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# BRAND BUILDING: THE ROLE OF PR IN MODERN BUSINESS

**Dmitry V. Ozman**  
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## Abstract

In the interview with Dmitry Ozman, President of Forbes Club and Development Director of Forbes Russia, the importance of PR and media in business is discussed, emphasising their key role in a company's success. It is argued that quality PR is a basic component of any business, as it forms the face and character of the company, which becomes especially important in a highly competitive environment. As technology and new media formats are actively evolving, companies are forced to adapt and utilise modern tools such as social media and artificial intelligence to remain relevant and visible to their audience. An important part of a successful media product is the characteristics of the target audience and their needs. The process of creating compelling content involves preliminary market research as well as interaction with peers and experts. Examples of successful projects illustrate how innovative formats and joint work with market players help to create in-demand products and effective business communities. In addition, the interviews emphasise the importance of early professional experience for young people and the importance of the first step in career choices.

## Keywords

PR, media product, compelling content, technologisation of the media business, target audience.



- **Tell us about your career path. What brought you into the industry?**

- This story should start with my childhood. In primary school, I dreamed of becoming a military man and was preparing to enter a military university. But when I broke my back at the age of 14 (compression fracture of five vertebrae), the doctors immediately said that I would have no future in this profession. They gave me a military ticket and that was it. My future profession was determined by my grandmother, who once said at dinner that I was a born journalist. Then came journalism school and the journalism department of Voronezh State University.

From the first year, I started working on television, but I realised straight away that it wasn't my thing: bushy operators, lack of freedom of speech and rigid boundaries. I realised that there was a very low ceiling in television journalism, and I definitely needed to look wider. So I started doing PR, I got a lot of projects, including international ones. And in 2018, when Forbes had big problems with its reputation, I took the position of PR director, that is, I became a media manager. Then marketing was added to my responsibilities. And in 2021, when I graduated from Stanford, I took the position of director of development.

Today, journalism is closely linked to my life – Forbes' video project "Business Class", Forbes Club journal, and the author's Telegram channel.



The basic qualities of specialists in media promotion are communication skills, attention to detail and love for what you do.

- **In your opinion, what role does PR play in the activities of a modern company?**

- PR plays a key role. Any successful business always has good PR, and where it is bad, there are always big problems. When a company has difficulties, the first people who start to solve them are lawyers and PR people. That is why PR is a basic component of any company. On the one hand, it is its face, and on the other hand, it is its character. We have moved away from the time when companies could be faceless. Today, almost every business has a media persona from its top management or that talking head that the audience associates with the product.



My main recommendation for the younger generation is to start working as early as possible, from their teenage years. It is important to understand your predisposition, what you are best at, what you are passionate about, to understand where these competences are applicable.

- **What trends are observed in the Russian media business?**

- All the trends of the last ten to fifteen years are in one way or another related to technology - the media have acquired their own YouTube-channels, social networks, and Telegram-channels. I think that the trend towards the technologicalisation of media will continue. Some editorial offices are already using artificial intelligence. Perhaps there will be forms of communication with the audience through augmented reality, when the reader/viewer will be immersed in the news as much as possible, will become a part of some event. If we talk in terms of a medium-term perspective of five to seven years, I see two directions of development - simplification of content distribution and technologicalisation of formats.



Our task is to provide unique opportunities for entrepreneurs: to get professional expertise, to find partners and friends among "our own", to discuss topics of concern with intelligent and interesting people.

- **What professional qualities distinguish specialists in the field of media promotion?**

- The basic qualities are communication skills, attention to detail and love for what you do. These are the three basic ingredients to be successful in media.

- **How to create a successful media product in a highly competitive environment?**

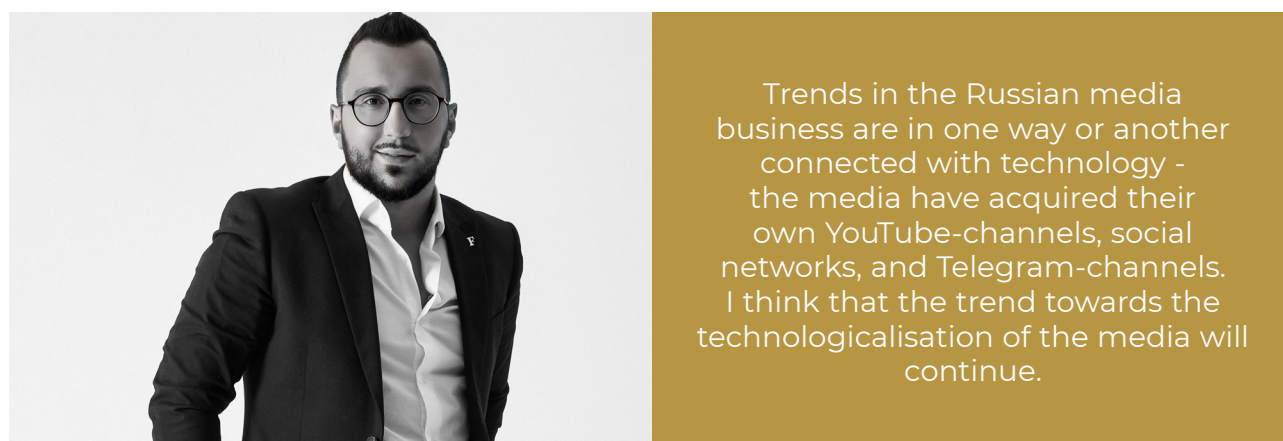
- The basic metrics of a successful media product are audience and advertisers' money. Before launching a project, you must have a clear understanding of who your target audience is, how big it is, and what its needs are. Without answering these questions, you should not even start - with a high probability the project will fail. The next step is to try to respond to these needs. Here you can stumble a bit and make some mistakes, see what content/format goes in and what doesn't. Look at the experience of peers, talk to experts,

perhaps engage those experts to create collaborative content. When the project gains a core audience, you will be noticed by advertisers and your project will be “valued” by the ruble.



- Tell us about the most interesting projects that you have already managed to realise or are planning to realise in the near future

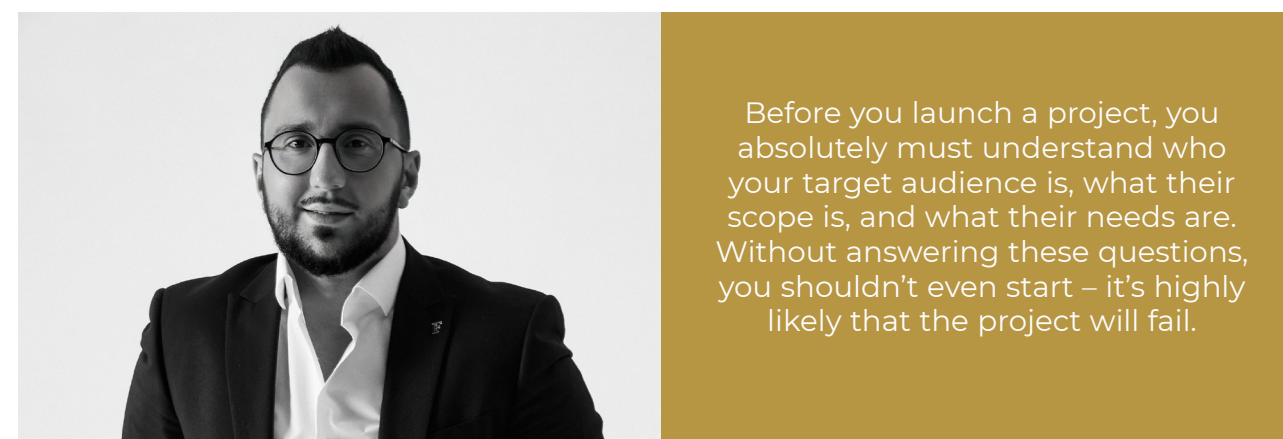
- Of the latest ones, Forbes “Business Class” is definitely worth mentioning, I spoke about it earlier. This project is interesting from the point of view of realisation. In the first season, we recorded interviews in a car, assuming that all entrepreneurs are quite busy people. To save them time, we talk directly on the road. From the point of view of realisation, this idea turned out to be very difficult because it is filmed in non-standard conditions - in addition to the car itself, where the shooting takes place, it is accompanied by three others. In two seasons, this product has established itself as one of the fast-growing and hopeful ones. There’s another one that definitely needs to be mentioned - it’s Forbes Club. We have been bringing together some of the best representatives of Russia’s business environment for many years. Visionaries, industry leaders, top managers of companies with high development potential. Our task is to provide unique opportunities for entrepreneurs: to receive professional expertise, to find partners and friends among “our own”, to discuss topics of concern with intelligent and interesting people. In essence, the club has become a tool that helps Russian business to grow. We have created a business environment where its participants do not compete with each other but unite to achieve common goals. This is also one of the achievements that my team and I are proud of.



- What advice would you give to the upcoming younger generation in terms of building a career?

- My main recommendation is to start working as early as possible, from the teenage years. You can try yourself as a courier or a tutor - that is, consider any profession available to schoolchildren. You need to work both with your hands and your head, look at different fields of activity. The sooner you start working, the sooner you will understand where you should move and what you should do in the future. From next year, when he turns ten, my son will go to learn new professions, and everything is available for that now. It is important to understand your predisposition, what you are best at, what you are passionate about, to understand where these competences are applicable.

As for internships, you should go for them only when you clearly understand where you want to go. But once again, the career path does not start from that point. You first need to understand what you’re good at and what you want.



- How to start a career in media?

- It seems to me that the best way is to find a mentor, an authority in the media sphere you need and try to be useful to him, learn from him and establish communication. Talk to bloggers, ask to visit editorial offices and agencies. Many people don’t want to just mess around with beginners, you have to spend a lot of time, but if you are useful in the business, if you can say “I’m ready to do everything, just give me a task”, then everything will work out.

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