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Pinar Erzin Profile

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on the areas we believe we can be useful for our customers, and move away from what we think is no longer important for them. We are a debt-free company, which makes profit and reinvests even after such a crisis, thanks to our team and customers. We are careful in promising something to a publisher and dedicated to fulfill it once we made a promise. This is what I tell prospective clients. Actually, I mostly, don't tell much anymore. I let my team talk to prospects. This is how we win new customers and keep our current relationships. My team does it. They are the experts in their fields.

ATG: *Who are your main competitors? What is different about Accucoms? What advantages do you bring to the table?*

PE: Interestingly, we create, develop, and grow the list and the type of competitors, as we grow our business. Our typical competitors are companies/sales agents which represent publishers in different territories. I think PCG is our only one-on-one global competitor; a very successful company with a great reputation. There are different local companies we compete with in different countries and territories. Sometimes we compete with large subscription agents, consultancy firms, and even aggregators. I personally don't like the word competitor. In my own filing system there is a folder I call "partners." This is also where I file all info about my competitors. I believe that all competitors are potential partners. There are countries or business areas in which we could do better if we worked together. There are times we are best at competing for the goodwill of our companies, as well as our customers. It is a balance and that's my vision.

ATG *We noticed that you have announced several new agreements over the last couple of months. Can you tell us about them and what they say about your future direction?*

PE: On 6 November 2014 we acquired **Accucoms**, and on the same day we entered a new "positive" storm as we were re-establishing ourselves. We stayed focused and were able to shift very quickly to business as usual. We were 38 people in November 2014, and we are 60 people now. We have several new contracts and we entered new territories. We have grown some of our relationships with large publishers in managing part of their business. We have gained several new agreements with large university presses and our global telesales activities are growing. I think the fact that we were able to protect most of our current agreements, as well as gaining new types of publisher agreements, is a proof that Publishing Industry is pleased with the way we run the company now. It also shows their trust in our future strategy.

ATG: *All of these fast breaking changes must take a lot of time and energy. How do you recharge your batteries? What fun things do you do to unwind?*

against the grain people profile

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Pinar Erzin

BORN AND LIVED: Born and lived in Ankara, Turkey until after graduation from university, lived in Amsterdam, the Netherlands after university until recently. Currently residing in Turkey, traveling globally mainly for business.

EARLY LIFE: 1981-1987 — French high school. 1987-1992 — BA degree in American Culture and Literature.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER: 1992-1999 — Several international jobs in Amsterdam
1999-2000 — Sales Representative for Turkey at Swets Subscription Services
2000-2001 — Publisher Relations Manager at Swets Blackwell
2001-2004 — General Manager Extenza Marketing Solutions
2004-2014 — Co-founder and Managing Director Accucoms BV
2014-Present — Founder and President, Accucoms International BV (rebirth)

FAMILY: Parents, sister, one niece, and one nephew who all live in Ankara Turkey.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE: Running, fitness, yoga and meditation. Cooking when I am home. Spending time with family and friends.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by **Richard Bach**, *Shibumi and The Summer of Katja* by **Trevanian**, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by **Ken Kesey**, and several works by **Henry David Thoreau**.

PHILOSOPHY: "Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing." — **Muhammad Ali**

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Saving my company from **SIS** bankruptcy with minimal damage for staff and customers, while showing growth within ten months after this takeover.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: More career and growth opportunities for staff, better services for publishers in different areas. More time with loved ones. Staying healthy and happy.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: More consolidation in publishing and services. Growth of small companies with better/more flexible services. Change in aggregation business (less big deals/more focused packages). Technology companies to reinvent themselves including services to their offering. Different alternatives for smaller publishers to be supported by (not just large publishers and/or aggregators). Societies spending more time in their membership businesses to readjust/strengthen their relations with their members. 🌱

PE: For about ten months, recharging was out of the question. It was automatic pilot. However, I believe I made most of the quieter summer months by travelling less, spending a lot of time with family and friends, living much healthier, and doing lots and lots of sports. I love running for mental clarity, I lift weights to get rid of any negative energy, I enjoy yoga to breath better, and I am just discovering meditation, and that is a miracle on its own. I think I am ready for the new season with renewed energy. I am, in fact, very excited about our planned strategy for 2016!

ATG: *Thank you so much for taking time from what is obviously a hectic schedule to talk to us.*

PE: I am sincerely honored that you have asked me to share my experience and thoughts. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Please note that Charleston has a very special place in our professional lives, as the 2003 conference was where the first step for **Accucoms** was taken! 🌱