Meet Opground, a professional growth platform for techies

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Eduard Teixidó, CEO of Opground about evolving fast, user feedback and using AI to connect companies and entrepreneurs with tailored tech professionals

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When I was 20 years old I tried to start a company, but it was impossible to find someone with the skills I don't have and interested in what I was doing. Later, after 5-6 years working as an engineer I saw it was so time consuming looking for a better job opportunity while I was happy at my job because spending time by explaining always the same when interviewing for first time with a company didn't make sense. Also, for companies and entrepreneurs, looking for talent on typical platforms and talking with random people was not efficient at all. With that in mind, I started being falsely interested for job opportunities so I was able to analyse the market and see if if there was a way to improve recruitment.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

Opground is the first Artificial Intelligence-based system that connects companies and entrepreneurs with the most tailored tech professionals. It

takes less than 5 minutes and is based on the same information recruiters are using to take decisions nowadays, the first interviews.

Tech professionals, through a single 30 minutes conversation with Opi, our intelligent chatbot, are interviewed by hundreds of tech companies at once. And companies, thanks to a system that searches, applies and conducts all the first interviews for all developers, can save up to the 80% of the time spent on hiring by getting the most tailored tech talent for each position in less than five minutes. Nobody wastes their time.
Today we are mainly operational in Spain and Latam, and our goal is to provide a global solution to help professionals find their desired job while companies find the most tailored talent to keep growing their businesses.
We're a great team of 5. Without them we wouldn't be where we are. That's the best of the company. I feel really proud of them.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

Opground was launched at the end of 2020 and started with a pool of developers to get feedback to improve the product. The business has been growing since mid 2021, once the product becoma more sellable for companies. Since then, although at the beginning is so hard to grow a "marketplace", a lot of mistakes and improvements brought us to today, a moment where we are already in a wheel moved by inertia. Also, we're starting with other business models like one that allows companies to reduce the loss of tech employees by up to 88% and another that allows event organisers to remove the labour around speed datings that we are used to seeing.

Tell us about the working culture at Opground

We focus specially on evolving fast, building the product based on users feedback, focusing on efficiency and simplicity while thinking outside the box, having fun at work and, of course, working in a collaborative environment where honesty and transparency are a must.

How are you funded?

I think that's one of our biggest strengths. We have never had a lot of money, so since we started we have managed all of our money cautiously. I always said that covid was a huge problem for starting up but was a huge benefit to start a company because with everything being closed, we were able to work without a salary because we weren't spending money on social meetings, trips, etc. At the beginning we started with our savings. It wasn't much and as we don't have rich families we decided not to involve our friends and family. Later, we started receiving some public funds thanks to our focus in

deeptech and, although we almost die because of the money, we closed funding of +500k€ from public funds and some Business Angels in 2021.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

I would say the biggest challenge was to find the perfect team. I say it's the perfect team because once, when we were running out of money, seeing we were closing in one month, they said: "If we close we can get a new job for recovering economically and start thinking about what could be the following business to start together". We all really believe in Opground, but that moment made us stronger.

How does Opground answer an unmet need?

From the tech professionals side, they use to receive a lot of contacts through social networks asking them to take a first interview, that interview is always the same, to discover who's behind this CV or Linkedin profile. To manage all these opportunities could take them up to 7 hours a week of their own time. That's crazy.
From the other side, recruiters have to search and filter through that same general and unspecific information because they can't interview everyone. It's impossible unless you have a system that interviews all professionals through a 30 minutes conversation with a chatbot, it's like being interviewed by hundreds of companies at once. At Opground every hiring process starts once someone has already passed the first interview.

What's in store for the future?

Opground is not only an IT jobs platform, it is a professional growth platform for techies, and it's going to be the same for many more sectors. Improving as a professional and running a business is hard enough to keep wasting time while looking for a job or hiring.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

If you're validating an idea, developing an MVP or already growing a company, NEVER ask for feedback in a conditional way. People don't want to hurt you so, if they can answer with a yes/no without hurting your feelings, most of the people will say what you want to hear. I'm sure most of Opground's success is due to the way we ask for feedback.
For example, when we were validating the idea, I wasn't meeting with developers and recruiters just to tell them the idea and asking if they would use that. That's the biggest

mistake you can do. You have to let people say: Oh man, this is amazing, if it can be real, it solves a huge problem. That's the point! I built a path of questions about how things work nowadays in recruitment sorted in a way that let me say if all the answers they told me were aligned with our solution. At the first interview you will always find many undefined aspects, but you'll be improving your product's details and the way you explain it.

Take your time. A deep validation will save you a lot of time and money.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

First of all, when I wake up (better, when my cat wakes me up before my alarm does it) I take my phone and I start the day by checking the email and Slack messages while I stay on the bed. I don't usually read all my emails during the day so I try to get important things done early in the morning. Then, I do my hygiene routine and start working with my laptop on the sofa while doing some easy stuff while keeping the mood. I'm a night guy so I need some chill in the morning. I try not to have meetings until at least 10am. From 8 to 10 I do some easy stuff, talk with the team, etc.

Then, I just work until lunch time, when sometimes I take a 15 minutes powernap before eating to let my brain rest. Then I eat while I keep working and, if there's good weather, I eat outside under the sun.

After lunch I keep working until I do some sport and afterwards, unless I'm going to drink a beer with some friends, I usually come back home for dinner and keep working for a while. I love the peace of the night. Maybe that's why I hate mornings hahaha.

On weekends, I try to mix social life with some work. We're really busy right now, so If I can do some stuff at some moments of the weekend I feel better. But if I have interesting things to do with friends or family, I focus on enjoying it, of course. My main life rule is to enjoy everything I do, if I don't enjoy something, I don't do it.

Eduard Teixidó is CEO of _Opground_.

Opground was selected as an AI for Good finalist as part of the Super Connect for Good competition powered by global super connectors, Empact Ventures, for more information visit _https://empact.ventures._

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