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Stylianos Lambrou

CEO & Founder of Social Airways

Co-founder of Heart Cyprus

@StylianosLa

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Out and about: Stylianos getting to grips with another village



www.thevillageexpress.com

Bored soldiers are ten a penny. But one who comes up and plans a successful website while on guard duty is someone extraordinary. ALIX NORMAN meets an outstanding web mind

Giving villages a voice

I have met the next Stelios Hajimoun. He lives in Limassol. Well, he's based in Limassol, but is studying in the UK, and I was lucky enough to catch up with him in Nicosia during his reading week. How can I be so sure he's Cyprus' next big entrepreneur?

For a start, he's already set up and runs one of Cyprus' most loved Facebook pages: I ♥ CYPRIUS, which he is monetising and transforming into the website Heart Cyprus. While doing his national service in Zgvi he founded Village Express, a complete guide to the country's villages. He's in talks to found a tech village on the south coast of the island. He's working on building services for outlying areas. He's promoting our island and creating employment in a struggling economy. And he's only 22 years old. But it's the enthusiasm, positivity and love of his country that makes Stylianos Lindros the undoubtedly next big thing on the island.

I caught up with him to discuss his website, Village Express - the website provides information for anyone - tourist or local - who wants to find out about a particular village. It's a joy to navigate, with virtual tours round each location, information on the history of the place, upcoming events, monuments, restaurants and cafes, accommodation, shopping and more. There are even interactive directions to each village, allowing the visitor to plan their route to and from each of the major cities.

"I was in the army when the idea came to me," he says. "I'd recently seen a banner on a main Limassol street reading '60 shops on this road', and I thought to myself: I could

Stylianos spent long hours researching the product, reading books on virtual photography while on patrol...

create a website for the whole street; a virtual shopping experience which would promote the area. Imagine that you could go virtually into each of those 60 shops and buy the products - anywhere at any time." Due to technological constraints, the plan wasn't feasible at the time, but the idea was in place, and true to his entrepreneurial character, Stylianos took the business model and applied it to something that could be done: the villages of Cyprus.

Stylianos had been visiting the villages on the island from a young age, as his father runs a company providing information technology services to each municipality. "I've always been amazed by the beauty and individuality of our villages. My grandparents are from Pafos, Mandria and Dora," he says, "and I thought I would combine adventure and fun." Stylianos spent long hours

researching the product, interviewing programmers and reading books on virtual photography while on patrol. "Yes, I got caught by the officers," he laughs, "but it was worth it. I had all this passion and energy, and coupled with my love of technology, the website was an obvious choice."

He discovered that most villages on the island already had their own website, all of which were being run individually, at great cost. "The system was very expensive to build and maintain, there was no coherence, and the websites were not being used effectively. I wanted to create a place where all the villages were in one place, with a consistent format. A website where each village could upload its events, photos, documents and news."

In conjunction with his business partners on the project, Armin Ordinary and sibling Andria, Stylianos had already come up with a winner in the I ♥ CYPRIUS Facebook page, a non-profit venture aimed at promoting the island, so he knew the market was out there. He set out to visit each of the 83 villages on the island, pitching his idea of a consistent platform to village councils, elders and dignitaries.

"You can't imagine how many shots of Givralia I shared in local radio," he laughs. "Imagine having to sell technology like this to someone 80 years old! But I loved every second of the process: the stories I heard, the knowledge I gained. I was surrounded by the entrepreneurial spirit that's still alive in our villages: these are people who often don't know the meaning of the word 'internet', yet their expertise is undeniably ex-

tensive with regards to their way of life. These are people who have, for generations, handed down the minutiae of when and how to pick and process the grapes, make the halloumi, create the commandaria. There's a wealth of knowledge in our villages."

Having completed his national service Stylianos began his studies at UCL, but distance was no object for this ambitious perfectionist. "I started out with a tiny corner of office space, just me and Michael, the programmer." The two would toil through the small hours, working non-stop and ordering KFC to keep them going. "These days Village Express has its own extensive premises, and Stylianos employs a network of almost 10 staff, an achievement of which he is quietly proud. "In this economic climate, it feels fantastic to be in a position to create employment for others," he says, earnestly. "Your network is your net worth, and I believe it's crucial to ensure your employees are trusted and valued. As a company, we're playful and innovative and ethical, because in business if you strive only for the money, you're going to lose out in the long run."

And Stylianos is clearly a man who is in for the long haul, never one to sit on his laurels, he ensures the Village Express website is constantly improving. "We're currently developing and rebranding the site, updating the navigation, ensuring its compatible to all devices, and developing a mobile app so you can visit the website while you're on the go." Navigable in both English and Greek, the pages are comprehensive in their detail, an invaluable guide to the villages of the island. While Stylianos directs operations from the UK, his trusted team are travelling the country in their efforts to include every village in Cyprus, so if your community isn't yet up, it soon will be.

With over 50,000 unique visitors so far, of which three quarters return for further information, the Village Express has proved an instant hit. Not bad for a twenty-something who's still alive in our villages: these are people who often don't know the meaning of the word 'internet', yet their expertise is undeniably ex-

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PEOPLE >

202k likes

Status Photo / Video Offer, Event +

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THIS WEEK

487
Page Likes

159,589
Post Reach

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1
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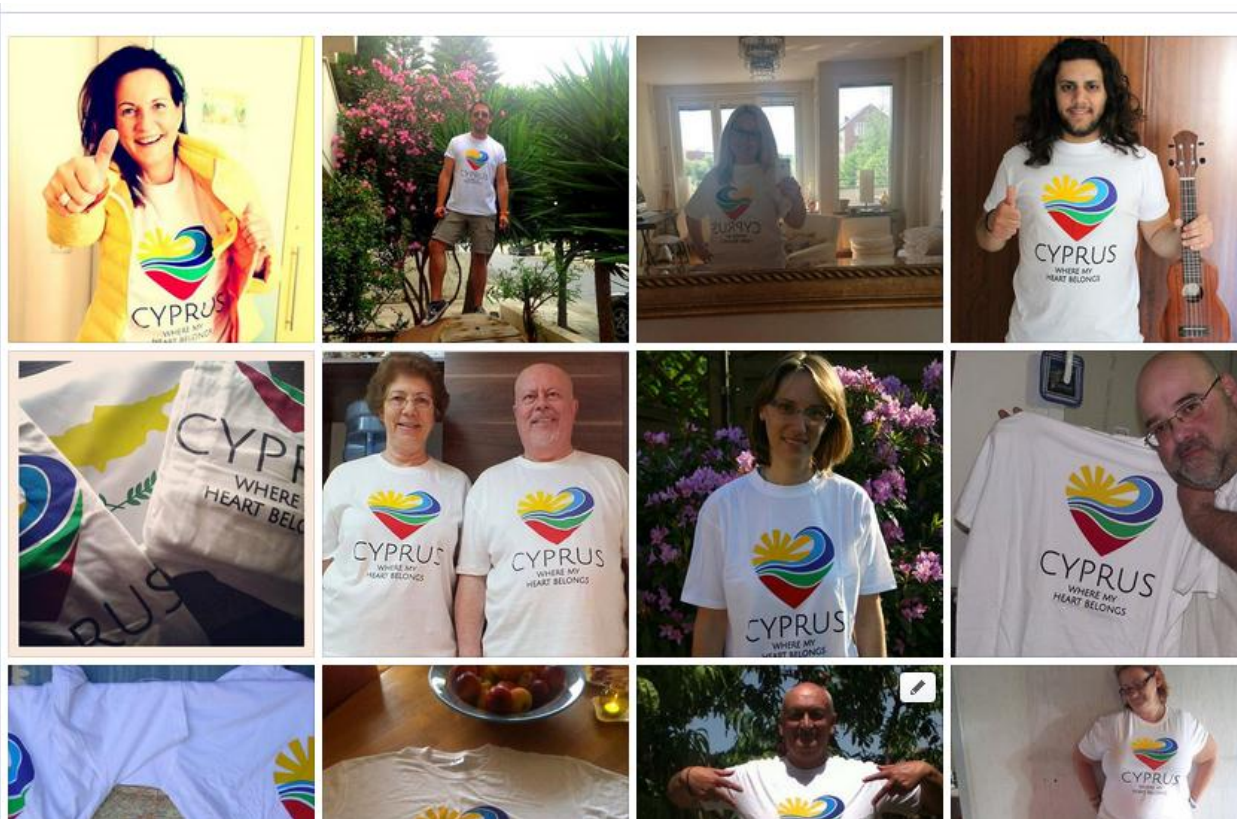
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Ein Herz für Zypern und guten Geschäftssinn auch

LIKOSIA, im Juni läuft man dieser Tage durch die zyprische Hauptstadt Nikosia, hinauf in den Norden, in Richtung Altstadt, dann kommt man vorbei an kundenreichen Geschäften. Swarovski steht verlassene, eine Frau geht einsam im Escada-Store, zwei Ausländerinnen weitgehend leerstehend mit vollgepackten Taschen die Makarios Avenue hinunter. Fragt man die Einwohner von Nikosia, seit wann das so sei, antworten sie seit der Krise. Nicht aber seit diesem März, nicht seit dem Beinahe-Zusammenbruch, nicht seit der Belastung von Privatvermögen über 100.000 Euro, nicht seit der Eigenbeitrags- und den jüngsten Sparauflagen der Troika. Sondern seit Beginn der Euro-Krise, seit mehreren Jahren also. Wir sind aber nicht hier, um die Zeichen der Krise zu lesen, sondern um herauszufinden, was sich junge Menschen einfallen lassen, um ihr zu begegnen.

Armin Orsodany, Stylianos Lambrou und Andria Lambrou haben um „Heart Cyprus“ mit einem großen schwarzen Wagen ab, der aussieht, als sei er von den Eltern geliehen. Ist er auch. Stylianos ist ein Neuzug, seine Schwester Andria ist vierundzwanzig Jahre alt und somit die Älteste der drei Jungunternehmer. Sie sind, sehr spontan, aus Limassol nach Nikosia gekommen, um uns zu treffen, mehr als achtzig Kilometer – beinahe schon die längste Strecke, welche der Süden der kleinen Mittelmeerinsel der Länge nach zu bieten hat. Die Jungen lassen die Arme aus dem Fenster hängen, zur Begrüßung springen sie förmlich aus dem Auto. Ein kurzer Moment römischer Projektilen: Drei junge Menschen, die ihr Land retten wollen.

Die Finanzkrise hat die kleine Mittelmeerinsel zwar hart getroffen. Aber das heißt noch lange nicht, dass sich aus ihren Vorzügen nicht touristisches Kapital schlagen lässt. Vor allem, wenn man es so professionell angeht wie die drei jungen Start-up-Unternehmer Armin, Andria und Stylianos. Ein Besuch bei drei rührigen Zypriern.



Da fehlt nur das richtige T-Shirt: Armin, Andria und Stylianos in Limassol

Foto: Martin Schallert

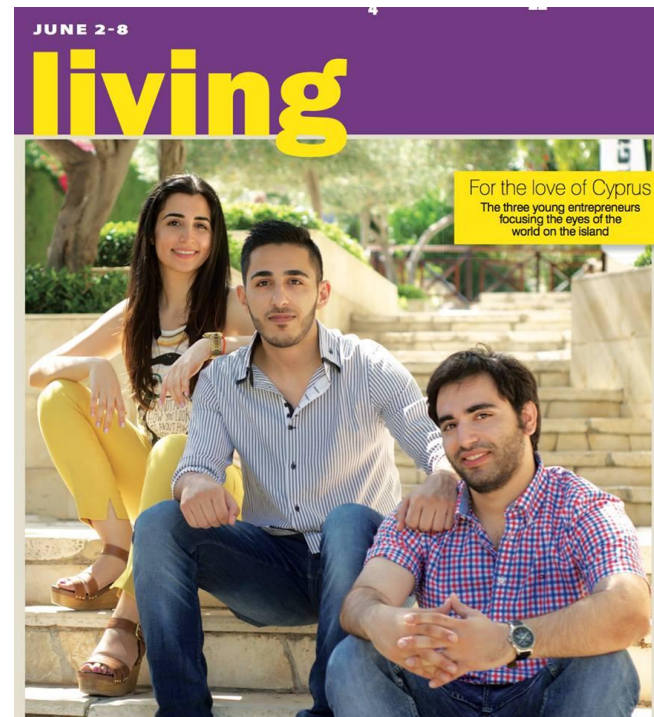
Heißblau zusammenstern. Der linke obere Herzbogen ist eine gelbe Plätzchenform-Sonne, die aus dem Blau des Meeres aufsteigen scheint. Darunter der Schriftzug „Heart Cyprus – where my heart belongs“. Wo mein Herz hingehört. Unübersehbar das erste „heart“, das Wort ersetzt ausgeschrieben schließt das rote Herzchen, das man von den „I love New York“-T-Shirts kennt. Die wurden in den siebziger Jahren vom Graphikdesigner Milton Glaser entwickelt, um der Stadt New York, die mancher wegen Kriminalität und Müllbergen nicht mehr besuchen wollte, ein ikonisches Logo zu verschaffen. Es hat sehr gut funktioniert.

Nach Ansicht der drei jungen Start-Upper hat auch Zypern eine Imagekampagne dringend nötig: schließlich wissen viele gar nicht so genau, wo die Insel eigentlich liegt, und gerade Deutsche denken nach den jüngsten Erschütterungen und punktuellen Merkel-Vergiftungsimpfungen vielleicht, es handle sich um eine Art deutschfeindliche Wüstenei irgendwo vor Libanon, wo die Rosen ihr Geld und die Türken ihre Kaktus haben. Das ist natürlich Unsinn – und werp man sich auf den Straßen er-

books könne ja alles zum Arbeitsplatz werden, die Uni – Armin studiert noch, Jun – oder das Café. Was ein wenig großzügig klingt, bewahrt sich nach der Abreise – Armin, Stylianos und Andria beantworten E-Mail-Nachfragen umgehend mit einer höflichen Gedächtnisstütze, die manchen gestandenen Büroangestellten verblüffen würde.

Mittlerweile hat „Heart Cyprus“ 167.786 „Likes“, nur etwa 50.000 davon aus Zypern. Die Anzahl dem, welche die Seite favorisieren, stieg nach den Ereignissen im März rapide. Die Facebook-Seite soll, ganz schlicht, Touristen ins Land locken und stellt auch genauso aus. Das Titelbild zeigt Badende im hellblauen Mittelmeer, davor kegelförmige Sonnenlinsen und eben das Logo, besagtes Herz. Sie haben es von einer Design-Firma eigens entwickeln lassen. Als die Staatspleite drohte, im März, ließen Armin, Andria und Stylianos die T-Shirts drucken, ein Statement, eine Solidaritätsgeze mit ihrem Land. Zusätzlich eine limitierte Edition von 200 Stück, die aber sehr schnell ausverkauft war. Die Kläder, Zypern, aber auch sehr viele Ausländer, fotografieren sich mit den T-Shirts und laden die Fotos auf der Facebook-Seite hoch.

Mittlerweile sponsert Heart Cyprus kulturelle Events auf der ganzen Insel, die großen Tourismusbetreiber würden schon um sie, erzählt Andria. Fast stündlich stellen sie neue Fotos auf die Facebook-Seite, von grünen Halloumi-Käse oder freundlichen zypriotischen Bienen. Das Feedback ist enorm. Viele schreiben, sie könnten es nicht erwarten, nach Zypern zu kommen.



For the love of Cyprus
The three young entrepreneurs
focusing the eyes of the
world on the island

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“ Heart Cyprus is challenging the CTO and the government combined, in terms of the amount done for the Cyprus tourism industry

Cyprus Mail, www.cyprus-mail.com **CyprusMail**

“ The «Heart» idea, has already managed to win the hearts of both local and foreigner lovers of the island”

Startup GR, www.startup.gr **STARTUP .GR**

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Scholarships worth €65,000 in collaboration with CIIM

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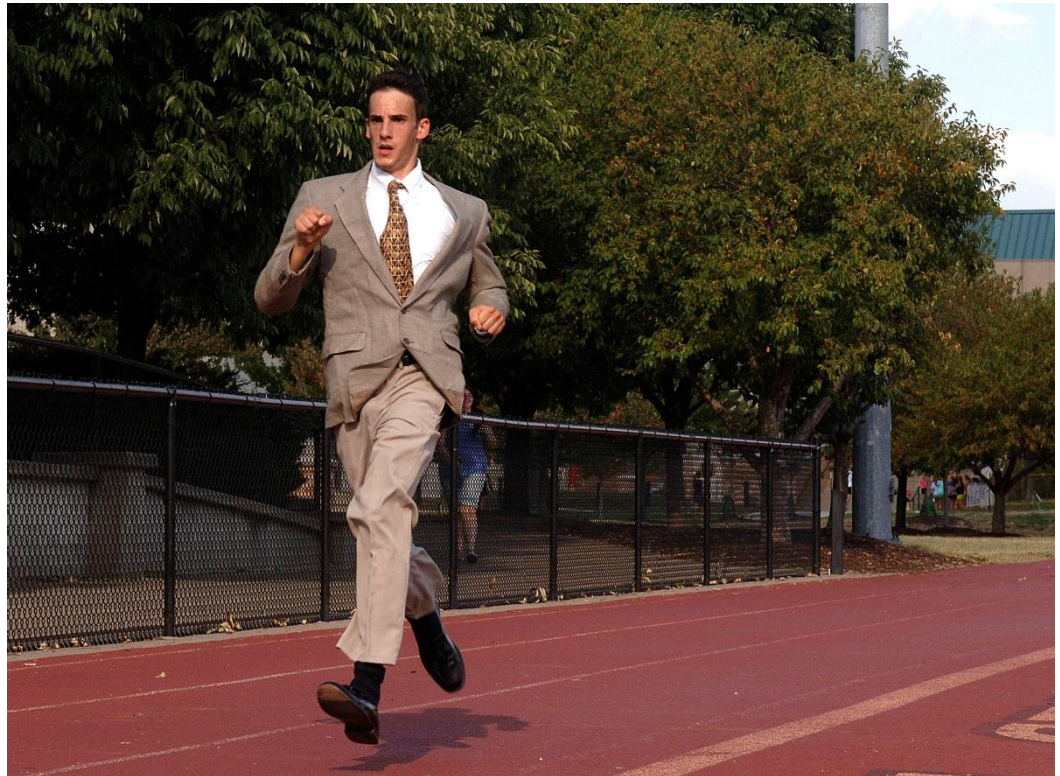


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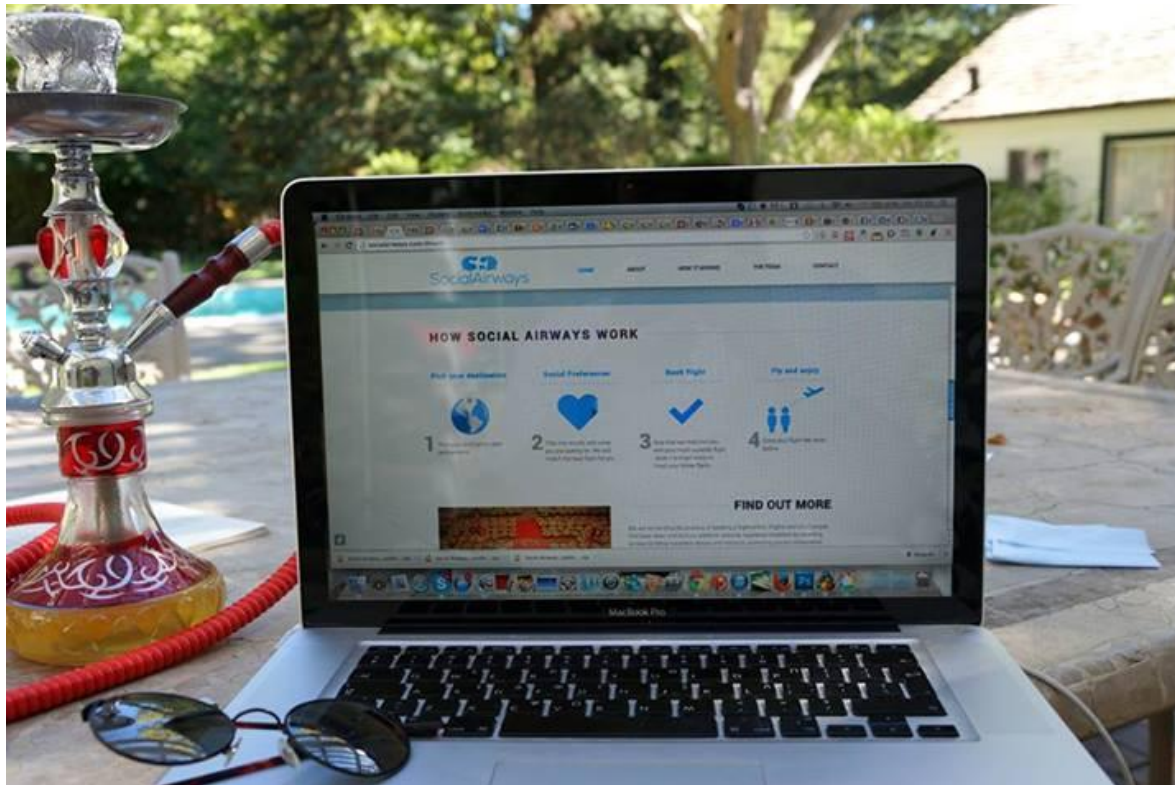
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AxiaCore invests \$100,000 in the project Social Airways

March 3, 2014. AxiaCore announced the investment of \$100,000 in the project Social Airways for the development of the unique social network for the aviation industry which makes the experience of travelling a social experience.

On March 3, 2014 in the city of London, AxiaCore announced the investment of \$ 100,000 to create a new project with the mission to deploy a robust platform that achieves the booking process more effective and efficient, helping the traveler to connect quickly and easily with other users on the same flight. This investment is intended to improve the technological platform and increase growth of the user base.

In September 2013 the Directors of AxiaCore travelled to San Francisco, California, where they met the young entrepreneur Stylianos Lambrou, student of Information Management for Business at UCL London, who created the idea that will revolutionize the way to choose a flight: Social Airways.

Social Airways, is an idea that emerged when he was looking a more personalized, social and enjoyable experience when booking a flight. It is a social search engine, who connects flights from hundreds of travellers. The new investment made by AxiaCore in Social Airways provide travellers the ability to make your travel a unique social experience where you can learn languages, play chess, teach or learn, share a taxi, and socialize, making a several hours journey flight become an experience that can be used for leisure, business and more.

The investment made by AxiaCore adds to the millions of dollars that companies have invested in the past year, in order to expand into the production of new technologies.

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Social Airways



Welcome, [Stylianios Lambrou](#)

The social way of traveling.

Find a flight

Join your flight

From*

To*

Depart*

Return

One way?

Where are you leaving from?

Where do you want to go?

✈ Find Flights



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Social Airways




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Boarding Pass

Departure LCA Larnaca, Cyprus		Arrival LHR London, United Kingd...	Flight N° SA1234
Boarding Time 01:00 ON JUL 31, 2014		Arrival Time 05:00 ON JUL 31, 2014	Passenger Name STYLIANOS LAMBROU



Welcome On Board

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Registered Passengers



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A SIMPLE HELLO
COULD LEAD TO
A MILLION THINGS.

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Your network will determine your net worth

Networking means the
act of exchanging
information with people
who can help you
professionally.

Michele Jennae

“The opposite of
networking is
NOT working”

– Someone smart

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**“THE REASONABLE MAN ADAPTS HIMSELF TO THE
WORLD; THE UNREASONABLE ONE PERSISTS IN
TRYING TO ADAPT THE WORLD TO HIMSELF.
THEREFORE ALL PROGRESS DEPENDS ON THE
UNREASONABLE MAN.”**

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

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