



Fri

Apr 20  
2007



## The Internationalization of Web 2.0

by [Tim O'Reilly](#) | [@timoreilly](#) | [comments: 19](#)

[Renee Blodgett](#) wrote in email:

Interesting enough, I'm repping three companies at Web 2.0 Expo this year [[esnips](#), [leaptag](#), and [spock](#), and NONE of the CEOs are American. (Israeli, Turkish and Indian). Interesting isn't it?

I'd be interested in hearing about other Web 2.0 companies started by non-Americans. (Apart from obvious winners like Skype.) It would be particularly interesting to hear about success stories from overseas that may be bigger than their American counterparts. For example, I've heard that [OpenBC](#) (now [Xing](#) is bigger than [LinkedIn](#), but is much lower profile over here.

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Bob Jamison on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0: My experience with Link...](#)

Raju Vegesna on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0: Tim, we @ Zoho \(www.zoh...](#)

Kathy Johnson on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0: By way of clarification,](#)

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[Daniela](#) [2007-04-20 06:52 AM]

Tim, let us get in touch. We indeed have an incredible story to tell ;)

[Steve Mallett](#) [2007-04-20 08:01 AM]

I found it interesting that the VCs on various panels at the expo were indicating that they were hungry to invest in startups, but generally not outside what seemed like a 100 mile radius of San Fran.

I understand they want to deal with folks they can reach out and touch, but it does seem to block out the rest of the world.

[Dave McClure](#) [2007-04-20 08:08 AM]

hey Tim -

are you sure about the stats on OpenBC/Xing vs LinkedIn? can you provide the source for the stats you're using there?

i'm pretty sure LinkedIn has the larger userbase, by most common measures.

[Tim O'Reilly](#) [2007-04-20 08:14 AM]

Steve, you're right -- most VCs like to invest in companies that they can keep a close watch on. That's been a proven technique based on a lot of bad experiences, I think.

That being said, many of the big guys have offices around the world, or do deals where another fund is providing the up-close-and-personal. And smaller firms often have relationships that let them do remote deals too. For example, at QATV, we're looking at a number of non-local deals, e.g. in Europe, with some help from friends over

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example, at OATV, we're looking at a number of non-local deals, e.g. in Europe, with some help from friends over there.

Al [2007-04-20 08:32 AM]

Tim checkout Sam Sethi's site : <http://www.vecosys.com/>

Sam and Mike butcher were the guys that previously ran the UK TechCrunch site. These guys cover a lot of European startups etc..

PS they are also about to move to a new brand domain etc.. <http://www.blognation.com/>

regards

Al

Ross Turk [2007-04-20 09:58 AM]

Hey Tim!

You may find it interesting to know that about 82% of SourceForge.net's traffic in a typical month comes from non-Americans. This probably can't be directly correlated to the geographic breakdown of Web 2.0 companies, but it suggests that creation and adoption of new technology is happening all over the world.

Tim O'Reilly [2007-04-20 11:01 AM]

Nice stat, Ross. Thanks for sharing. I bet if you look at the contributors, you'll see a great worldwide effect as well. We saw it first in open source, which didn't require access to capital to become a significant player. With Web 2.0 and its lightweight business models, the worldwide developer population can get in the entrepreneur game as well without being in Silicon Valley or another major tech center.

Florian Weber [2007-04-20 11:23 AM]

After being pretty focused on the american startup world for the past two years, I recently looked around a bit to see what is going on more locally, in Germany. It's quite saddening. There surely are more and more web 2.0 companies here, most of them however go the safe "localisation"-route. They take a successful idea from overseas (like facebook, del.icio.us, etc), simply clone it and use german instead of english text.

Just in last few days I saw four Twitter clones pop-up: (<http://wamadu.de>, <http://www.faybl.de>, <http://frazr.com>, <http://www.texteln.de>)

There surely are original companies here that follow an own idea, Plazes and Xing being one of them. Finding more of them still feels a bit like looking for the needle in the haystack though.

Mario Sundar [2007-04-20 12:18 PM]

Hi Tim,

I'm the Community evangelist at LinkedIn. I'd like to mention that we recently added our 10 millionth user worldwide, and we're very excited about that.

We're also the largest professional network internationally, with half of our users coming from markets such as Europe and Asia-Pacific.

I look forward to seeing examples of international success stories.

Jose A. del Moral [2007-04-20 05:04 PM]

way of clarification...

Alper on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0](#): Well we are completely ...

Peter Nilsson on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0](#): Tim - I believe your fe...

Tom Dibaja on [The Internationalization of Web 2.0](#): Tim - there's indeed a ...

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There are many European Web 2.0 startups, as you can see in the contest we launched last week:  
<http://www.startup2.eu>

**Sam Sethi** [2007-04-21 12:35 AM]

Hi Tim

Thanks AI for the plug. Tim we are launching Blognation.com in early May which will initially cover 8 European countries (web, mobile, enterprise, events) and we will also be writing them all in English.

One of the reasons for the lack of awareness of cool European companies is the language barriers that keep them hidden for longer.

I am hoping we can remove those barriers and help some the great European companies get on radar quicker.

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**Cem Basman** [2007-04-21 03:19 AM]

In the current distribution of human languages English (with all its derivatives) is only ranked #2-4 according to wikipedia whereas it is spoken as a natural language only by 380 million people. I wished the web 2.0 could create effective and efficient tools and methods to overcome the "Language barriers" either in ease localisations or on-line (and real-time) translations. That's a challenge. That would really open the international and common attempt to communicate with each other. That's what the internet is also for.

**Tom Dibaja** [2007-04-21 04:50 AM]

Tim - there's indeed a lot of good stuff going on outside the US at the moment. I'd be happy to tell you more about Properazzi. As it happens, our founder/CEO is a French-Brazilian.

**Peter Nilsson** [2007-04-21 11:30 AM]

Tim - I believe your fellow Radar team member Nikolaj Nhyholm is Swedish and CEO of Polar Rose. A few others that come to mind:

- Tariq Krim. French/Algerian, Netvibes
- Mattias Miksche, Swedish, Stardoll
- Martin Warsavsky, Argentinian, FON
- Stefan Glöckner, German, Last.fm
- Tommy Ahlers, Danish, Zyb.com

-- Peter

**Alper** [2007-04-22 06:01 AM]

Well we are completely Dutch based and busy building <http://tipit.to> which we think is quite an okay idea.

**Kathy Johnson** [2007-04-22 10:10 AM]

Katly Johnson [2007-04-23 12:12 PM]

By way of clarification: Xing is the largest paying business network in the world with over 220,000 paying subscribers. They're the leaders in the business networking category in both Europe and Asia.

We're working with a number of Web 2.0 companies based in the US and in Europe, with US and non-US founders and investors, including: Xing, King.com, wunderLOOP and kyte.tv, which launched today.

Raju Vegesna [2007-04-23 04:32 PM]

Tim, we @ Zoho (www.zoho.com) are from India playing in the online office space.

Bob Jamison [2007-05-05 02:58 PM]

My experience with LinkedIn in China, Japan, and Korea is outlined below. I have about 180 people in both my Xing and LinkedIn networks:

Xing users tend to be much more active and serious about networking. There seems to be many more premium users on Xing. Xing seems to be expanding very, very rapidly in China, and seems to be much more international. I noticed that CEOs and other upper level management types are very active on Xing, and it has been quite easy to meet them online, on the phone, and in person.

LinkedIn users tend to have an account because a friend invited them, but then do not use it much. I do not know very few premium users on LinkedIn. Very few Chinese business people I know use or know about LinkedIn. Active users tend to be expats, employees of foreign companies, or headhunters. I am the CEO of a company, but I have not yet been successful in networking with other upper level management people on LinkedIn.

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