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IEDC Alumni Success Story

MATJAŽ GRM: »THE ESSENCE OF MARKETING/BRANDING IS ABOUT CREATING THE VALUE FOR THE COMPANY WHILE EMPATHIZING WITH CONSUMERS AND GETTING THEIR TRUST«

Interviewed by Vera Pasyukova

Photo provided by Matjaž Grm

One of the first question that probably is on the mind of many of our readers is how did Adria Mobil manage the last several months when corona virus has been causing a total havoc around the world?

Covid situation impacted our workers at our factories in Slovenia as well all our exclusive distributors managing more than 500 Dealerships across the EU and wider region. It was the moment where real leadership had to give the sense of emotional empathy with people that got insecure on the one hand side and bold, brave decisions to activate the company on the

other hand side.

How did you manage communications within the company and teams? What are the learnings?

We had to manage both sides of communication – internally with our employees and externally with our partners with frequent, open and well-structured communication about our safety measurements and action plans to secure the business. The main learning point was that any communication is still better than no communication in such difficult times.

It might be a generalisation, however, marketing quite often is

underrated in companies, and that even without any economic crisis situations. How do you see the role of marketing, particularly, in the current situation?

The essence of marketing/branding is about creating the value for the company while empathizing with consumers and getting their trust. In current situation this is even more important than ever before.



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How did travelling restrictions of the last few months affect the caravanning market? What are your predictions on what could be future developments both for the market and the industry?

Caravanning market is one of the niche industries in Europe and the US that was positively impacted by new travelling and leisure time patterns of consumers. In summer time we experienced unexpected »boom of demand«, created mainly from newcomers to the industry that were looking for safe, individual, spontaneous, outdoor and environmentally friendly way of leisure time or vacations. Those values will on top of positive demographics trends probably still positively impact our industry in next years to come.

How did corona crisis affect your marketing strategy? What is happening with the marketing channels/tools that you have been using so far?

Rich marketing content with consumer relevance, outstanding new products

and efficient and measurable communication via direct digital channels were already in the past part of our marketing strategy. In last months we intensified this mix of our success formula.

You attended a number of IEDC programs, among them the IEDC Executive MBA that you



have completed back in 2004. Would you say MBA helped you in any way in your professional development? In what way?

MBA program of IEDC was a lifetime experience and a milestone where I figured out the essence of leadership, managerial skills for my further career development. It was an eye-opener and a behavioural transformation that helped me become a better leader and a manager. And somehow I have incorporated and followed the ambition, a tagline used in the school - »Only the best is good enough« - also with the future projects and business I was in. Such ambitions also

brought Adria to become a no.1 brand in Europe.

Besides work, what are the things that keep you motivated, make you happy, help you unwind?

Ambitious targets and continuous growth mean hard work which you can only achieve with a dedicated

and talented team of people around. It is my task to keep them grow as well as this is one of the strongest motivations. And personally, without the support of my wife and my children, my life would not be fulfilled either, so family moments with a wide spectrum of outdoor activities close to nature are providing the proper work-life balance for me.

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MEET MATJAŽ IN PERSON



Matjaž Grm

Executive Sales and Marketing
Director, Adria Mobil

EMBA 2003-04

My friends would describe me as... an open-minded and a straight forward person that never gives up.

My favourite free time activities are... skiing, running, cycling, gardening.

My favourite destination to go to with a camper is... Pelješac peninsula for windsurfing, Dolomite mountains for hiking/cycling and Greece for discovering beaches.

The last book I've read was... Brick by Brick by David Robertson about the Lego innovation and their company/culture transformation.

My favourite movie is..... the Wall Street 2: Money Never Sleeps

The country I have not been to yet and would like to visit is... Argentina – Patagonia for hiking.

An advice I would give to my child(ren)... be honest, trust in yourself and dare to be unique and outstanding.