Hakan Bas

Lidyana

“ I saw an opportunity to develop popular social games customized for emerging market populations. ”

COUNTRY	Turkey
INDUSTRY	Technology
WEBSITE	www.lidyana.com

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Peak Games is taking online gaming in the Middle East to unprecedented heights. Founded in October 2010 by one of Turkey's top internet entrepreneurs, Sidar Sahin, and former Endeavor intern, Hakan Bas, Peak Games is bringing top quality Facebook games to emerging markets. Today Peak has two business lines: translating games and adding local elements in order to adapt games to the culture of their target audience ("Publishing"), and developing games ("In-house development"). **Today, more than a third of Turkey's 30.7 million Facebook users have played a Peak game.** Until recently Peak has only targeted the Turkish market and it is already among the **top six gaming companies globally with 5.9 million Daily Active Users (DAU).** With the recent release of two Arabic games, the first exceeding two million users within a month, and one Spanish game, Peak is now executing its strategy of developing social games for emerging markets around the world. With offices in Turkey, Spain, Germany, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, Peak expects further regional expansion and successfully launched a mobile line in 2012.

Together Hakan and Sidar possess the creativity to develop top games and the diligence to run a multi-million dollar company. With a B.A. in Economics from Cornell and an MBA from Yale's School of Management, Hakan worked as an investment banker for three years before he met Sidar, a successful Turkish internet entrepreneur. The two became fast friends after another Turkish internet entrepreneur, Demet Mutlu, introduced them. One evening Sidar shared his idea for a Turkish social gaming company with Hakan. Three days later, Hakan left his VP role at Garanti Bank and rented a small apartment to serve as Peak's office.

With US$1 million pooled between the entrepreneurs and Demet, Peak acquired Okey, a Turkish Facebook game with 3.5 million users but virtually no monetization. Peak set about adding virtual goods and exclusive VIP levels for purchase. Three weeks later Safa Sofuoglu, Okey's original developer, quit his PhD program and became Peak's CTO. Safa recruited his former professor and soon had a team of the top engineers from Ankara's Universities. In December 2010 Peak published its first game, Komsu Çiftlik, a Turkish version of the popular Barn Buddy. Peak advertised the launch within Okey and **Komsu Çiftlik made tens of thousands of dollars in the first 10 days.** Within the six months that followed Peak bought two small Turkish game studios and a handful of individual games to monetize, in addition to publishing five games for the Turkish market.

Both Peak's publishing and in-house developing take popular trends and customize them to make games that appeal to a specific market, which includes not only language translation, but the addition of local cultural features and edited artwork, eliminating the sensation of foreignness for their target users. **The original Barn Buddy has two million monthly active users (MAU) globally and zero Turkish users, while Peak's Turkish version has three and a half million MAU.** From offices in Jordan, Spain and Germany, Peak scouts the latest global trends and accesses creative talent that is in short supply in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. Peak's success in emerging markets is in part due to the lack of social opportunities in Middle Eastern territories compared to the West: Peak offers subscription-based membership for its games, allowing users to create avatars and enter chat rooms. This creates a new and attractive way to socialize for emerging market populations with steadily rising disposable incomes but still conservative social habits. Back in Turkey, the entrepreneurs' reputations, competitive salaries and a creative work environment attract the top software and computer engineering graduates. Thanks to new data intelligence software, Peak learns more about its market with each game it releases.

Sidar and Hakan have executed admirably since late 2010: assembling a top team, using its exclusive platform of 16 million Facebook users and its familiarity with MENA culture to target the **region's Facebook population of over 50 million, which is projected to exceed 250 million in 2015.** Peak is well positioned to partner with other international companies looking to expand in the region, while developing its platform for cross-promotion and market research. In February of 2012, Peak acquired the Saudi gaming company Kammelna, cornering another market with immense potential. Peak also has plans to expand into emerging markets in Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, while maintaining its delivery of top-quality, locally tailored games to the MENA area.

In 2012, Hakan left Peak Games to start Lidyana.com, a celebrity-endorsed online jewelry company. He currently serves as Lidyana.com's CEO.