

multiple fast growing companies. All these case studies from the Otto Beisheim Graduate School of Management were presented in executive seminars on success factors of fast growing companies. We organized this seminar for graduate students on an annual basis for entrepreneurs and managers from high growth firms since we had never before such a seminar came up in early 2001, after the crisis. We strongly felt that the time for entrepreneurship and innovation in fast growing companies was not over, it was rather just starting. We started the academic exercise of a seminar with the goal to present cases of firms from different industries that succeeded during the crisis and despite difficult capital market condi-

tions. The cases cover different industries, company ages, and company sizes. Most of the cases are about German companies. Although they were founded in Germany, many of them have become international. Some are truly global firms, like Qiagen and SAP. The companies in this book are active in diverse industries like biotechnology, software, food processing and others. While the defining characteristic of impressive growth rates, some of them are older and can best be described as mature

companies. These case studies can be used in different ways. First, they serve as excellent material for teaching courses in entrepreneurship, innovation and technology at the graduate and executive level. Second, the case studies of fast growing firms presented in this book are well suited to be used as examples in more theoretical courses on new business models and growth management. Finally, we personally use these case studies in business plan seminars and graduate courses on entrepreneurship. They are also excellent for teaching business models, making revenue and cost models, and forecasting growth.

We would like to thank the case studies who agreed to have their material included in this book. Every team of authors had intense conversations with the representatives of the company under investigation, and every team worked hard to get the main story line out clearly. Special thanks go to the companies who gave their precious time to discuss the content and