

Raised 83 million for shopping navigation

Forkbeard develops software for indoor navigation. Now they want to help companies to obtain customer data in a completely new way.

Online stores have the advantage of being able to store and analyze user data customers through cookies. Forkbeard will do the shopping easier for the customer, and make corresponding customer data about movement patterns available for retail. Forkbeard springs from Sonitor, a company that for more than 20 years has developed technology to be able to navigate indoors. Recently acquired the company NOK 83.6 million through a share issue. The former shipowner and golfer Per Heidenreich is the main shareholder with a shareholding of over 70 percent. Only existing investors from Sonitor have invested in Forkbeard.

Indoor navigation

- Today, one easily navigates the internet via search engines, and one navigate easily outdoors with GPS. Indoor navigation is not yet available commercialized and made available in the same way, and that's what we want do with Forkbeard, says CEO of Sonitor, Arne Øyen. The idea behind Sonitor started in 1997 the medical doctor Ole B. Hovind. That time was patient records analog, and that was a pervasive problem for doctors that they spent a lot of time and forces to find the records. He would solve the problem of developing indoor navigation. This resulted in an ultrasound solution such as was commercialized with Sonitor. IN today they deliver indoors navigation to hospitals and large corporations, primarily in the United States.

Smartphones

With the new company Forkbeard, they will do indoor navigation more available. The company develops software that makes it possible to use smartphones to navigate in, for example, grocery stores. - We saw the opportunity to use smartphones for indoors navigation four years ago. We just needed to develop the software, says Alexander Saftschuk, market analyst i Forkbeard.

In online stores you use cookies to get one overview of the shopping habits of the customers. With indoor navigation is the idea that one can access the same type of data from real life – man should, for example, be able to get an overview of how customers move in the store and where they spend the most time. - The solution will make action more efficient, and at the same time be able to provide valuable data about customers, claims Øyen.

Eurovision Song Contest

The start-up company is already starting to get noticed. Pandemic put a brake on new contracts with companies, but at the same time led to one new application of the technology. By having an accurate overview of how people moves indoors in real time, it is easier to track infections, claims Øyen. In collaboration with EY, Forkbeard did just that for this year's Melodi Grand Prix competition in Rotterdam. The company developed an app that used their patented technology to track all the guests at the event to get one overview of who had been in contact with each other below the arrangement. The system was also used by the organizer for 6 weeks before ESC to ensure that those who worked there was not exposed to infection, similar to the NATO summit (there was not the participants track, only the organizer), and the July 22 memorial service in Oslo, writes Øyen.

