?

We are convinced that digitalization is not just hype, but a revolution comparable with the industrial revolution of the 18th century. Disruptive business models will also impact health insurance companies sooner or later. That’s why our fundamental philosophy is: better to seek answers today than to have none tomorrow. We want to make sure that we are noticeable in the market with digital use cases.

“CRM IS THE BASIS ON WHICH WE ARE BUILDING OUR DIGITAL COMPONENTS.”

Emanuele Diquattro, Head of Sales & Marketing

You differentiate between operative and strategic digitalization. Where does the border lie?

Strategic digitalization pertains to the digital business model across the entire value creation chain, including all stakeholders. We are developing new digital products, handling processes digitally and systematically analyzing data. Operative digitalization involves the daily business. This includes process optimization, automation and the continuous further development of digital customer interfaces such as customer portals and apps.

What impact does digitalization have on your marketing?

In marketing, we centralized contents in so-called content hubs so that they can be provided to customers in relevant channels and channel-specifically. Marketing automation will be an important digitalization step. Based on the data at hand, we can offer our customers relevant information at the proper “trust point.”

Where else is digitalization having an impact?

The channels in sales are also being designed digitally. This involves embedding offline components seamlessly in the online experience. The aim is to offer our customers a transparent and conclusive customer experience.

What does digitalization mean for the customer service department?

The data is shifted to customer service. If they have more data at their disposal, then this in turn enables a new dimension of individual customer service; keyword: segment of one. Customers are increasingly more informed and demand appropriate customer service at eye level. The new disciplines such as live web chat, video chat and co-browsing open exciting possibilities for complementary customer service.

Which digital offers do customers especially appreciate?

The favorite function among our customers is to photograph the medical receipt and to submit it through the app. Since December, 35,000 customers have downloaded this app. The customer portal is also very popular and is actively used by 150,000 of our 800,000 customers.

What does the customer of tomorrow wish from an insurance company?

It’s difficult for us to imagine today all that digitalization still has to offer. We have to live with this uncertainty. But we are designing our strategy flexibly and committing to topics that we know will remain relevant tomorrow, such as personal support and intelligent data management. The customer decides when, where and how he or she prefers to interact. We have to make the corresponding possibilities available. And, of course, the younger customers are, the greater their technological affinity.

How does Sanitas score among the various target groups?

With personalization and added services that provide added value. This includes Priority Access, which enables customers direct access to specialists or the emergency nanny for when the child suddenly falls ill and cannot go to school or kindergarten. Other market innovations include second opinion and health programs. There is still plenty of potential for new offers that meet customer requirements and can be designed digitally.

What’s in it for customers if they share their data?

Wearables are often mentioned in this context. What’s in it for customers if they share their data? Wearables are interesting for healthy people who want to reward for their healthy lifestyles. Wearables also offer advantages for chronically ill people: They can monitor themselves, which contributes to convenience: the doctor can then use the data to decide whether an appointment is necessary. This can contribute to optimizing service costs. The challenge is to create trust that the data is to be used in the interest of the customers and not against them.

What role does the CRM play within the scope of digitalization?

CRM is the basis on which we are building our digital components. We can use CRM for the customer interface and analytics, automatically trigger activities and manage customer feedback. Customer feedback is fundamental to us. We not only want to handle complaints well, but to actively obtain customer feedback to gain insights. Customer feedback is integrated in BSI CRM. A rule engine decides which action must be initiated. In a second step, we can actively involve our customers in the designing of our products; keyword: co-creation.

Customer portals, mobile invoice scanning, services: These are just three examples of what Sanitas offers digitally. The health insurance company is assuming a pioneering role with the launching of digital transformation services with added value, and is incidentally promoting customer loyalty in the process.

**License to digitalization**

**TEXT:** CLAUDIA GABLER

**PHOTO:** SANITAS

Customer portals, mobile invoice scanning, services: These are just three examples of what Sanitas offers digitally. The health insurance company is assuming a pioneering role with the launching of digital transformation services with added value, and is incidentally promoting customer loyalty in the process.

**MEET THE CLIENT**

Emanuele Diquattro has a background in business, moved into IT, where he worked for 11 years – 3.5 of them as CIO. He assumed leadership of the Sales & Marketing business division when Sanitas reshuffled its company management in April 2015. “IT and business are increasingly merging in the digital world. Today’s borders won’t exist in the future,” according to the expert with a license to digitalize.
Matthias was an exchange student in the US during high school. He was there again this year and visited friends and many national parks.

You recently started working on the new “Indigo” release of our standard product BSI CRM. How does this compare to working on customer projects?
Each software developer on the team contributes his experience from the customer projects he’s been involved in. This enables us to improve the standard product for all customers.
I have primarily worked on the development of the software’s new user interface. In the process, I further developed the Eclipse Scout open source framework. I also implemented new features in BSI CRM and fixed bugs. It’s nice to help co-develop the latest release of BSI CRM – which is, so to speak, the heart of BSI.

What do you like most about the new release?
I find our new user interface looks great – it’s really been cleaned up and is contemporary. I also like the implementation as a web application using HTML5 and JavaScript instead of Swing for the rich client. It means that the software functions on various end devices with no adaptation needed. The web application, of course, is just the interface, Java still exists in the background. For the developer involved in customer projects, hardly anything has changed, since the visualization is cleverly solved through Eclipse Scout.
BSI CRM Indigo also delivers many interesting features. What I find especially helpful is that I can now search through all entities at once and then visualize the results using various graphics.

Speaking of visualization: On the photo wall with all BSI employees you say: “I love culture.” What does culture mean to you?
It’s a play on words. On the one hand, I find other cultures fascinating: other traditions, customs and countries. It’s interesting to get to know new perspectives and to discover both differences and commonalities. On the other hand, I also mean high culture, like opera or theater.

In your free time, you are active in the student exchange organization “Youth for Understanding” (yfu.org). Is your interest in different cultures the reason for your voluntary commitment?
To a large degree. However, this interest only really arose when I lived in the United States for a year. I like the idea and also want to make it possible for others to experience staying abroad.
And last but not least, I get to meet interesting people in this way and the volunteer work is simply fun – just like at BSI. I also get to know interesting people here and can be part of exciting projects.

Why do you recommend staying abroad?
Because it’s a one-time opportunity to intensively get to know another culture. Deep insight can be gained especially by living with a host family and attending school. I personally benefited a great deal from this. I met interesting people and made good acquaintances. I still have regular contact with my host family. I even visited them a few weeks ago. Thanks to my stay abroad, I became much more open towards other cultures and issues. Since then, I can imagine visiting nearly every country.

If BSI had offices throughout the world and you could work for a year at any location you like, which would you choose?
That’s a very difficult question. I would probably be enthusiastic about almost any location. Everywhere is interesting, and I still don’t know enough, neither about near nor far-away countries. But really, I find Japan attractive, because everything feels really different there and because I’ve never been there.

Matthias Otterbach: “I love culture”

TEXT: MELINA MERKLE
PHOTOS: SEVERAL SOURCES

Meet the team

Matthias was an exchange student in the US during high school. He was there again this year and visited friends and many national parks.
CRM software that fits like a glove.

Solid customer relationships require robust CRM software. Designed as real workware, BSI CRM Indigo delivers more structure, character and design to customer data and customer processes – and hence greater workday convenience.