

## TECHBAGUETTE

The adventures of a Silicon Valley native discovering the local tech start-up scene in Paris, France.

April 19, 2010

### 13 hot French entrepreneurs under 30

by Roxanne Varza

I've been wanting to do a post on this topic for a while – because whenever someone tells me that it's insanely difficult to launch a start-up in France, I chuckle to myself and think: “Hey, if 20-something-year-olds are doing it fresh out of school, it can't be *that* hard, right?” I also have recently noticed that becoming an entrepreneur from a young age is becoming more *à la mode* – so here is my list to set the record straight.

### Hot or not?

The trouble is there are actually *a lot* of young entrepreneurs out there. This list is insanely far from exhaustive and is just a few names that I think are likely to stick around for a while. As the entrepreneurial community is predominantly male, I should also probably clarify that by “hot” I am referring strictly to their start-ups. After all, this is not my attempt to be the Franco-version of Valleywag. PS. You'll notice that I've chosen 8 companies and 13 names.

#### 1. Jonathan Benassaya & Daniel Marhely (Deezer).



The [Deezer](#) boys are behind one of the hottest – if not *the* hottest – online music company to come out of France. While they are still incredibly young, Daniel (25) and Jonathan (29) kicked off their entrepreneurial careers in 2004 and 2005 respectively. Yep, Daniel was still a teenager at the time.

#### 2. Eric Bennephtali (MediaStay).



As the story goes, this 26 year old started his internet career in middle school. He then went on to drop out of school at the age of 13 to launch the internet performance marketing company we currently know as [MediaStay](#) - which is also the publisher of games sites like Kingolotto and Grattages. Yes, that makes another one for the drop-out club!

### 3. Ronan Pelloux & Julien Mechin (Creads).



The 25-year-old team is behind the online participative ad and logo creative platform, [Creads](#), that gives internet allstar Gilles Babinet's Eyeka a run for its money. Oh, and the 2-year-old company already counts international offices in Spain and Japan.

### 4. Simon Istolainen (PeopleforCinema, MyMajorCompany, Architurn...).



Yes, he's been an entrepreneur since 2008 and the 25-year-old is already on his 3rd company (he just announced [Architurn](#), after [MyMajorCompany](#) and [PeopleforCinema](#)). The participative investment platform model seems to have been very good to him, in both the music and film distribution spaces. But my favorite part about this kid's success story is that he studied the farthest thing from entrepreneurship and tech in school: that's right, *anthropology*.

### 5. Céline Lazorthes (Leetchi).



[Leetchi](#) is the first company of this 27-year-old lady and she's already got big names like Oleg Tscheltzoff, Jérémie Berrebi and Xavier Niel backing her platform for group gift purchases. Nice.

### 6. Stéphanie Pelaprat (Restopolitan).



The 26-year-old founder of a French company, [Restopolitan](#), that dares to compete with OpenTable has entrepreneurial energy spewing from her veins. As she's got a few more tricks up her sleeve, she's not likely to disappear.

### 7. Boris Saragaglia, Paul Lorne, Jérémie Touchard (Spartoo).



The [Spartoo](#) trio (Boris pictured) started right out of school, back in 2006, when the sum of their ages was less than 75 (I'll let you figure this one out). Today Boris (27), Paul and Jérémie run the très successful French/European equivalent to Zappos. These kiddies also scored €12 million in January. Hello, Jeff Bezos?