



## FLIPPED STUDIO “SUCCESSFUL INNOVATOR” - NOVA

Project No. 2020-1-LT01-KA227-ADU-094751

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### Puzzle mania – outwit the boredom

**Creator of the good practice, country:** Ozone.bg – website for online trade with games, multimedia and merchandise, Bulgaria.

**Sector:** Games & Multimedia

**Type of business / employment:** Ltd. Company, Private sector, Online commerce and sales

#### Achievements in CCS before the Pandemic

Ozone.bg is a Bulgarian online store specializing in the sale of entertainment and leisure products.

Since 2008, the online store Ozone.bg has dedicated itself to the difficult task of stimulating its customers to get the best out of the free time moments, no matter how they prefer to spend them. In the online store a person can find countless entertainment options suitable for every taste and age.



*Photo source: <https://pixabay.com>*

Ozone.bg began its existence in 2008, and until 2013 focused mainly on the sale of computer games and accessories for them. Since then, the site has offered other products, including electronics, puzzles, toys, books, movies, computer accessories and clothing.

The company is known as one of the largest investors in e-sports in Bulgaria. Although not a publisher, Ozone has traditionally participated in the Sofia International Book Fair.



In 2014, Ozone.bg also participated as a partner in an initiative to promote reading among Bulgarian children. The Reader's Relay initiative aims to pique the interest of children between the ages of six and 13 in contemporary children's literature and books outside the compulsory school lists.

Currently Ozone.bg is the largest and most popular online store for consumer goods, with an extremely wide range of products of various kinds. Very often the latest books, movies, games or puzzles appear there first, with the possibility of pre-ordering.

The website is extremely pleasant and easy to use, and the regular campaigns and promotions, as well as the professional attitude and quality of the products, gained Ozone.bg thousands of followers and customers.

### Challenges faced during the Pandemic and innovative solutions to overcome them

Being the biggest Bulgarian online entertainment store and also a co-creator of a national brand of jigsaw puzzles (Black sea puzzles), Ozone.bg naturally became partner of an unofficial Facebook group, called Puzzles Bulgaria. The Facebook page was created to bring together all puzzle lovers, to collect and provide any interesting information related to puzzles and accessories for them. They try not only to inspire those who are already in line, but also to invite more and more people to try this favorite to many people hobby, through many games, polls, reviews and competitions.



Photo source: <https://pixabay.com>

One of the biggest competitions, organized by Puzzles Bulgaria, supported and financed by Ozone.bg is Puzzle mania – a contest for speed solving of jigsaw puzzles, organized annually. Puzzle mania started in December 2015, initially supported by other partners. It was usually



organized in an event hall where teams of two people compete with their rivals as to see who will be the fastest to solve a jigsaw puzzle of 1000 pieces and will leave with a cash or item prize.

The national state of emergency declared due to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic, declared in March 2020 affected the business sector the most, but also led to the flourishing of online commerce. The antiepidemic measures requiring social isolation and avoidance of public places and crowding have forced many people to stay at home, which has also led to a boom in the search for all kinds of entertainment and ways to fill in the time spent at home with fun and attractive activities. So, the business of Ozone.bg was better than ever. But they continued to search for innovative ways to make their customers happy, engaged and entertained. This is why, together with their partners from Puzzles Bulgaria decided to work hard and organize the annual Puzzle mania 2020 online despite all challenges.

Although many people were skeptical about how a puzzle competition could be organized in an online environment, more than 300 teams of two people signed up to take part in it.

### Conditions for the innovativeness and success

In order for the puzzle competition to run smoothly and in the most successful way possible, clear and precise instructions and an action plan were needed. For starters, news of the competition was spread on the organizers' websites and their social media profiles. Due to the great interest, two dates were announced with two competitions (semifinals) and the first 10 teams from each of the 4 competitions qualified for the finals during the following week.



Photo source: <https://pixabay.com>

Signing up was very easy. Each team had to buy a ticket for participation from the site of Ozone.bg, valid for a specific date and time. With it, the participants secured an entrance to the virtual Zoom room in which the competition took place, as well as 1 puzzle, which was sent to them in advance, tightly wrapped in black foil. On the day and time of the competition, each



team had to join the Zoom platform from a computer or telephone with a camera, microphone and stable internet connection. The condition was the camera to be focused at the puzzle and the participants at all times, and that the connection to not be interrupted on any occasion. When all the participants in the respective group were already in the virtual room, after a signal from the organizers, each team had 5 minutes to unwrap the puzzle and prepare for the arrangement. Each group had to solve the same puzzle of 1000 pieces within 4 astronomical hours and the first best teams qualified for the final. At the final competition, the best teams received cash prizes, as well as vouchers for shopping on the website of Ozone.bg.

The pilot online edition of Puzzle mania 2020 was a great success and inspired the organizers to repeat the initiative in 2021 as well. Due to the huge interest in the event in June 2021, a second one was organized in October.

Apart from a successful business initiative (each ticket for participation + puzzle costs about 15 euros), Puzzle Mania has become a favorite and long-awaited event for young and old who share their love for one of the most popular leisure activities – solving jigsaw puzzles. After the end of the state of emergency and the return to a normal way of life, the competition may continue to be held also online, because in this way it can be attended by participants from other cities in Bulgaria and even other countries (Romania since October 2021).

### Involvement of volunteers

Since the contest is organized in Zoom platform with the participation of hundreds of teams that should be constantly monitored, there is a need of people who can support the organization from this technical point of view. During the finals and semi-finals there are volunteers who take care of monitoring the online rooms and compliance with the rules.

**Source:** <https://www.ozone.bg/>

### **Self-reflection questions**

1. What kind of leisure or entertainment activities could also be implemented online and in the form of a contest? What tools/equipment is needed for this?
2. What kind of initiatives could a company organize in order to engage its customers in entertainment activities?

**This good practice story is prepared by Know and Can Association**