

## Ersan Özer

Magnet Digital



“ I saw an opportunity to become a leading platform for video-based expert testimonials. ”

<b>COUNTRY</b>	Turkey
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	Technology
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	75
<b>YEAR SELECTED</b>	2011
<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://www.uzmantv.com">www.uzmantv.com</a>

## COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Advertisers can no longer resist the pull of Magnet Digital's Internet reach. Founded in 2005 by longtime Internet entrepreneur Ersan Özer, Magnet Digital is a digital media holding company with a suite of sites that collectively attracts over 11 million unique visitors per month. One of the newer sites, Uzmantv.com ("ExpertTV.com"), features two- to three-minute videos of experts discussing topics ranging from digital camera operation to postnatal care. The site is home to more than 30,000 videos and receives over 6.5 million unique visitors every month, traffic directed almost entirely from organic Google search. In addition to Uzmantv, Magnet Digital owns 14 different city-based dating sites and Timsah.com, a user-generated video-sharing site. While the dating sites currently generate more earnings and Timsah sometimes gets more traffic, Özer believes that **Uzmantv's quality content will redefine the media and advertising landscape in Turkey.**

Ersan has been involved with Turkey's Internet scene from the beginning. Educated at Anadolu University, where he earned his degree in advertising and public relations, Ersan built a career in media, first as a newspaper reporter, then as an award-winning producer of TV shows. While producing new programs for a popular TV channel, he launched one of Turkey's first viral Internet hits in 1999. Itiraf.com ("Confessions.com"), a site featuring embarrassing stories culled from user submissions, which caught the country's imagination and helped usher in the age of user-generated content. Ersan left his job and worked on Itiraf full-time, managing everything from web development to content curation. Heralded as a true Internet pioneer, Ersan soon found himself at the center of a burgeoning tech scene mentoring young entrepreneurs.

With his background in traditional media and his foray into Internet entrepreneurship, Ersan felt responsible for helping Turkey navigate its way through the new web medium. When it became clear in 2004 that Itiraf would not achieve profitability, Ersan left the company to explore other business models. In 2005, **he founded Magnet Digital with two entrepreneurs he had previously mentored**, the founders of the online auction site, Gittigidiyor.com ("Goinggoinggone.com"). Envisioning subscription-based dating sites as an alternative way to monetize traffic, Magnet Digital bought domain names such as Istanbul.net and Ankara.net and launched city-based dating sites that emphasized proximity within metropolitan areas when matching couples. Within two years, the sites were profitable and had gained market leadership, allowing Ersan to turn his attention once again to his true passion: how to make media work online.

Ersan launched Uzmantv in June 2007 with the idea that expert videos—high quality, trusted content in digestible bits—were needed to address the lack of reliable Turkish online content. A confluence of forces—increased Internet penetration, bandwidth that could support video streaming and a dramatic drop in video production costs—allowed Ersan to broadcast cheaply and quickly to Turkey's fastest-growing audience, Internet users. Bringing his media experience to bear, **Ersan oversees a tightly controlled process, which goes from expert identification to film editing, in order to guarantee the quality of Uzmantv videos.** As testimony to the relevance and reliability of its content, Uzmantv receives 90% of its traffic from organic Google search.

Uzmantv's highly engaged and highly targeted audience sets the table nicely for advertisers. The site generates revenue via several advertising mediums: pre-roll video ads (73% of ad sales), advertorials (16%), banners (6%) and video licensing (5%). Magnet Digital's sales team works with advertisers to develop ad campaigns tailored to match the look, feel and user base of Uzmantv. **At roughly US\$45 marginal cost, an expert video recovers its cost after only 1,800 views.** By way of comparison, Uzmantv commands a 50% advertising premium over Timsah, which features less targeted, lower production quality user-generated videos. **With roughly the same Internet traffic, Uzmantv generated nearly 4 times the revenue of Timsah in 2011.**

Given his compelling vision for the future of online video advertising, Ersan wants to focus exclusively on Uzmantv. **As Turkey's advertising scene moves away from traditional media towards the Internet, video ads promise to play a significant role, and Uzmantv will be at the center of the migration.** As Uzmantv continues to upload 25-30 new videos per day, Ersan plans to drive future growth by investing in a recording studio and growing distribution channels, such as social media and broadcast television. With growth capital and the right personnel, Ersan hopes to bring the Uzmantv concept abroad as well. Uzmantv has a process and a platform in place to create quality content, and Ersan is using his media savvy to find viewers and advertisers alike. Ersan is leading the charge in changing where and how brands advertise in Turkey.

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