AFFILIATE NETWORK INSIDER: Admitad

Each day new players are starting to compete within marketing industry. They all aspire to achieve great success and hope that someday their names will appear along with the affiliate marketing leaders. But not all badly managed teams and products survive, only the best and most tenacious succeed. What were they dreaming of? Which problems did they have? What were the key factors of their success? How did they survive during market changes? What was the affiliate marketing industry like back then?

We continue sharing the answers to these and many more questions in our series of articles, Affiliate Network Insider, that touches upon the exciting life of the biggest and most prominent affiliate networks in the industry. Stay tuned to meet known players at affise.blog, and welcome our guest, **Admitad founder, Alexander Bachmann**.

Admitad is an ad network founded in 2009. With 9 years in the sphere Admitad is now trusted by a huge number of advertisers, including Lamoda, KupiVIP, AliExpress, Goodbet, Qatar Airways, Pups Asia's, HTS, MegaFon, Dodrevy Club among the others. The company works with more than 1,500 advertisers and 630,000 publishers that are driving more than 4 M targeted visitors daily.

| 9 years | Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany, China, India, UAE | Beauty & Health, Tourism, E-commerce, Internet services, Mobile, Online Games, Finances, Goods for kids | Worldwide |

—Admitad is not simple day. It is a giant in affiliate marketing. When we saw your volumes and the impact you make in the industry, we hardly believe that a 29-year-old boy stood behind this business. Looking back, how did it all begin?

Alexander Bachmann, Admitad founder

It all began with one website. I saw 16, when Maksim Vladimir, who is still my business partner, and me got to launch my own website in just two years this project grew to the size of a company. At the same time I was building my own career as a German affiliate network. Salina, and in 2009 I was included in the list of TOP publishers in Germany. That was quite an achievement. But I also wanted to jump. I then became interested in how it worked, affiliate networks. So back in 2009, CIS market in Eastern Europe was just evolving and by old ones were far from those in Germany. I decided to start it there. So I moved to Russia and had been living there for year and a half. We had a small office. In the very beginning for our company spread over, and a year later, and a half had started to get some employees. Everything was growing steadily. And we set out the process to relatively cheap traffic. Admitad had become profitable right from the onset.

—What was the most challenging at the very beginning?

As I've already mentioned, we initially worked in Eastern Europe countries including Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. On the one hand, the opportunities for the development there were huge, as the area was not so oversaturated with networks as it was the Western markets. On the other hand, we had to build the market on our own. Creating a team was quite a challenge as it was very hard to find people who knew anything about CPA. Besides, right from the outset we faced the problem of fraudulent traffic. We worked in gaming niche, and a part of the affiliates just made it up on 2 cams per install. That is why a big number of publishers couldn't resist the temptation to scam the advertisers. Luckily, we managed to combat fraud very fast without huge losses.

—Has Admitad's not limited to just Eastern Europe, you are growing globally. What is the reason for such expansion?

In 2009 everything was different. Digital penetration wasn't that huge as it is now, and affiliate marketing didn't work even in some countries. So, it's not an overstatement to say that it was us who brought CPA marketing to Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. I decided not to reinvent the wheel but forecast the vision of the market and its development based on it. So I decided to apply my experience and educate the staff with all the affiliate marketing peculiarities, we started off well and proved that the approaches were working.

Initially, we focused on turning vertical for several reasons. First of all, gaming was the fastest growing niche. Second, we were fond of online games too, so it was quite logical for us to promote them. But as we were growing in quality and quantity, we started as a team of the 5 people with 280% growth yearly, it was evident that we need to scale up our capacity. Thus, we started to diversify and move to other verticals, such as finance, retail and so on. After a couple of years, we became one of the top of three in the field, being Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus and other countries, including BRIC countries, were our main target markets. We've managed to grow and develop into such an attractive player that the technologies here and now help matter, CIS market is now proven by the affiliate for that grew by more nine times in the industry. Our aim is to make the market more transparent and efficient for our affiliate marketer. Now we see the direction of our global growth and it is already leaning to India.

Admitad has two offices in 7 countries all around the globe.

—You mentioned that the affiliate marketing industry has changed a lot comparing to the time when you started. What are the major changes you see now?

The world has changed drastically, and the affiliate marketing has changed as well. Comparing to 2010, I see that the approaches to digital marketing have become more mature. Retailers now have better understanding of online advertising and they want to consume high-quality products — all these factors are a catalyst for developing and thriving technologies, and in turn, guides and trends are already coming to this. For me, the market is changing in favor of transparency. The retailer, it touches upon GDPR, it confirms to us that the world becomes more open and transparent, and the time is ripe for this. The market requires more transparency, so it is logical that everywhere in the world the requests for transparency are extremely high. The same strategy should apply to developing and keeping loyalty to customers. Transparency and loyalty are the two key challenges of this transition now.

—With so many years in affiliate marketing, I bet you have a bunch of interesting stories happened to you. Can you mention any of them?

I can remember that several years ago one of our clients couldn't manage to pay for our service due to difficulties in the payment system. So he compensated it with a large shipment of goods, high-quality clothes and shoes. It took us a whole year to pass out this, quite unusual for us, merchandise.

You can find Admitad lawyers among the speakers at the most relevant affiliate marketing events.

—Your TA? team counted 15-16 employees, now 260 people are working in Admitad. In 2009 the market was just about to grow and faced real professionals in the sphere, so you had to build and educate the team on your own. What has changed since then and how do you hire your team members now?

We greatly cherish the team that we managed to grow in these 9 years. The company almost doesn't see staff turnover, and the majority of our team members work from the very beginning. Some of the newcomers have already become the managers of separate divisions and even the heads of the departments.

We always chase for the best. It doesn't matter whether you are a talented graduate from the university or an experienced professional. What really matters is your past and your bright attitude and willingness to work. Our corporate culture is quite special. We always grow and foster our team, discover new tools and learn new horizons. That is why we appoint our employees to keep up with our ambitions, be proactive and eager to get succeed. Besides, we treat this situation of collaboration and mutual support, where everyone can share their ideas and get the advice. Here in Admitad, we have very democratic rules; we do not set any policies where they are absent, we don't have a lot of bureaucracy, and the atmosphere at the office is very friendly and cozy. We encourage the employees to learn everything new and share their experience with the peers, participating at the webinars in the Admitad Academy. It is an efficient tool that develops the knowledge and skills of your employees, and it makes the company more competent too. Therefore, to encourage the information coming from our employees and we always open to constructive dialogue.

Having started with 15 employees Admitad team is now more than 250 team members.

—What do you think sets you apart from other affiliate networks?

If we talk about a company from the perspective of a living organism, our main asset is in our youth and thirst for constant development. Coming top with the old and old affiliate networks, Admitad is still on the rise but is very savvy and dynamic and flexible. As it have already said, we do not have big bureaucracy, that is common for older companies and often slows down the processes of making decisions and implementing innovations approaches. While some big companies are working with the outdated approaches and the fear to innovate and implement intermediaries, Admitad instead is the agency at the forefront of the affiliate networks altogether. Besides, we have all around the globe, so we effectively deal with the optimization of the expenses on salaries. We do not have a big expensive office in Silicon Valley, but we prefer to be cozy in other countries. Thus, Admitad can increase the team members faster, offering it service to the clients all over the world regardless of their location.

—Are there any peculiarities or technical advantages of working with your network?

One of the most important advantages that sets us apart is the global outreach of our business. Thanks to that, we provide our clients with multi-language support and show the local specialties all around the world. Thanks to this multi-scaling and working across in the affiliate marketing industry, we have created $25M million profit working with Admitad. Indian cross-border sales increased 9 times compared to the previous year and we reached $4 million in 2017.

Besides, we presented a bunch of innovative technologies which set us apart from the other market players:

Mobile SDK is a technology of mobile integration with Admitad, which allows advertisers to track the application installation, user registration, order checkout and payment, all while adhering to the application, and more.

CMS Plugins in 2016 we published the newest plugins for a row of CMS systems such as WooCommerce, OpenCart, 1C BITx, Webasyst, Shopify, Insales, and Magento 1 and 2.

Moneylink – the technology for monetizing links to online sites, personal blogs, and other content sites.

Admitad ADS – Admitad AD is a functional interface which gives access to the whole functionality of the ad network – it is compatible with all programming languages that supports JSON.

Brandguard – a tool that indicates violations in paid search advertising.

InvoicePos – a tool that analyzes traffic and indicates fraud.

Admitad hosts a range of crucial events, including Admitad Lounge.

—As affiliate network is an important link between an affiliate and an advertiser. How do you attract affiliates to your network?

I am a great believer that one of the keys to success of affiliate marketing is a balance between technologies and human relations. Admitad is not a faceless company where tools and publishers find each other and form a faceless mass. Admitad is a big community of people which is all around and still trying enough to succeed. It is not a secret that a big number of affiliates are still lead by technologies. In this respect, we created a project, Admitad Academy, which helps our advertisers understand the ins and outs of affiliate marketing and increase their sales and profits. We educate our audience publishers get to know the peculiarities of CPA marketing and we share our useful tips on our YouTube Channel.

Not only are we spreading most relevant conferences and events in the industry, where we meet our current and potential partners, we also hold events all over our own. We already 3 years we are organizing Admitad Lounge a huge party for advertisers, publishers, and Admitad team. Here we gather in an informal atmosphere with the most relevant players in affiliate marketing industry. As we continue to grow and develop, the number of attendees is increasing. Besides the fun and leisure, the attendees can gain insights together with their advice and build new business connections in this friendly environment. It's that's only, if you want to succeed you just have to provide advertisers with accurate statistics, high-quality and in-built technologies, for those things seem to be crucial for affiliate. Apart from this to attract new publishers we always show them the best technologies and treat them with respect, because we understand that only in this case our affiliates will trust us and will choose our technologies instead of others. We treat them as business partners. Only if we are focused not only on the technologies but also on the human relations, we can achieve the best results and form loyalty both among our advertisers and publishers.

Alexander Bachmann: "We do not set boundaries where they are needless, we do not have a rigid hierarchy and the employees and their managers only about specific more that cultivate encouraging, communicating and dynamically."

—You have 8 offices in 7 countries all around the globe. Your head office is in Germany. Why is that? You travel a lot, I can see in affiliate marketing industry.

I would like to name several trend that I see here in affiliate marketing industry.

- **Head to Mobile.** Many, if not most, Internet consumers spend their time on mobile devices and in general more and more users prefer mobile in apps. Technologies are adjusting to mobile apps and is quickly becoming the top tendency in affiliate marketing.
- **Transparency.** Digital advertising is becoming more transparent. Russia's digital marketing will be pushed taking evolving due to the economy and the importance of the area, so the biggest companies are already investing into this. I believe that pretty soon is going to boom, especially with the new law coming into effect. Everyone is interested in consuming high-quality and the most transparent advertising, that is why the companies should consider this path as well.
- **Customer Journey and Cross-Device Tracking.** Rightly speaking, these trends touch upon analytics and stats tracking. Due to the growth of the mobile devices, including the difference in between traffic channels, many use of these channels and the increase in switching from one device to another during the decision-making process, and the growth of the mobile usage, customer journey and cross-device tracking are becoming more complicated. So affiliate networks, I suppose we are those who should consider all their peculiarities. Of course, all these trends are extremely important for the whole affiliate marketing industry. While only those networks that can embrace and work with technologies to adjust them will continue being successful. That is why, if you want to succeed you just have to provide advertisers with accurate statistics, high-quality and in-built technologies, and take close care of the human relations. Keeping them in mind along with affiliates. TOP publishers should clearly realize who they deal with.

—TOP Affiliate — what does it mean to you?

Top affiliate is a publisher that earns $1 M daily. As in for us is an individual publisher, but a whole affiliate.

—What is the secret of your success?

Understanding that the idea itself will not bring you money is the first step to success. One person can start something but the key is to build a whole team of professionals to make the idea to the next level. You can't just dream to fix things, you need to put real passion in the team and create the best product and serve others.

"AFFILIATE NETWORK INSIDER" is a project, covering success stories and inside info of the biggest and most prominent affiliate networks. Stay tuned for more brilliant stories here at affise.blog, and welcome our guest, next we are coming to meet more players. If you want your company to be in the list, feel free to contact us. We are always happy to hear from you.

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