

# Information and Integration

**Future of people with disabilities in school, job  
and leisure time**

Q1 2010



## The founder: Joachim Schoss

The founder of the foundation MyHandicap –Joachim Schoss – was born in 1963. He had an impressive business career, founded several companies and was known as 'Internet pioneer'. Today, additional to his duties as Foundation Board President, he is still entrepreneurial active, including in the investor base of b-to-v.

In November 2002, he was involved in a traffic accident in which he lost his right leg and arm. Relating to that, he lost his professional position and his private life changed completely. To better cope with his new living situation, he searched the Internet for information about his physical disability. And he found little.

Based on this experience, he decided to set up a foundation and to make his contribution to facilitate the life of people with disabilities.



## The Foundation

The foundation MyHandicap was founded in 2004, based in Switzerland. It aims to improve the living conditions of people with disabilities.

The foundation aims to facilitate access to information relevant to life with disability. The Internet portal [www.myhandicap.ch](http://www.myhandicap.ch) serves as a platform and is the basis of all services of the foundation.

The foundation intends to gradually expand into other countries in order to create a network for information, contacts and exchanges. Germany is the first country that has joined us. In December 2005, the partner organisation [Myhandicap.de](http://Myhandicap.de) was founded in Munich.



## The foundation's purpose

The foundation MyHandicap intends to improve the life of people who are significantly affected by a physical limitation in their daily life.

This is done with comprehensive **information** and advice on all areas of everyday life, principally over the Internet.

In addition, MyHandicap wants to campaign for the **integration** of people with disabilities into society and economy.



## Values and positioning

MyHandicap promotes ...

- support for self-help
- support of the help for affected people by affected people
- openness and tolerance
- respect for the individual path of affected people
- social equality
- active participation and presence in everyday life

MyHandicap positions by...

- the combination of personal experience with proven technical expertise
- information generation and placement
- cooperation and networking
- entrepreneurial action
- allowing access to the private sector and other NGO's

**MyHandicap is politically neutral and economically independent.**



## Information

For many years now, people with disabilities meet in an open, independent and positive environment on [www.myhandicap.ch](http://www.myhandicap.ch). Central is the sustainable assistance to self-help. MyHandicap collects information, knowledge and experience about all areas of life with disability and mobility impairment.

The visit of the portal allows people with disabilities, their families and friends to exchange ideas in the forum, to receive expert advice and to network with the Community. In the editorial section, they can search for specific information, look up addresses or request an Ambassador. And all this for free.

Every year about 2.4 million contacts happen on [www.myhandicap.ch](http://www.myhandicap.ch). Therefore, MyHandicap is the meeting point and the undisputed No. 1. No other organisation in the disability environment has achieved anywhere close to our range. Around 65,000 people with disabilities use the offered services, such as brief advice, address switching, editorial contents or personal contacts.



## Information

### MyAdress

With My**Adress**, the biggest "barrier-free" Internet address directory in the German-speaking part of Europe has been established. MyAdress is easily accessible and free for 8.5 million people with disabilities, their families and friends. And soon even the addresses are location-easily accessible on mobile devices.

The interactive MyAdress address directory currently contains about 500,000 entries and counting, thanks to the cooperation with other organisations in the disability environment (e.g. MIS, etc.), and we are in active negotiation with partnerships with enormous data volumes. The aimed growth of MyAdress clearly bases on the idea of networking. We want to collect all disabled-relevant addresses are and make them easily accessible at [www.myhandicap.ch](http://www.myhandicap.ch).

Every year, there are about 100,000 requests from Switzerland, and here too, a bullish tendency.



## Information Community Development

Desire and aspiration of MyHandicap is to be an entry portal for patients and their families, where they can quickly and efficiently find information and contacts. The Community and various Boards on the portal give affected people and interested users the opportunity to exchange among themselves and with experts. This allows the users to profit from others' experiences and gives mutually support.

The following subjects are available in the Board:

- Health & Tools
- Partnership & Sexuality
- Legal & Social Issues
- Construction & Housing
- Education & Job
- Sports & Leisure
- Travel & Mobility
- Search & Wanted
- ChitChat



# Integration

## School, education and training

For school, education and training yet applies: not learning disabilities and their disposal, but their strengths and support should be in the foreground, in particular, the expansion of experience and the attainment of competence.

Also for children, adolescents and young adults with a disability, the regular school attendance in a resource-oriented and a "normal" social environment is important to prepare them for life. Ideally, it is a regular school, usually a public school. But private schools can be a very good alternative.

The foundation MyHandicap sees itself as Facilitator; the foundation supports lecturers, school principals, school psychologists, government, homes, parents and disabled people etc. in the integration of professional consulting and training services.



## **Integration Occupation**

Regardless of whether disabled or not, it is important that each person is given an occupation that meets his/her special abilities and capabilities. He/she should be encouraged to incorporate these skills successfully in the regular labour market. Also enterprises, administrations and organisations of any kind should be instructed to count increasingly on the abilities of people with disabilities.

The foundation MyHandicap sees itself as Facilitator; the foundation supports managers in organisations, businesses, governments and disabled people by sound advice, training and instruction services in matters relating to rehabilitation and training, integration, management, etc.

Also for people with disabilities, the step into self-employment can be the right decision. For the necessary planning and founding related step can be consulted the business know-how of the founder of MyHandicap, of the various trustees (business leaders), of the CEO of MyHandicap (Ph.D. economist) as well as of the CDI-HSG and Institute for young entrepreneurs (IFJ).



# Integration

## Sport, exercise and leisure time

For people with disabilities, it is often more stressful and difficult to cope with everyday life than for non-disabled people. Therefore, for the mental and physical balance, sports, exercise and a balanced healthy diet is particularly important.

The foundation MyHandicap sees itself as Facilitator; the foundation supports organisers, clubs and associations by sound advice, training and instruction services in the integration and promotion of disabled people in sport and in raising the awareness of what is part of a healthy lifestyle (e.g. diet).

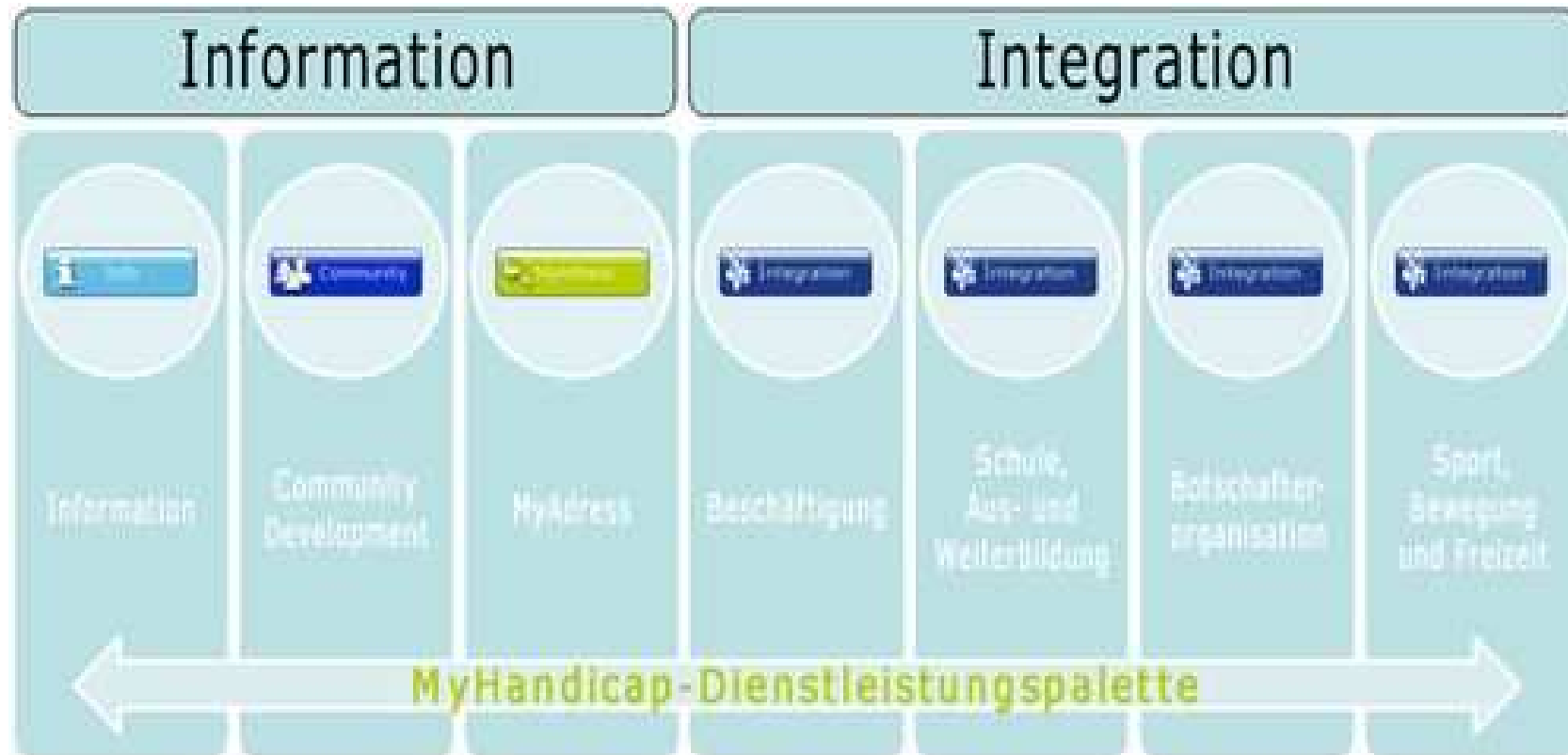


## **Integration Ambassador Organisation**

A stroke of fate can change a whole life within seconds. Additional to the best possible physical recovery, various props are needed to handle the psychological trauma ... and to find the way back into life. Our Ambassadors have experienced similar things, and have been confronted with a disability as well, and they can credibly answer questions to which non-disabled people have no answers. And since all our Ambassadors lead a satisfied and fulfilled life, they can provide positive motivational insights into a possible future.

Upon request, newly affected people can be accompanied by an Ambassador yet shortly after the incident. Therefore, a good cooperation with hospitals (doctors, nurses, therapists and social services), rehabilitations centres, relatives and disability organisations is important.

## Array of Services by MyHandicap





# The Foundation

Formal details about the foundation

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Foundation MyHandicap

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**Legal form:**

Foundation under Swiss law

**Date of foundation:**

16<sup>th</sup> November 2004