

## FROM THE EDITOR

# ON WINGS OF CREATIVITY



My youngest son, Daniel, who is 8, has developed a fascination for bird-watching. This is not a pursuit that has ever appealed to me.

But now, looking at the world through his eyes, I've learned to appreciate the flash of color from a red-bellied woodpecker, the clear chirp of a cardinal, the flutter of a black-capped chickadee. The diversity of nature in every treetop—even in New York, where I live—was something that I had blindly overlooked.

We tend to be just as blind about the business world. It is far simpler to stereotype people as "suits," "hackers," or "hipsters" than to train your eye to appreciate creative distinctiveness. **Cyrus Massoumi is not simply a former**

management consultant; he's the creator of ZocDoc, an eye-opening way to ease patient-doctor communication. Maelle Gavet is no run-of-the-mill geek; she's building the Amazon of Russia. Yael Cohen is not just another charity founder; she's taking aim at the stigma of cancer using celebrity and comedy.

These are just three of the characters on our 2012 list of the **100 Most Creative People in Business**, a vivid snapshot of where business is today and where it is heading. Our honorees hail from China, where Ma Jun (No. 1 on our list) has pressured multinationals like Apple to improve factory conditions, and Ethiopia, where Bruktawit Tigabu (No. 45) is bringing education to the underserved.

They work at Gatorade and American Express and Nike; they do research on biotech and robots. They obsess about comic books, and they sing at the Grammys.

What unites these birds-of-a-feather is a tradition-busting mind-set—an eagerness to stake out new territory and remake our

economic landscape. No one who has previously appeared on our Most Creative People list is eligible to repeat, nor is anyone who has been profiled in the print magazine (which is why folks like Mark Zuckerberg and Lady Gaga are not included). Yet such restrictions barely narrow the field; there are so many compellingly creative figures in business, if you simply open your eyes to them.

We are not ostriches at *Fast Company*: We know the health of our economy is tenuous, that deceit and selfishness are rife in boardrooms and legislatures. But we choose to believe that the spirit of innovation can provide solutions, no matter the challenge; and we continue to find people whose creative effort and insights thrill us. The examples in the ecosystem are just too rich to ignore. And thanks to them, the possibilities remain as wide open as the sky.

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**CYRUS MASSOUMI,**  
 Cofounder, ZocDoc

**HOW TO SERVICE A HIGHLY SKEPTICAL INDUSTRY**

### 5 STEPS TO: WINNING OVER DOCTORS



#### STEP 1 Start with dentists

Patients visit them frequently and schedule visits long in advance. That makes dentists a natural entry point, Cyrus Massoumi believed.



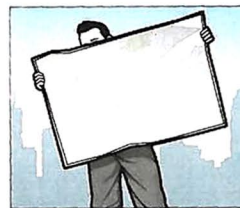
#### STEP 2 Get kicked out, come back

Most dentists didn't see a need for ZocDoc; Massoumi was kicked out of multiple offices. But he kept calling. "Now they're all our clients," he says.



#### STEP 3 Sign up 10 doctors

Ten is a magic number, Massoumi says: At that point, he could tell other dentists that their peers were signing on, and selling became much easier.



#### STEP 4 Follow the geography

ZocDoc's first market was New York, where one in six primary-care doctors are trained. Local docs told out-of-town friends, and Massoumi followed.



#### STEP 5 Arm with early data

As the system went live, ZocDoc found that 80% of first-time users stuck with it. Local docs used that selling point to impress and sign up specialty doctors.

### 3 STEPS TO: WINNING OVER VCS



#### STEP 1 Identify the culture clash

Because Massoumi and his partners were previously McKinsey & Co. consultants, he says, "the startup community really questioned us."



#### STEP 2 Buy jeans

"I literally went to the Gap, bought jeans, and untucked my shirt. I was suddenly rebranded. And there was our cred."



#### STEP 3 Meet and greet

In meetings with VCs, he was less formal and more direct. Now, finally, he was speaking like the startup guy he'd become.



At our cover shoot in Los Angeles, CeeLo got into character as a businessman—the businessman as "Frank" that is. (That's his word!)