

FoundersCard



FOUNDERSCARD SNAPSHOT

FOUNDED: JANUARY 2010



BASED: MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

FOUNDER: ERIC KUHN

INDUSTRY: LIFESTYLE & LEISURE

PROFILE: AN EXCLUSIVE COMMUNITY FOR BUSINESS FOUNDERS AND ENTREPRENEURS, OFFERING MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

PEOPLE: THEN: 1, NOW: 10

 6,833+
 3,935+

The life of an entrepreneur can be a whirlwind of work, travel and meetings – particularly when starting out. It’s often a lonely process too, with most startups manned by one person at the helm juggling many different roles. This can be daunting to say the least.

This was why, in March 2011, [FoundersCard](#) was such a welcome innovation to come across – a membership community for entrepreneurs that aims to offer the same exclusive benefits that an executive of a major company would enjoy. Since then the business has boomed and the FoundersCard team have seen a rapid rise in their membership, growing from a humble 100 soon after their launch in January 2010, to an impressive 10,000 at current count.

Founder and CEO, Eric Kuhn, believes that this dramatic increase in members is largely thanks to the attractive benefits package: 'Over the past few years we've worked very hard to deliver valuable benefits and experiences that enhance the lives and businesses of our community of entrepreneurs.'

The team have developed strong partnerships with well-known brands and these include Lufthansa, JetBlue, Standard Hotels, Cathay Pacific, and Hilton Honors. They have also negotiated free perks for members with access to UPS, Rackspace, MailChimp and Dropbox.



Alongside their work to build an appealing set of benefits for prospective members, they have also expanded their events programme to cover a number of major cities including Chicago, Seattle, London, Toronto, and Austin. These events give members the chance to meet each others and share like-minded experiences, making the role of startup founder that little bit less isolating.

They are keen to keep their members in the loop, and to consult them in major decisions. They have found that this has strengthened their business, as members feel they have a say in the direction it takes: 'The key to our recent success is that we've created a participatory community that includes our entrepreneurial members in every component of what we do. We're constantly adding to the services and allowing our members to participate in unique ways.'

Crucially, they've also been strict about not biting off more than they can chew. 'As we've grown, we've tried to raise the bar on the quality of everything we do, including the companies with who we partner. That means saying no to certain opportunities and companies which, at times, can be difficult.'

The chances to meet each other in person through events are complimented by the company blog, *The Founder*, which delivers regular advice posts. Their online presence is indicative of the collaborative approach, encouraging members to contribute their expertise in order to help other members. The FoundersClub blog has guest posts from members on myriad topics including how to set up a successful crowdfunding campaign, interviews with high profile startup founders and health tips for entrepreneurs who travel constantly.

These posts indicate an understanding of the entrepreneurial lifestyle, particularly in the early stages of a business, which can feel lonely and disorientating. A sense of community can be essential to

anyone working alone on what can feel like a massive project, and FoundersCard is keen to foster a support network of like-minded individuals who understand the various strains business founders can be under.



A peer network, and the advise and support that comes with it, can also increase confidence in making business decisions that impact on a company's user base. For example, Eric is keen to stress the huge difference between trying out new ideas when starting out, and keeping the interests of the customer at the forefront of any decision-making when the business is more established. 'When you're starting a new venture you have to simply follow your instincts. When it's a live venture with real customers, you have to continuously incorporate feedback from customers to get it right and keep it relevant.'

Eric is firm in his business philosophy: 'Focus on creating one thing that you can be better at than anyone else. Stay focused and learn to say no to things that fall outside that scope regardless of how tempting' — It is largely due to this strength of purpose that FoundersCard has flourished, building a 10,000 plus membership community and forging entrepreneurial links to create a robust business network.

You can read more about FoundersCard [here](#), or visit the FoundersCard website [here](#).

For a limited time, Springwise subscribers may apply for FoundersCard membership at 35 percent off the standard membership rate (USD 395 vs USD 595). To access this exclusive offer, [Inquire About Membership Here](#) and you will be fast-tracked a preferred membership invitation, from which you can preview all FoundersCard benefits and upcoming events.