

Press Info

Expedition Innovation.

On the trail of the secrets of Silicon Valley.

In 1848, thousands of people sought their fortune as gold diggers in California. The Gold Rush had begun. About 150 years later, it was rushed again – this time it wasn't about nuggets, but about bits and bytes, the networking and virtualization of the world. From the Wild West to the Virtual West. I was intrigued: What makes these companies, the Googles and Facebooks and such, different than the others? What stories, rumors, and secrets do you experience when you are actually there? What makes a company so successful that there is no other like it in the world, reaching one economic peak after another? That is why I have joined a trek – my stagecoach is an Airbus A340 from Lufthansa, which brings me first to San Francisco, from which I head further south, to the valley of silicon. The area is not officially “Silicon Valley,” but actually “Santa Clara Valley” – but technical journalist Don C. Hoefler had written articles about the local semiconductor industry more than 40 years ago – and (quite innovatively!) invented the name.

The area is just as big as Dubai, but includes a university that is one of the finest in the world: Stanford is ten times as big as Disneyland and has a budget through donations and study fees that would make German universities start crying. Not far from this university is a memorial stone, which makes the neighboring house and garage a “Historic Site of the USA”: Silicon Valley was founded here – in this garage, Mr. Hewlett and Mr. Packard launched their company, HP. Not far away is another garage, where there is also a sign. It states: “Access is not permitted. Security cameras recording! Photos must be shot from the street!” It is the garage next to the former house of Steve Jobs' parents. There, he and his colleague Steve Wozniak screwed the first Apple computer together. Apparently, today's owners have had undesirable encounters with uninvited guests in the front yard. The words historical and hysterical are very close to each other.

About Gerriet Danz

Gerriet Danz has been one of the most recognized experts on innovation and creativity for over two decades. The lectures of this passionate lateral-thinker, multiple startup founder, and best-selling author (CAMPUS/Random House) are as inspiring and unusual as the mix of his experiences. He worked initially as creative director of the international advertising agency BBDO, supporting global players in the development of innovations. His second career led to television: Gerriet Danz developed new TV formats, and even moderated the knowledge game-show classic: JEOPARDY. Motivating, humorous, and practical, he describes in his appearances how companies can create the perfect innovation climate and overcome creativity barriers. "One of the best in his field!" writes *Computer Week*; "It's hailing ideas..." says *GQ*. And *Der Spiegel* asked him, "...what really matters." Gerriet Danz is a visiting lecturer at the Steinbeis Hochschule Berlin, advises the European Patent Office in The Hague, among others, is a member of the German Speakers Association as well as of GSF Global Speakers Federation Toronto, and is a winner of the CONGA Award in the "Speakers & Coaches" category.

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Gerriet Danz
Siemssenstraße 11
20251 Hamburg
Germany

Press Contact:

Anika von Keiser
vonkeiser@gerrietdanz.com
(+49) 040/87876751