

Paid crowdsourcing: Increased know-how is needed

With an international network of over 400.000 Clickworkers (Internet users registered at clickworker), clickworker is one of the leading providers of paid crowdsourcing. Text creation, Web research, mobile crowdsourcing, tagging, categorization and translation tasks and projects can be ordered and processed in large volumes.

clickworker develops individual solutions for complex tasks, and divides large projects into microjobs. All of the jobs are simultaneously processed on the online platform by numerous, qualified Clickworkers, and reassembled after being subjected to strict quality controls.



Freelance journalist Frank Puscher, in an interview with Christian Rozsenich, Managing Director at clickworker.

Crowdsourcing project customers are getting to know the market and are placing increasingly specific demands on service providers such as clickworker. In addition, Managing Director Christian Rozsenich is monitoring the developments at Google and Amazon with keen interest.

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<http://www.clickworker.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/ChristianRozsenich.jpg>

Mr. Rozsenich, crowdsourcing projects are becoming more and more important in marketing projects, for instance in the “Edeka Selbermacher” project where the crowd creates ideas of new food products. Has this affected you?

Christian Rozsenich: Our particular focus is the production of high-quality content by the crowd. The realization of marketing campaigns by the crowd is not our top priority. Our customers are still international customers, for instance Groupon, or Yellow Page publishers. However, we have recently received initial inquiries from media companies who want to work with us.

What is it all about?

Rozsenich: They need to update their archives, or tag their media libraries. The editorial staff usually documents this information when the content is recent, but is it often missing in archive content. And if it is not well tagged, it is dead capital. Only film material with a good tagging can be profitably marketed online.

Where is the crowdsourcing landscape currently headed?

Rozenich: Various trends can be observed. One of them is certainly mobile crowdsourcing. We have launched our own app, and have carried out initial pilot projects. These might include getting pictures of a specific location, such as the picture of a menu in a restaurant or a picture of the restaurant.

Will this change the existing business model?

Rozenich: No, it will not change the business model. The difference to the stationary offer is mainly that the Clickworker has to be on-site. But it also offers new product and service options, and also new quality assurance demands. And we are in the lucky position that we can profit from our stationary business.

Does this mean that jobs are being processed on two levels: one part of the crowd gathers the content and the other part checks the quality?

Rozenich: Exactly. We can scale accordingly between both sides as a result of the existing infrastructure. And there are orders that involve both. For example address data with a picture. It is easier and more inexpensive for address data to be checked by a stationary Clickworker.

What are the legal issues when Clickworkers take pictures? Can they photograph everything?

Rozenich: As a rule, buildings yes, people no.

Do you have to provide the Clickworkers with a special training?

Rozenich: Not every Clickworker is allowed to take part of this project. Those who take part are given instructions and participate in an online training. It applies to the quality of the pictures and the angles from which they photograph.

What market segments are making the most mobile crowdsourcing inquiries?

Rozenich: Mainly the local portals and local search sectors. There are numerous Qype similar providers. They are making most of the inquiries. Furthermore, there are service providers who work together with local providers, such as delivery services who need the current menus.

Another interesting sector is tourism. There is also a large demand for professional pictures that we cannot fulfill at the moment. But we can imagine that someone will develop a network of photographers.

In the United States, there is currently a lot of personal contribution in the area of weather apps.

Rozenich: I don't think it will become a mega trend in Germany. And it isn't really suitable for paid crowdsourcing. There are a number of platforms that are involved in social commitment.

In contrast, it has become evident that an increasing number of companies from traditional industrial sectors are discovering the potential of crowdsourcing. They need to have old

catalogues digitalized and tagged, and this requires the industry know-how on the part of the Clickworkers. We anticipate a market: the creation of specific industry know-how in our community.

Is this the rub in the concept of crowdsourcing: As the needs become more specific, the crowd will dwindle?

Rozenich: No, I don't think this poses a problem. Certain sectors and industries have begun to rediscover the value of unique, original content. They will not purchase content that affects the core of their product.

What about companies that do not see content as a core competence. Does the topic content marketing play a role there?

Rozenich: Definitely. They also have crowdsourcing projects, but not with us because our focus is on large-volume and multilingual projects. It used to be traditional agency work. In the meantime we have observed that we are increasingly competing with text agencies. For some companies it is already part of the sourcing.

Let's take a look at another market segment, for instance crowdfunding. What do think of it?

Rozenich: We have detected two major segments here. One is crowdfunding for content creation, for example to write books. The major danger here is that the established marketers will seize the topic. Just think of Amazon.

The second segment is startup funding. Platforms are predestined for them especially in the initial angel phase. However, open issues such as ownership structures and compliance play a part in Europe. What happens when this kind of company goes bankrupt? Legal security is needed to build up the trust of the investors.

If Amazon has such a great potential of advancing into this market, what about Google?

Rozenich: Google is obviously very strong on the map market. They have embedded strategic material from their users into the maps to improve them, for years. As a rule, Google's competitors can achieve the same quality only if they spend much more. The access to android smartphones is a clear competitive advantage.

The brilliant part of it is that it works both ways. Google can improve its maps quickly and offer a good product to its users. Google can virtually embed the information in improved search results in real-time and therefore immediately generate new revenues.

You mentioned crowdsourcing in non-monetary sectors. Are we altruistic enough to continuously inform each other where a parking space is available and where you can get free WLAN?

Rozenich: If you are talking about startups, many niche suppliers have their sights on being bought at a later date. They have to quickly achieve a critical mass of data and users; the direct business concept is secondary. I find it difficult to be able to survive on the market in such a small niche when the proceeds model is unresolved.

However, in our case, the willingness to participate in voluntary projects is still high. It has not changed.

A change is taking place in the paid crowdsourcing sector. An increasing number of professionals and ambitious amateurs are working in paid crowdsourcing simply because the demands of the customers are becoming more specific.

Where do new Clickworkers come from, what pulls?

Rozenich: Digital word-of-mouth propaganda. Satisfied Clickworkers recommend us.

Do Clickworkers have to be protected from self-exploitation?

Rozenich: We calculate with fair hourly wages. But the market also regulates it for us. If a customer doesn't offer enough payment, no one will take part.

Mr. Rozenich, thank you for this interview.

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