

When I meet native English-speakers, they would always ask me if I was born in an English-speaking country. To their surprise, I tell them that I have only spent a few weeks learning the language in an International Summer School in England. Those weeks have not only significantly changed my accent in the language, but also my whole perception of life. I realized that there is an immense opportunity to explore the world. I wanted to share my experience with others, who considered education abroad unaffordable luxury connected with big expenses and complicated registration process, and I have found a great way to do it when I turned 21 in 2011 and was able to start my own business together with my colleague, our first clients being my friends inspired by my experience. We started with just 300 dollars to register our company.

By the end of 2012, we served hundreds of clients, helping them to find a perfect language course abroad at a low price and register for it. This is when I realized that we could help not hundreds, but thousands of students plan their language trips by bringing the business online. That is how the idea of MPReserver.com – the first Russian online booking platform for language courses abroad was born. Since 2013 this startup has become my main focus, and we have launched it in 2014 and already receive first bookings and appreciation from our clients and partners.

My work experience made me realize that my previous education has been very theoretical and it has not made my life as an entrepreneur much easier, especially during the first months. For example, I had difficulties opening our company's bank account and making our first international transactions, never tried to negotiate contract terms with our partners considering such practice inapplicable and had to figure out Internet advertising methods. I had to learn many things myself, which is a great way to learn, but takes more time and is connected with many mistakes. At later stages of our business, I was able to apply statistical and analytical methods for accessing our company's performance, but I still feel that I need to learn a lot in both theory and practice of how customers make their decisions, what affects their choices and how to turn data into powerful insights.

My short-term career goal is to start international expansion of my company and build a global platform helping students from all over the world achieve their goals in learning a foreign language and creating new opportunities for them. Unfortunately, I feel that I do not have the sufficient expertise and skills in new project management and expansion and international marketing of new ventures. I believe unique expertise of the University of Scranton will provide me with necessary tools for these challenges. For instance, International Business course deals with core elements, which are basic for company's international success. Educational programs at the University of Scranton are aimed to foster justice and responsibility among its students and thus make MBA very appealing. Moreover, this MBA provides well-rounded knowledge in various areas, which would not only help me learn new things, but also fill in gaps that might exist.

Besides the challenges of global development faced by my company, I also feel that the 11.6 billion language travel industry is highly underresearched. The language travel market is rapidly changing the same way as travel market did some time ago: language trips are being commoditized, which means that courses offered by different schools do not vary much, thus clients make their choice based mainly on the price. This implies a new approach to marketing and selling of language trips, which has to be developed and studied.

My long-term career goal is to be a marketing manager in a billion-dollar company. It is straight and simple, but this is what I think global goals should be. I want to develop my management skills to such level, that I would be able to apply them to a company in any sphere. I also want to help startups bring their ideas to life efficiently. I have already been involved in the work of several startup communities both in Russia and abroad. It is impressive how this sphere has developed and how many opportunities there are for young entrepreneurs.

I am eager to become a part of a community of future business leaders and I will have a distinct advantage utilizing the alumni network to help me succeed in my business development. I have management experience as well as teaching experience, which would definitely help me in my studies. I am excited to create mentorships and professional relationships with instructors at Scranton. Such relationships are very important for me especially in terms of future global expansion of our startup and my long-term career goals.