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ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Turkish entrepreneurs aim to bring point-based lives

ÖZNR TUNA

ISTANBUL - Hürriyet Daily News

A group of Turkish entrepreneurs from diverse sectors have joined forces to introduce a revolutionary point-based social network to create a bridge for brands.

Mapplook, a communication, marketing and entertainment platform, plans to start its services in June with an investment of \$1.5 million. It integrates the relations among locations, people and life, with a marketing and IT base that allows its users to browse around the map, discover and share.

Having set off with 24 entrepreneurs in June last year, the project currently has roughly 30 entrepreneurs with a growing base. The entrepreneurs were the frequenters of a cafe, managed by Zehra Aktay, head of the sales-marketing committee in the project.

Mapplook has eight board members, and two more committees, including a financial committee and a technology committee, in addition to a sales-marketing committee. The project has six consultants, five of them as partners.

These people from diverse sectors have united with the aim of developing something jointly, said Aktay. "We are all social network users... It would not be proper to deem the project as just an IT project, as it includes people from marketing."

The project will also offer TV contests, home-style board games and tailor-made card systems. Moreover, through "localads," commercial en-

A point-based social network founded by 24 entrepreneurs from several sectors is growing through new additions to the team. Mapplook, a communication, marketing and entertainment platform, plans to start its services in June with an investment of \$1.5 million and aims to reach a business volume of \$1 billion by 2015



GROWING: Having begun with 24 entrepreneurs in June of last year, Mapplook currently has roughly 30 entrepreneurs and is eyeing global opportunities.

terprises and people will market their products and services to their target audience in the targets regions.

Mapplook.com, which aims to open with 75,000 locations nationwide and reach 200,000 users within the first six months, will provide services through its crews called "mapteam" to enterprises. Anyone can be a partner in the project, establish solution partnerships or receive a franchise.

A global first

Mapplook integrates media, television contests and field teams as it uses marketing tools and platforms, said Ömer Öztaşkın, one of the entrepreneurs. "It is the first time in the world that a project is integrating these into a social network." The goal is to map out roughly 10 million

places, such as cafes, restaurants and hotels, by the end of 2011, he said. "In an interactive platform, we put the locations on the map and open separate dynamic pages for them."

By 2015, the project aims to reach a business volume of \$1 billion.

The project is based on post-modern marketing principles, he said. "It is the post-modern age, the era of people's exposing themselves and watching others, which actually started with the programs such as Big Brother. With the Internet, this has peaked." People want to increasingly secure their place in life, said Öztaşkın. "Formerly, religions and ideologies were enough for this. [But now,] self-exposure and forming your own identity through watching others have become more prominent." Platforms such as Face-

book, in one sense, offer one's own "shrine," according to Öztaşkın. "Mapplook makes it possible to monitor thousands of locations and people over map. It is almost like flying with a helicopter."

At present, there is enormous data flowing worldwide, and this also creates information pollution, said Öztaşkın. "It is not easy to receive and absorb data and turn it into information anymore. Many believe this is the reason for the collapse of ideologies. The space and the set of rules you are born into does not intersect with the new data. Hence you create your own world." Öztaşkın said complex structures do not generally attain success, so the project prioritizes simplicity, adding that the project will develop in time. Mapplook only offers information but does not make preferences

on behalf of people, Öztaşkın said. "The different income modeling of the project is likely to yield a lot," Aktay said. In 2012, Mapplook plans to launch global master franchises. The locations included in the system will have a free page, but will charge for additional services.

"The importance of local ads is increasing worldwide," said Tolga Artan, chairman of LuckyEye, an integrated communications agency. "This is an opportunity for small enterprises. The firms that are aware of Internet advertising make significant leaps, creating differences... and attaining significant coverage with small costs." In Turkey, most Internet projects are stillborn due to capital inadequacies but there will be an increase in investments in the upcoming period," he also said.



FATMANUR ERDOĞAN

fati@fatierdogan.com

Change isn't easy for anyone

In life generally, and in business in particular, we like to think of ourselves as being receptive to change. We like to imagine we are open-minded and adaptable.

Being comfortable with change is considered a great asset in any profession. When someone calls you a "change agent," it's a compliment, and you walk around the office taller, prouder, and more confident.

In fact, 20 years ago, being open to change was considered a plus, something that set you apart. Now, it's assumed. It's almost become a prerequisite for getting hired for any job in the first place.

But, in reality, change is difficult for everyone, even for those who say they've come to bring change. After all, if you are hired to bring about change, you have a mission. Your mission is to bring change, and probably a fairly particular kind of it. As a result, you want the change YOU want. In order to usher in that particular change, you have to be hostile to changes that don't fit well with it, and so sometimes even change agents turn into the resistance.

Bigger firms see slower change

The difficulty grows when the company is large. Bringing change to a large organization is often compared to steering a large ship, and for good reason - as the organization gets bigger, any change of course becomes slower and more complicated to execute. Unfortunately, even in the largest companies, thorough structural changes are often necessary for success. In today's business world, it is clear that companies that are able to adjust course and move with the market thrive while their competitors stumble.

But in order to make a significant structural change, you need strong, persistent leadership that can clearly define what is needed and can communicate that message throughout the organization. It might sound obvious, but even the biggest companies are made of individual people, and individual people are almost always afraid of change in some way. So you can't expect your company's middle-management ranks to help you lead change if you are any less than fully committed to it. And if you don't get your middle management to carry the torch, you won't get your lower-level employees to buy in on it, either. Making change happen requires the efforts of everyone, from the chief executive officer to the lowest-ranking line worker.

Tension between concepts

What makes change at a large company especially complicated is that the change itself becomes a process, and there's an unavoidable tension between the two concepts. Large companies have thousands of people whose work they need to organize, and that requires processes. Yet asking for change to be one of those processes is like asking oil to be like water. So as if it weren't challenge enough to expect thousands of employees to overcome their natural fears of change, you have to carefully balance two concepts that don't fit well together.

Small companies have a reputation for being more comfortable with change, and maybe that's true. But one advantage large companies have when they are going through change is that because their pockets are deeper, they are better-equipped to survive the inevitable missteps. Change involves learning, and learning involves mistakes. When those mistakes cause you to lose sales, or rack up unnecessary expenses or waste resources in some other way, a big company can usually find a way to fill in the gap while the organization figures out how to try again. A small company, on the other hand, might only get one shot before it goes bankrupt. Small boats might turn faster, but they also get knocked over by smaller waves.

It doesn't really matter who you are, or how big your company is. Change is equally hard on everyone, just in different ways. So the next time someone in your office praises you and calls you a "forward-thinking change agent," be proud and stand tall. But remember that secretly, somewhere inside of you, you too are afraid of change. Be humble, and remember that deep down, you have something in common with the office reactionaries.

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Business initiatives to promote women

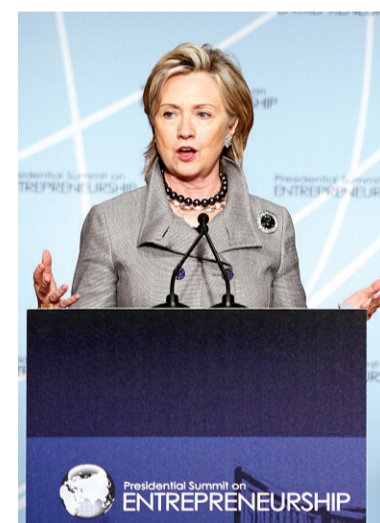
WASHINGTON

Agence France-Presse

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton announced Wednesday business initiatives to benefit women in Muslim countries as part of a broader drive this week to promote U.S.-Muslims economic ties.

"What we're doing is trying to pry open those doors of opportunity for more people to walk through, more people in Muslim-majority countries and more women specifically," Clinton said. "Because the fact is that women still have a harder time accessing loans and equity capital investments." The diplomat promised to pair women entrepreneurs in Muslim countries with U.S. mentors who will offer them up to six weeks of training in California's hi-tech Silicon Valley.


The projects announced here are also part of a State Department campaign to promote women entrepreneurs internationally, under-



SPEECH: Hillary Clinton speaks at the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship in this photo. AP photo

scoring Clinton's views that bettering the lot of women will help lift countries out of war and poverty.

She announced the "Secretary's International Fund for Women and Girls," a public-private partnership to provide grants to non-government organizations which seek to help women make economic, social, and political gains. The fund is designed to offer women greater economic opportunities, combat violence against them and give them greater access to education and health care.



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1.300 RUMELIHISARI 350m2 3BR Bosphorus view, high ceiling renovated Ottoman konak
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1.150 CIHANGIR 170m2 magnificent seaview classy apt. w/ elevator & 1 car parking
0.350 ULUS 130m2 2,5BR cozy entrance level apt. w/greenery, 5 min walk to Akmerkez
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