

Letter from Stanford

January 2010



This is the fifth (and last) letter from me, visiting California.

European Entrepreneurship and Innovation Thought Leaders

During the winter quarter a seminar series, European Entrepreneurship and Innovation Thought Leaders, is given at Stanford. Burton Lee is the responsible Course Director and the purpose of the class is to present CEOs/founders of leading European startup companies, venture capital firms, technology corporations and university incubator. For more information please contact Burton Lee (blee@stanford.edu) or take a look at the website: www.europeanentrepreneursatstanford.com

Meeting new visiting researchers at Stanford

The winter quarter of the academic year started directly after the holidays, A new quarter means new visiting researchers. Among them I met Anette Hallin, PhD from School of Industrial Engineering and Management, KTH. She will spend six months at Scancor (Scandinavian Consortium for Organizational Research), Stanford. Find out more about Scancor at www.scancor.org



Me and Anette Hallin

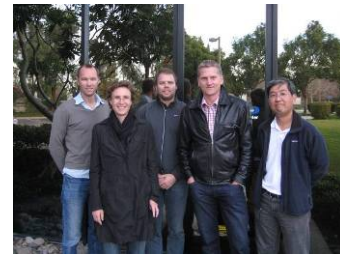
Research interviews at Volvo Monitoring and Concept Center

During the month of January I had the opportunity to spend time at the Volvo Monitoring and Concept Center in Camarillo (VMCC), California. VMCC was opened in 1986 and to be a think tank focused on developing new products and processes, by combining relevant professional skills in a small, team-driven organisation. Everything VMCC performs is based on three pillars - Business, Design and Technology - and VMCC:s ultimate goal is to produce concepts that move Volvo Cars forward.

The purpose of spending a short time at VMCC was to wrap up my Stanford stay and to do some writing. An additional purpose was to spend time studying the VMCC concept team at work, and to conduct a number of interviews on my own research topic: concept decision making.

Innovation communication presentation at VMCC

During my time at Stanford I got to know Bettina Maisch, another visiting researcher (from St Gallen in Switzerland) at CDR. Her research topic is Innovation Communication using Web 2.0 and she uses launches of electric vehicles as cases to study. Therefore I invited her to speak at VMCC, where she told us: "An innovation has to be created two times. First: when designing the physical product. Second: when designing the image of the product in peoples brains".



Bettina Maisch and some of the VMCC team members

Meeting Dan Werbin

Dan Werbin is a business veteran and his CV includes being Head of Volvo Cars Product Planning, President of Volvo Cars North America, and President of Volvo Cars Japan. In an interview with him I had the opportunity to discuss his experiences regarding e.g. decision making, strategic issues and cultural aspects that he experienced during his almost 40 years at Volvo Car Corporation.



Meeting Dan Werbin in his home in Newport Beach, CA.

ME310

ME310 is a class given at Stanford, and the full name is **'Project-Based Engineering Design, Innovation, and Development'**. The class runs through a complete academic year and provides project-based collaboration with international student teams (e.g. from Germany, Colombia, Switzerland, France and Finland). Every Thursday evening the class has SUDS (Slightly Unorganized Design Sessions) at the ME310 Design Loft. During SUDS students, teachers, industrial coaches, and some hangarounds (such as myself) meet to enjoy food and drink, and to socialise a bit.



Presentation, some food, some drinks, and a lot of discussions at SUDS

Wrapping up my stay in California

When trying to wrap up my Stanford stay, I can definitely say that I learned a lot - both research wise but also on a personal level. The work at Stanford in general, and CDR in particular have been interesting to learn from. The 'Silicon Valley way' has also been a great experience. However, now it is time to try to channel all impressions and other input into my research. An experience on the personal level was to come as a visitor to a new to a new situation, new country, new settings, new rules...

Finally, I am so glad that I have been able to experience this adventure and it will be a memory for life! I felt a little bit sad to leave California and I am deeply grateful to the contributors that made this Stanford stay possible: PIEp, the Sweden-America Foundation and Volvo Car Corporation. Thank you very much!



Sunset at Venice Beach

Goodbye!

Ingrid Kihlander

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