

JAN HENRIC BUETTNER



Jan Henric Buettner

Serial Entrepreneur, Creator,
Leader, and Philanthropist

Founder of AOL Europe;
Headline Venture Capital;
WEISSENHAUS – Private
Nature Luxury Resort; Big
Barn Studios & Record Co.;
Freestyle Chess Co. / Author
“Bite-sized wisdom for life”

Pioneer in Mobile, Internet, Venture Capital, Luxury Hospitality, and Chess

- Jan Henric Buettner (born **September 10, 1964**) is a visionary leader in mobile technology, the internet, venture capital, luxury hospitality, and chess. He has lived in Germany, California, and now primarily resides in South Africa.
- **Mobile Technology & Internet Innovation:** In 1989, Jan played a key role in Axel Springer Verlag's bid for the D2 mobile license, contributing to the introduction of private mobile telephony in Germany. In 1992, he founded the world's first multimedia online service, which led to the creation of **AOL Europe** in 1995. This venture culminated in the sale of Bertelsmann's and Jan's stake to AOL for **\$10 billion in 2000**.
- **Venture Capital & Silicon Valley:** In 1997, Jan moved to California and launched BV Capital (now **Headline Ventures**), which today manages over \$4 billion in assets. Between 1998 and 2007, he oversaw **\$1 billion+** in venture investments, backing early-stage companies like **GoTo-Meeting**, **Groupon**, and **Sonos**.
- **Luxury Hospitality & Weissenhaus Castle Estate:** In 2006, Jan acquired the **400-year-old** Weissenhaus estate on the Baltic Coast of Germany. Investing over **EUR 150 million** he transformed it into the award-winning **WEISSENHAUS Private Nature Luxury Resort** (weissenhaus.de).
- **Chess & Sports Innovation:** In 2024, Jan co-founded **Freestyle Chess Co.** with **Magnus Carlsen**, bringing together the world's top chess players to revolutionize the sport by using principles inspired by **Formula 1's success model**.
- **Expertise & Thought Leadership:** A sought-after expert in internet innovation, venture capital, luxury hospitality, and sports, Jan advises leaders in politics and business worldwide. His book “7x7 JBite-Sized Wisdom for Life ;)” is available in both print and audio formats.

Expectations of FIDE Presidency 2026-2030

Vision: Grow the global chess ecosystem.

Mission: Stronger federations, more players, more opportunities.

Method: Sponsorship, education, media, technology, and professionalization.

Leadership style: Listening, partnership, transparency, and service.

Personal credibility: A lifetime spent building organizations, partnerships, and opportunities that did not previously exist – and now bringing that experience to world chess.

INTRODUCTION AND MISSION STATEMENT
for FIDE Presidency 2026-2030
Jan Henric Buettner

As many delegates may not yet know me personally, I hereby briefly introduce myself, so that you can determine if I do possess the skills, experience, and international relationships to help you and FIDE jointly create new opportunities for chess in your respective countries.

- By sharing my background I would also like to give you comfort trusting me with the FIDE leadership for the next four years, so that FIDE can better serve its member federations, players, organizers, coaches, arbiters, sponsors, and millions of chess enthusiasts around the globe.
- Throughout my life, I have been a builder, founded companies, developed international businesses, raised investment capital, created media platforms, organized major events, and transformed ambitious ideas into successful realities. But I am not asking for your support because of what I have achieved in the past - I am asking for your support because of what we can achieve together in the future.
- I understand the challenges of growth because I have spent decades creating growth. I also believe I understand the needs of smaller federations, because building something from the ground up requires many of the same qualities: vision, leadership, perseverance, creativity, and the ability to achieve more with limited resources.
- Today, chess stands at the beginning of a remarkable new era. Our collective task is not merely to govern the game, but to expand its entire ecosystem—bringing more players into chess, creating more opportunities for professionals, attracting new sponsors and audiences, strengthening national federations, and ensuring that chess reaches every school and every community that wishes to embrace it.
- In pursuing that goal, I believe FIDE should be inclusive and forward-looking. We should embrace every legitimate form of chess that helps grow our game and inspire new generations of players: Classical Chess, Rapid Chess, Blitz Chess, Online Chess, School Chess, and Freestyle Chess. Different formats appeal to different audiences, but all contribute to the same objective: making chess stronger, more accessible, and more relevant around the world.
- My hope is that this brief introduction provides context for the ideas contained in my Chess Manifesto Summary. Ultimately, I ask not to be judged by my past achievements, but by the vision, integrity, and practical results that together we can deliver for world chess. If entrusted with the leadership of FIDE, my commitment will be simple: to listen, to serve, and to help create more opportunities for every federation, every player, and every community that believes in the power of chess.
- It is my strong belief that a stronger FIDE must always mean stronger federations, because the future of chess will not be determined in boardrooms, but in local clubs, schools, communities, and national federations around the world.

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