



CEO of tonies SE
Entrepreneur and Investor

Tobias Wann takes over companies at the very point where most leadership transitions fail: following the founder. Three times in his career, he has succeeded founder-CEOs and steered their companies into the next phase. Most recently at tonies SE, the Frankfurt-listed company behind the Toniebox, the world's largest interactive audio platform for children. This pattern forms the core of his talks: How do you carry on building what someone else has invented - and make it even bigger?

Tobias Wann (*1972) studied economics at Witten/Herdecke University, including a study visit to UCLA in Los Angeles. Whilst still a student, he co-founded an IT security company with two friends, which he sold to the US corporation VeriSign. After around ten years in IT security, he moved into the online travel sector: first as General Manager of the US group HomeAway (now part of Expedia), then as CEO of the Dutch @Leisure Group, one of the world's largest holiday home providers. He subsequently served as CEO of Munich-based Xempus AG, one of Europe's leading digital platforms for occupational pension schemes. As a member of the Digital Finance Forum, he also advised the Federal Ministry of Finance on issues relating to the digital finance sector at that time.

He has been CEO of tonies since January 2024. The company operates in more than 100 countries, is growing fastest in the US - where its products are stocked at retailers including Walmart and Target - and collaborates with licensing partners such as Disney, Pokémon and Bluey. In 2025, tonies generated a turnover of 630 million euros. By June 2026, more than twelve million Tonieboxes and over 165 million Tonies figures had been sold worldwide. This makes tonies a rare example: a German invention that has created an entirely new product category and now leads that category globally.

Topics (Selection):

- Taking up the baton: Leadership after the founder-CEO - Why successions often fail and what it takes to successfully lead a company into its next phase of growth
- Childhood under pressure: Screens, attention and the tech industry's responsibility - Why digital products for children need to be reimagined and where technology companies' responsibilities lie
- From category creator to global brand: How an idea became an international brand - And what lessons companies can learn from global growth