



Umut Vural

Founder & CEO, Adgager · Serial Entrepreneur · Startup Mentor

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linkedin.com/in/umutvural adgager.com

20+

years in digital business

200+

brands served by Adgager

\$6.6M

valuation, 2023 round

#2

worldwide, GSA 2026 public vote

PROFILE

Entrepreneur with more than two decades across e-commerce, digital marketing, consumer research and technology. Founder & CEO of Adgager, an AI-powered market research platform that gives brands fast, transparent, end-to-end consumer insight through its own verified member community. Combines commercial leadership with hands-on product building: from early web ventures to AI-supported research products, community platforms and a Web3 reward layer, and today an AI-native way of working.

EXPERIENCE

Founder & CEO · Adgager Research Services

2016 – Present

Founded with İTÜ Çekirdek support to make market research faster, more transparent and accessible, using a verified, nationally representative online panel of 90,000 people (the Gager community) and AI-supported analysis.

- Grew the company to serve 200+ brands; 420% growth in 2021 and 200% in 2022; raised investment at a USD 6.6M valuation in 2023.
- Built and commercialised the product line: AdQ (AI-supported ad effectiveness scoring across 13 dimensions; 858 ad films in the 2025 AdQ Almanac), the monthly AdQ Index with Marketing Türkiye, AdQ PreTest and AdTeams brand communities.
- Launched GAG Token, a blockchain-based reward layer for the research community (listed on LBank, 2024); recognised as Best Fintech Startup, GSA South Europe 2025.
- Leads strategy, product, business development, partnerships and sales; research partner on Aktifbank's Silver award-winning project.

Chief Executive Officer · Give A Coin

2022 – 2026

Led a crypto analysis platform that tracked the market, published a daily in-depth project analysis and scored projects in real time with AI.

Chief Marketing Officer & Shareholder · Octo Networks

2018 – 2026

Led marketing for a white-label community app platform that lets brands run their own communities: networking, groups, messaging, events, live video and payments.

Founder & CEO · Dijans Dijital Pazarlama

2014 – 2022

Founded and led a digital marketing agency that grew to 15 people (strategy, advertising, e-commerce, online marketing); ran in parallel with Adgager from 2016 and continued marketing work globally. Working inside brands' campaigns revealed the research problem that led to Adgager.

Editor-in-Chief · Kupa.Net

2015 – 2016

Sports news portal built on contributor and editor content.

Digital Marketing Manager · IBC Agency

2013 – 2014

Media planning and buying, annual digital strategy, social media strategy, reputation and crisis management, reporting and conversion tracking.

E-Commerce & Digital Marketing Manager · doremusic

2006 – 2013

Built e-commerce and digital marketing in Türkiye's early e-commerce era; with e-commerce investment, ad planning and social media, online and offline revenue grew 10–15x and the site became Türkiye's leading musical-instrument website.

EARLIER CAREER

Web Manager · Senkron İstanbul 2004 – 2006

Digital Entrepreneur · Independent 2000 – 2006

Started at 19 by building and selling websites, portals and forums.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2026 Global Startup Awards · Global Final
#2 worldwide in public vote (People's Choice) · Top 10 Best Fintech Startup · Top 16 Founder of the Year

2025 Global Startup Awards · South Europe
Best Fintech Startup (jury) and People's Choice, Málaga

2025 13th Baykuş Awards · Silver Taktisyon Baykuş
With Aktifbank, Turkish Researchers' Association (TÜAD)

2024 12th Baykuş Awards
Industry jury member

2019 STARTUP100
Among Türkiye's 100 most successful startups

2016 İTÜ Çekirdek Big Bang
TL 45,000 investment (TR Angels, Telos); İTÜ Çekirdek and TÜBİTAK BiGG incubation

HOW I WORK WITH AI

A personal AI team. ~20 named specialist agents (engineering, security, QA, data analysis, competitive intelligence, finance) that know the business context.

Persistent memory. An LLM-maintained knowledge base in Obsidian (LLM Wiki method): sources in, structured and linked knowledge out.

Scheduled routines. Morning intelligence brief, weekly summary, CRM and LinkedIn workflows run automatically.

Verification discipline. Nothing is “done” untested; written plans, milestones, invariants and stop criteria for every build.

Tools. Claude (Claude Code, Cowork), ChatGPT, Grok, Obsidian.

SELECTED CLIENTS

Turkcell · Garanti BBVA · Türkiye İş Bankası · ING · Aktifbank · Albaraka · Getir · Trendyol · sahibinden.com · MediaMarkt · L'Oréal · Nestlé · Reckitt · Oriflame · Bioderma · Evyap · Hayat Kimya · Kumtel

CORE EXPERTISE

Entrepreneurship & executive leadership

Market research & consumer insight

Research technology & product strategy

Advertising effectiveness

Business development & B2B sales

Digital marketing & e-commerce

Community platforms & Web3

Generative AI & AI-assisted product development

ECOSYSTEM & COMMUNITY

Startup Mentor, İTÜ Çekirdek

2022 – Present · business model, product-market fit, growth, commercial strategy

Senior Advisor, Hayata Renk Ver Association

2013 – Present · children's health and rights

Writer on LinkedIn

8,950 followers · AI, technology and society

EDUCATION

Zonguldak Karaelmas University

Electrical studies; left to pursue entrepreneurship

Avclar Technical High School

Electrical

LANGUAGES

Turkish

Native

English

Professional working proficiency

REFERENCES

Eight public LinkedIn recommendations and two references summarised in the CV. Names link to LinkedIn profiles; quotes originally in Turkish are translated.

"I have known Umut Vural for quite some time. I have admired his indefatigable ability to strategically connect people, organizations and ideas. [He] possesses an incredible ability to harness relationships, project the future and mobilize people, and resources around ideas. Umut [is] one of the best in business in terms of using technology, new ideas and reaching people."

Emin Onur Genc

Founder, INBOX

Worked in different teams at the same organisation · September 2017 · LinkedIn recommendation

Describes the collaboration as one that gave the idea courage, opened new doors and created work with the potential to resonate globally.

Resul Yesilyurt

Ilanuas Life Sciences · Nasodren Türkiye

Client · Adgager years · Summary in CV · translated from Turkish

"Umut Vural is the most experienced and knowledgeable person I know in e-commerce and social media marketing. Both during the Do-Re Müzik years and afterwards, he answered every request of mine quickly and offered clear solutions to every problem."

Bora Uslusoy

Recording Artist · Associate Professor, Berklee College of Music

Client · January 2015 · LinkedIn recommendation · translated from Turkish

"Umut is really a talent[ed] front-end developer. He is very keen on learning new technologies especially e-commerce business. His marketing skills are vast with a thorough knowledge of meeting audience needs online through channels such as social media forums and chats."

Alper Hankendi

Software Engineer

Managed Umut Vural directly · December 2014 · LinkedIn recommendation

"A colleague I have always admired: as founder, developer and reshaper of the Dore Müzik website, and through his social media expertise and initiative, he took the site's revenue to incredible figures."

Barbaros Aşıcı

Sales Manager, Sanita Food Sterilisation

Worked in the same team · November 2013 · LinkedIn recommendation · translated from Turkish

Says that Umut Vural, her first manager, shaped her professional development, her work ethic and her outlook on business and life.

Kübra Taşkesen

Ak Yatırım · former Adgager team member

Umut Vural was her first manager · Adgager years · Summary in CV · translated from Turkish

"A social entrepreneur who achieves what he believes in!"

Melek Okur

Founding Chair, Hayata Renk Ver Association

Volunteer work · December 2018 · LinkedIn recommendation · translated from Turkish

"Umut has special talent about digital world. He loves his job and he always tries to discover the best and successful models for the brands. Moreover his energy is great to increase productivity of work."

Ahmet Atçı

IBM · Marketing, Sales, Branding, Management

Worked in the same team · January 2015 · LinkedIn recommendation

"Because you are a determined, persistent and hard-working friend, I definitely have to recommend you."

Zeynep Sevim

Manager

Worked in different teams at the same organisation · November 2013 · LinkedIn recommendation · translated from Turkish

"An honest and hard-working friend."

Gülsüm Çıta

Corporate Sales & Tenders Manager, Zuhul Müzik

Worked in different teams at the same organisation · October 2013 · LinkedIn recommendation · translated from Turkish