

Asking the Right Questions Lands Stephan Goss on 'Forbes' 30 Under 30 List

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As a Swiss immigrant studying at a U.S. university, with limited work options due to his H1B visa, YPO member Stephan Goss lived off money from affiliate marketing. He would advertise products on the internet and every time a company received a paying customer, he'd make a commission.

His company, Samples.com, is now one of the largest sampling, couponing and savings sites on the web, with millions of monthly visitors redeeming unmatched quantities of the best free samples.

But it took a question by one of his health care clients in 2011 for Goss to step up his game. Could Goss identify specific categories of high-value web visitors, such as those with a particular medical condition? The client was willing to pay him six times more per lead, so Goss began showing visitors to his client's website a one-question survey that asked whether they were diabetic. If the user replied yes, Goss would show them relevant ads.

Goss's survey strategy became the basis for his second company, Zeeto, which has garnered tremendous buzz as an innovator of ad technology and placed him on "Forbes" 2017 [30 Under 30](#) list of Marketing & Advertising entrepreneurs.

"We've basically built a platform that connects advertisers with consumers via questions," says Goss. "We are a data discovery company with an ad-tech spin."

Since its founding in 2010, Zeeto has bootstrapped its way without outside investors to 80 employees mostly based in San Diego, California, USA, with a new office recently opened in New York City, New York, USA. Its projected revenue for 2017 is expected to climb to USD43 million. Zeeto has been recognized as a Top Workplace in San Diego by the "San Diego Union Tribune" and the No. 2 Best Place to Work in San Diego by the "San Diego Business Journal."

8 billion ways to ask a question

With Zeeto, Goss takes buying traffic and placing ads on sites to drive visitors a step further by enabling publishers, entrepreneurs and content providers to drive the next wave of online innovation by monetizing their traffic more efficiently.

“Unlike traditional ad networks, we don’t guess, we don’t scrape or infer data,” explains Goss. “Instead, we simply ask users questions and use the answers to target ads. This allows for optimal CPMs, driving incremental revenue for our publishers that they can re-invest in their business.”

Sounds easy, but Zeeto’s techs work through millions of combinations of questions in order to provide their clients java script to plug into their website. This allows clients to monetize their users by targeting products to each customer. “We pay a revenue share and we keep 28 percent, so it’s a performance-based business.”

Key levers for growth

Zeeto began its growth by building their own properties. “So switching the business model to explore existing traffic rather than having to go into our own is a one-to-one data discovery element that is powerful. For advertisers, we can do targeting that no one else — like Facebook — can do,” says Goss. “We went from zero to 40 million in traffic; we project 200 million by end of 2017.”

Goss, whose only experience working for someone else included a brief stint as a skydiver, isn’t sure where he’ll be a year from now, but feels there’s nothing but tremendous potential for Zeeto. “At some point it will be a great acquisition for someone like Google or Facebook.”

Ever adventurous and not sure what the future holds, Goss, who was driven as an entrepreneur out of necessity, knows that for now, asking all the right questions has proven very effective.

Connect with Stephan at stephan@zeeto.io

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