Roman Kokhanovskiy

Advertising, Marketing & AdTech Executive | Commercial Director at AdRiver | Digital Products, Measurement, Verification & Attribution

Moscow, Russia | +7 985 761 22 74
roman@kokhanovskiy.com | LinkedIn | kokhanovskiy.com

Profile

I am an advertising, marketing and AdTech executive with 25+ years of experience.

I have been building and scaling digital advertising products and businesses since the industry's earliest years. My career spans advertising platforms, programmatic technology, product development, commercial strategy and digital business - from launching new monetization models and sales channels to leading major advertising products and strategic partnerships.

I have built products and teams from scratch, grown businesses generating tens of millions of dollars in revenue, led strategic advertising initiatives at major technology companies, launched my own programmatic DOOH venture and worked in payments and FinTech.

Today, my primary focus is AdTech, advertising measurement, verification, attribution and marketing analytics.

Professional experience

AdRiver

Commercial Director

October 2023 - Present

AdRiver is one of the companies that helped build the Russian digital advertising market. Founded in 1997 - before Google was incorporated - it has been part of the industry almost from the beginning.

I have known AdRiver since 1999, when my own career in digital advertising was just starting. Joining the company as Commercial Director almost 25 years later felt, in many ways, like coming full circle.

I lead AdRiver's commercial strategy and work at the intersection of product, technology, marketing and business. My role includes:

- Developing and commercializing advertising measurement, verification and analytics products
- Ad verification, traffic quality, invalid traffic (IVT) and ad fraud prevention
- Marketing attribution and data-driven media optimization
- CTV, online video and cross-channel measurement
- Attention metrics and identity-based analytics
- Go-to-market strategy and strategic partnerships
- Collaboration with major advertisers, agencies, publishers and AdTech platforms
- Representing AdRiver in industry committees, conferences and standards development

During my tenure, the business has maintained double-digit annual growth, growing at approximately 1.5 times the rate of the display advertising market. Following the launch of new products and measurement approaches, several hundred clients began purchasing AdRiver services.

AdIndex interview: traffic quality, attribution and CTV | Podcast: attribution, attention and ad fraud

Self-employed

Independent Advisor | Advertising, AdTech & Digital Business

December 2022 - September 2023

Advised technology companies and digital ventures on monetization, product strategy, strategic partnerships and go-to-market across advertising, e-commerce, identity, payments and FinTech.

Selected engagements:

- HR Rocket - designed and launched a pilot for a new monetization model in online recruitment
- Tinkoff ID - supported the development of strategic partnerships with major digital businesses
- Mitgo / Qbigtech / Admitad - supported the market launch of a new online monetization product

VK Pay

Chief Commercial Officer (CCO)

November 2019 - December 2022

Led commercial and product development for VK Pay, a financial ecosystem embedded in VK and used by more than 20 million people.

- Built a new merchant proposition combining customer acquisition, loyalty, installment products and payment services
- Established partnerships with major merchants, including MegaFon, AliExpress, L'Etoile, Delivery Club and Svyaznoy
- Served as product owner for Smart Feed, a personalized product discovery experience within VK Pay designed to increase engagement and transaction frequency

> **Key result:** During my tenure, VK Pay surpassed 20 million users; its partner-store network tripled, installment transactions increased 3.5-fold and the average transaction value doubled. In 2022, the service processed more than 365 million payments across the VK ecosystem.

VK: 2021 business highlights | VK: 2022 annual report highlights

VDOOH

Managing Partner

June 2018 - November 2020 | Part-time

Built and launched VDOOH, a programmatic Digital Out-of-Home advertising platform combining DSP, SSP and DMP capabilities.

- Developed the venture from concept to commercial launch, including product strategy, team, business model and go-to-market
- Established partnerships with major OOH media owners, audience measurement providers and media buyers
- Led MVP development and the transition to commercial operations

> **Key result:** Approximately one third of the audience-based DOOH solutions in the market operated on VDOOH's white-label technology. The company was subsequently acquired by the market's largest Digital OOH player.

VDOOH platform presentation

FreakOut Holdings, inc.

Business Development Director, FreakOut Russia

July 2018 - July 2019

Led the Russian market entry of FreakOut, an international native advertising and AdTech platform with a strong presence across APAC.

- Developed the market-entry strategy and established the company's operations in Russia
- Built partnerships with leading publishers, advertising platforms and agencies
- Developed relationships with major advertisers, including Mail.Ru Group, ZeptoLab and Pixonic
- Led cross-border business development, helping Russian companies enter APAC markets through FreakOut's international network

> **Key result:** Successfully established FreakOut's presence and business development operations in Russia and received a written recommendation from the company's top management in recognition of my contribution.

FreakOut executive recommendation

Yandex

Head of Strategic Projects, Commercial Department

March 2017 - June 2018

In a new role within Yandex's Commercial Department, I led the strategic development of one of the company's largest advertising businesses, spanning the Yandex Advertising Network (YAN), platform partnerships, B2B marketing, advertiser acquisition and new monetization products.

My remit covered the entire YAN ecosystem: 20,000+ external publishers and advertising monetization across Yandex-owned non-search properties. Together, they represented approximately 40% of Yandex's advertising revenue.

Key achievements:

- Negotiated and signed the long-term exclusive agreement for Yandex to monetize Mail.Ru Group's search traffic - a landmark deal with a direct competitor and Yandex's most significant external advertising partnership
- Defined and led an integrated growth program spanning AdFox, dynamic monetization, online video, in-app advertising, anti-adblock technology and Turbo Pages - Yandex's fast-loading mobile publishing solution comparable to Google AMP
- Redesigned partner management around the top 10, top 350 and long-tail segments, introducing differentiated growth and monetization strategies for each
- Strengthened Yandex's partner training and certification program; the number of professionals certified to work with its advertising products surpassed 60,000
- Founded the Yandex Advertising Network Publishers Club and established it as an annual industry event
- Led the team responsible for Yandex 42, providing executive direction for the international conference featuring Vladimir Pozner in conversation with Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman

> **Key result:** Strengthened and diversified a portfolio representing approximately 40% of Yandex's advertising revenue, secured Yandex's most important external monetization partnership and opened new growth paths across display, video, mobile and publisher technology.

Yandex annual report, 2017 | Talk: Yandex Advertising Network monetization

Mail.Ru Group

Head of Advertising Technology | Commercial Director, myTarget

December 2010 - March 2017

Led the development and commercial expansion of myTarget - Mail.Ru Group's unified self-service advertising platform for VK, Odnoklassniki and Moi Mir - turning a new advertising product into a major source of revenue for the group.

With end-to-end responsibility across product development, sales and customer operations, I built both the platform's commercial engine and the organization required to take it to scale.

- Built the commercial organization from scratch, creating sales, client service, moderation and support functions and leading a team of 60 people
- Created a scalable agency sales channel supported by professional education and certification, with more than 1,000 agencies certified
- Launched new advertising products and commercial models for different customer segments
- Rapidly expanded the advertiser base while consistently exceeding sales and revenue targets over multiple years

> **Key result:** Built myTarget into Mail.Ru Group's flagship advertising platform, generating approximately 60% of the Group's advertising revenue and serving as its main advertising revenue growth driver in 2016 and 2017.

Mail.Ru Group annual report, 2016 | Mail.Ru Group annual report, 2017

Begun

Director of Sales & Business Development

May 2008 - December 2010

Led sales and business development at Begun, which at the time was one of Russia's leading contextual advertising platforms.

- Identified untapped growth opportunities and transformed them into new revenue streams
- Built new sales channels and commercial infrastructure from scratch
- Developed partnerships with leading agencies and launched new advertising products for major clients

> **Key result:** Within one year, the new commercial unit generated 25% of Begun's total billings - tens of millions of dollars. During my tenure, Google signed an agreement to acquire Begun for $140 million.

TechCrunch: Google's agreement to acquire Begun

Rambler

Deputy CEO & Media Director, Index20

June 2003 - May 2008

Led advertising monetization for Rambler Media Group's digital properties, including Rambler.ru, Lenta.ru, Ferra.ru and ICQ.

- Developed advertising products, pricing, inventory management and monetization models across display and contextual advertising
- Created the first dedicated unit for bespoke advertising solutions on the Russian-language internet, including sponsorships, branded projects, gamification and below-the-line marketing
- Managed strategic relationships with major advertisers and agencies and led a team of 45 people

> **Key result:** Advertising revenue grew significantly faster than inventory, increasing revenue per user. During my tenure, Rambler Media's AIM-listed shares increased sixfold over two years, taking the company's valuation to approximately $450 million.

ComNews: Rambler Media valuation

Algorithm Group

Director of Business Development

December 2001 - May 2003

Built and expanded A-Net, Algorithm Group's digital advertising business.

- Developed the company's core advertising network, initially focused on technology clients including Intel, AMD and IBM
- Diversified the business beyond the IT sector, expanding into automotive and financial services
- Recruited and led a team of 12 people and managed key client relationships and media buying

> **Key result:** Transformed a specialized advertising network into a diversified digital advertising business serving clients across multiple industries.

System.Ru

Executive Director

June 2001 - December 2001

Led System.Ru, an early internet advertising agency, overseeing media planning, media buying, key clients and a team of 15 professionals.

- Developed and introduced a standardized media plan template in 2001
- Managed digital media buying and relationships with major clients, including Microsoft, Evroset and BCS
- Recruited, trained and led the agency team

> **Key result:** The media plan format I developed in 2001 became a de facto industry standard and is still widely used by agencies and advertisers more than two decades later.

Manifest Internet Advertising Agency

Director of Sales & Business Development

March 1999 - May 2001

At the dawn of digital advertising, I built the commercial organization behind Manifest, one of Russia's first internet advertising agencies, and helped scale its proprietary advertising platforms.

- Created the sales department from scratch, recruited and trained the team, and led 14 people
- Developed and commercialized the agency's own advertising products, including InterReklama and BannerBank
- Led media sales, media buying and relationships with major digital businesses and advertisers, including Yandex and Mail.Ru
- Expanded the BannerBank Virtual Banner Network to more than 1,000 affiliated advertising networks

> **Key result:** Within months, Manifest became the market leader by revenue. Within two years, BannerBank grew into the largest advertising platform in the Russian-language internet by available inventory.

Teleport-TP

Corporate Account Manager

March 1998 - March 1999

My career on the internet began with infrastructure - at an internet service provider - before online advertising became an industry.

At Teleport-TP, I sold dedicated internet access to corporate clients and coordinated last-mile providers. First, I learned how the internet works; then I started building businesses on it.

It was also where I met the best CTO I have ever worked with: we shared an office. Twenty years later, he helped me create VDOOH.

If you have read all the way back to 1998, hello - and thank you. Now you know I understand even the technology that gets you online, though AdTech and PayTech are where I specialize.

Education

Moscow Institute of Electronics and Mathematics (Technical University)

Engineering degree in Electronic Devices and Systems, with honors. 1992 - 1998.

Top skills

Mobile Advertising · Affiliate Marketing · Web Analytics

Publication

Contextual Advertising: A Handbook for Advertising Professionals

Co-author. Piter Publishing, 2010. ISBN 978-5-4237-0079-9.

Honor & award

Ministerial Commendation for Contributions to Communications and Information Technology

Ministry of Telecom and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation. February 2018.

Award document on LinkedIn