

Lycke Von Schantz, Sweden



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Lycke Von Schantz’s professional background

- Lycke von Schantz is the founder of Påhoj, a product that is a bicycle seat and a stroller for children.

Lycke Von Schantz’s story

Lycke Von Schantz has an MSc in Industrial Design from Lunds University, and it is where the idea of Påhoj originated. During the last year of the program she needed to write a master’s thesis, which is according to her, the ultimate challenge for an industrial designer to find a solution to everybody’s problem. Her mother mentioned an everyday issue she had come across when Lycke was younger: travelling with children by bike. Lycke von Schantz saw the potential and took the project to a certain point for the thesis, but she also realized the work that was needed to make the product a reality.

She moved to Holland after graduation to work in a designer’s office, and she later returned to Sweden and started at IKEA as an external designer. After some time, she wanted to start something new, and that was the beginning of the journey towards the creation of the company, Påhoj.

What was the reason you started your company?

I was tired of the role of a product designer, only playing a role in a small part within the whole

Process chain. For example, you gave your product to other people who marketed the product in a way you did not have in mind. Having a company I can now be involved in every step, which of course can be burdensome but also gratifying.

After graduation I appeared in the LTH newspaper (LTH is the faculty of engineering) where I talked about the product, since then the phone started ringing from both potential customers and producers, and it did not stop. This made me realize that this was my mission, and I identified the market needs. I hope Påhoj will contribute to improve travel with children.

“Don’t underestimate your view and experiences as a woman, both as a user and observer. Use it as an asset and benefit for future development and progress.”

How can your innovation contribute to diversity in cycling, according to you?

When I think of diversity, I consider numerous aspects, e.g. economic and gender. Påhøj can contribute to diversity to make it possible for parents with children to choose a cheaper and more sustainable transportation option within urban areas. The idea is to make bicycling with children easy and accessible, so parents do not see it as an obstacle to take the bike. It is also an investment in the future because how you travel with children when they are young will affect their natural choice of transportation options when they are older. If Påhøj can make more parents take the bike with their children we can change the mindset on what is a natural choice of transportation. Most consumers are women, but it is a bit self-created because it is in these forums (with women) we are showcasing. We are trying to involve more fathers in marketing to reach another group, it does not exist at the moment, but we are working on it. The industry is men, but the buyers are women, there is much that can be improved within that sector.

What are your experiences as a female entrepreneur in the area of bicycling and mobility? Have you experienced any difficulties?

A little bit of both good and bad. One benefit is that I stand out and people think “wow, a female entrepreneur that is also a mother and company founder.” Although it feels questionable that this feels so revolutionary in 2020, I am trying to turn it into an advantage because many think it is interesting to write about and support female entrepreneurs.

However, I feel in some parts of the process, e.g. production, there is a lot of “male behavior”, where it is rough, and I do not want to participate in that. This could be a disadvantage because people can see me as mawkish and not take me seriously or think that I can get things done, but I will do it my way and I don’t think it is necessary to be rough and tough, and if that is more feminine, I do not know. I think there is, and have been for a long time, a stereotypically male way of doing things in the sector, but I think it is starting to change and hopefully I can contribute to that change.

Do you have any advice to other female entrepreneurs in the area of bicycling and mobility?

“Don’t underestimate your views and experience as a woman, both as a user and observer. Use it as an asset and benefit for future development and progress. Diversity in all segments is a profit for everyone!”



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