

What is common in a house party locator application and the biodegradable drinking straws?



[David Uzoni](#) began his first business at the age of 15 with some of his friends and then, through his parents, reached us to discuss the legal issues of the initial investment. Since then, he has been working with us on a number of legal issues. David gave this interview to the senior partner of Ecovis Hungary Legal, [Dr. György Zalavári](#).

February 13, 2019

How did you get the first idea for your first joint business project started as a high school student?

First of all, we started to develop a home-party locator mobile application with one of my friends, Bálint Burián in 2014. The idea arose from the fact that at that time we almost always wanted to go to house parties at the weekends, but these house parties in our circles of acquaintances were organized just monthly, and usually the same and already known people were invited. The charm of these evenings begun to fade. We were sitting in one of those boring house parties with Bálint when we invented the basic idea of Jumpin. Jumpin is an application where anyone can share the time and the location of her/his planned house party, and the users in the neighborhood may indicate to the organizer whether they want to join. The organizer can decide whether he or she accepts the candidates. After the idea was born, only the programmers had to be involved in the project, so we took two guys with coding skills from our high school into the project and we started the implementation together.

What kind of visibility and external support has this project brought to you?



As we were still very young at this time, some media picked up our story soon. We appeared twice on the www.index.hu (a Hungarian leading news portal), Forbes wrote an article about us, we could talk on Forbes Flow, and we were ranked in the Forbes 30 Under 30 list. These press releases have been proven to be a great advantage for us later.

One of Hungary's best-known start-up incubator houses, Kitchen Budapest, also noticed our project and adopted it. In addition, a lot of young entrepreneurs contacted us who wanted to do business at that time. I got to know a lot of new people and I have contacts with whom I have been still in contact until today.

How is Jumpin application coming along?

We have been still developing the app. The team around me completely changed several times. We haven't really been lucky so far, but in the summer we received a smaller amount of angel investment. We now seem to have found a trusted developer. I am optimistic about the future of the application.

Have you started any other business since then?

Yes, there are currently two other companies in my portfolio in addition to Jumpin. In the summer, with one of my best friends, Adria Chrobák we set up EcoHills. This company sells biodegradable drinking straws and other environmentally friendly products in Eastern Europe and in the US. In the course of nine months, we have grown into one of Hungary's largest distributors of degradable drinking straws. I'm very proud of that. In addition, with my friend Ádám Péter, I have founded DP Innovations a year ago, a research and development company in the field of medical devices, and a year ago we received a pre-seed investment from Hiventures. At the moment our team has four members, but this year we want to involve another investment group and grow further, probably from US sources. Unfortunately, I cannot say more about this project for the time being.

What is important for you in your everyday life beyond business? What has been a significant experience for you in the recent years?

If I have to answer briefly: family, friends, learning, and football. With my family, we had moved to Kuwait for two years, and there we were very much tied to each other. Now, however, I am studying at another university on another continent now and it is also very difficult without them. On the other hand, we talk every day, and they support everything I do. I can count on them at any time. In addition, my friends are very important, too. With one exception, all my closest friends are my business associates. Many people say that it is not fortunate to have friendship in the business, but I experienced the opposite. Since I spend most of the year abroad, I can only work at home with people who I can completely rely on and they can take over the operational part of the business without my physical presence. And it only works for me on a friendly basis. In addition, I keep learning continuously.



In September, I have started my university studies at Bentley University in the United States. Learning has always been the first for me. There is a saying that life is divided into three parts: "learn, earn, give back". I'm still in the "learning" phase, and as much as I want to do my business twelve hours a day, I am not allowed to and I can't do it at the expense of my academic improvement.

How has your entrepreneurial approach enriched during the years abroad?

Both Kuwait and the US gave me a lot. In Kuwait, the cultural differences were more significant. Everything is very different there, but if you accept it, you will get along relatively easy. I would always go back to Kuwait, but despite this fact I would not make any business there. I tried to do

business with the local people several times, but everything was very slow, and without proper connections it is almost impossible to start a business. In the US, however, there are many more options. For example, we have just started to expand with EcoHills now here, and I see that there are many more options available here due to the huge solvent demand. But it is still a difficult place for me compared to Hungary. However, if I learned something from moving from home, it is not to get stuck in a comfortable state. There is always a need to look for new challenges because this effort brings results.

Have you had any legal difficulties, have you ever encountered legal pitfalls in any of your businesses?

Of course, I had a few. In Jumpin, once the developer disappeared with the advance payment and we had to recover the money in a judicial route. In addition, a lot of contracts had to be reviewed, analyzed and signed during the foundations and investments of the companies and I had no experience in these kind of procedures before, and I easily missed important details. Lawyers have already found a few provisions in drafts of contracts which could have jeopardized the projects later. Most startups focus on just product development and marketing. On the average, 90% of the tight budget goes to these two activities. So, there is no money left for legal support, but without it, it is very difficult to plan for the long term. On that score, an unexpected event can often seal the fate of the entire company.

Today, fortunately, basic legal things became a routine for me in Hungary, but in the US I had to learn this again. For example company formation and bookkeeping are completely different than at home. But this is the reason why it is exciting to be here.
