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where I interview world-class product leaders
and growth experts to learn from their hard-won experiences
building and growing today's most successful products.
Today, my guest is Tim Hawley.
Tim is VP of product at Etsy where he's been
for over 10 years and has helped grow Etsy
from around 500 million in GMB to over 13 billion in GMB.
This episode is for anyone working on Marketplace
or looking for ideas to increase growth
or looking for advice on how to change your internal culture.
We get into the big cultural transition
that Etsy went through that took them to the next level.
Lots of examples of product changes
that helped them with conversion, acquisition,
and retention, plus how Etsy organizes their teams,
thinks about supply versus demand dynamics,

how Etsy got started with growing their initial supply
and also their initial demand,
plus a bunch of frameworks and hiring advice
and so much more.
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after a short word from our sponsors.
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Tim, thank you so much for being here.
Welcome to the podcast.
Thank you for having me on, Lenny.
Really appreciate it.
Looking forward to it.
I'm looking forward to it even more.
So you've been at Etsy for, I think, over 10 years,
although I did notice that you left for a year
and ended up leading product at SoulCycle.
So first of all, just what is that about?
What happened there?
Yeah, at the time I'd been at Etsy for over six years
and I just had the itch.
You know, I wanted to go work on a different product,
build different things, experience different industry.
Along had a theory that working on kind of the proactive side
of health care, meaning fitness and wellness,
is how you achieve better outcomes.
And it felt like SoulCycle was a really interesting way
to do that.
Pretty well-known brand, you know,
high street presence in many cities.
Could you affect change through that?
Ultimately realized it wasn't a place
that I wanted to spend a ton of time and energy.

And so, you know, through a lot of soul searching,
grown, I know, I found my way back to Etsy,
really kind of anchoring on three things.
One, working on a product that you care about
that adds value to other people's lives.
And so, you know, what we do every day at Etsy
is we help our sellers make sales.
And that's really meaningful for the vast majority of them.
You know, it's reaching an audience
that they wouldn't be able to reach.
And so that feels like a really great thing
to get up every morning and work on.
And so that's maybe the kind of the business
and the product side, and the other side is people.
It might sound a little twee,
but just working with people who you can learn from
and who you respect and ultimately can have fun working with,
it matters a ton.
You know, we spend a lot of time
of our days and our lives at work.
And so doing it with people who you really value,
it's awesome.
I have one memory that we used to have an engineer
who used to be a stand-up comedian.
And so that really like pushed the boundaries
of what a stand-up meant every day.
And it was always, you know, a little fun,
a little exciting.
You never quite knew what you were gonna get.
And so just little things like that, you know,
they make the work life really, really great.
That's hilarious.
I never thought of it that way.
I feel like every stand-up needs a stand-up comedian
and their stand-up.
Sounds like a, that should be part of Agile.
They should, we should need to change the manifesto.
So I've always seen the Etsy journey from the outside.
And so there's a few things
that I've always wanted to dig into.
One is, I just remember this New York Times story
back in the day when your current CEO, Josh Silverman joined.
And it felt like a huge moment in the history of Etsy

where it feels like it just kind of transitioned
from this touchy-feely everyone loves each other moment
to just like, hey, you guys,
we gotta build a real business here that's sustainable.
And it feels like many startups have to go
through that transition where it's like,
oh, when that thing's ever gonna change,
it's gonna be, so we're all family here,
to just like, oh, things have to change.
This isn't working.
I'm curious just what that was like living through that.
Yeah.
I mean, the first thing I'll say is,
it was a hard transition.
And I was personally fortunate in the sense
that the transition you're speaking of in 2017
also happened to coincide with rounds of layoffs.
And I was super fortunate that I didn't lose my job.
So I don't wanna presuppose that my version of hard
is the same as another person's version of hard.
But I think a lot of us and myself included,
we had a lot of our identity tied up in Etsy
and what we're doing, a really deep passion
for the mission of the business
and what we're trying to achieve.
I just mentioned helping small independent sellers.
And that just to be clear, that hasn't gone away.
I think that that's something we've been really successful
at pulling through as a line that was true 10 years ago
and is still true today.
But it was a time when we were really forced
to rethink a lot of how we worked and what we worked on.
Just to use a small example,
we had had a pretty entrenched consensus-based culture
where we would really debate a lot of decisions
and a lot of features.
And on the one hand, I think that that does lead
to good outcomes, right?
Thoughtful products that have a lot of viewpoints
really baked into the core of the thinking.
On the other hand, not fast.
When you have your identity tied up in the company
and what you do and then you're kind of being asked

or you realize that you need to change how you're working,
it can feel pretty existential, right?
That it's really cutting to the core of who you are
and things that you hold really true.
The reality is it's a business
and we needed to get faster at launching features,
improving experience and ultimately having a predictable way
to drive GMS gross merchandise sales
which is kind of our North Star KPI.
Definitely took some time to work through that,
but we got to a good place and the results over the last
few years kind of to some degree speak for themselves,
but it was a testing and trying time for sure.
I'm always curious how these changes play out
and what works in making change.
Is there something that you remember that Josh did well
or that leaders did well to help that transition?
One thing that is just such a standout is having,
and I mentioned GMS as our North Star KPI,
just having that being absolutely front and center,
being the drumbeat that we talk about in every meeting,
the measuring stick that we measure
the success of launches against.
And maybe it's a bit surprising,
but we didn't have that type of clarity in the past.
And so rallying everyone around that
and you might not pay into it directly,
you might pay into it through one or two levels of abstraction,
but you're still clearly aligned
with what the company is trying to achieve.
And that was something that was a really stark difference.
And I think that helped really,
it helped the prioritization discussion a lot.
If you can't really articulate why this thing matters
to driving GMS in the type of timeframe
that we're talking about, be it a quarter or 12 months out,
and different projects will contribute in different ways,
but that was just one huge standout.
And that's been a drumbeat over the years
that let's continue to stay focused on that as a metric.
The other thing to me is bringing an outside in perspective,
really benchmarking against your competitors
and your competitive set.

Don't get me wrong,
and it gets you is a unique marketplace, right?
Our sellers are independent sellers,
they sell unique items.
The reality though is that our buyers
are shopping all over the internet.
They're shopping on high street,
they're shopping in different places.
And so we have to be aware of the broader context
that of where they're spending their dollars
helps us make better decisions over time.
And so on the one hand,
there is no one-to-one direct competitor to Etsy,
but there are other businesses and other brands
that are competing for eyeballs or wallets
that we need to be aware of.
And that bringing that into the discussion
was a really helpful one that helped ground us
in kind of the overall dynamics of what buyers are doing,
where they're spending their money
and how they think about us.
Is there anything else you took away as a leader
from watching that shift
that you bring to making change,
transitioning people to working in a different way?
You know, definitely focus on a clear KPI
that the teams can rally around.
That's one.
The other is, and I respect Josh immensely
on his ability to tell a really clear narrative
and use that consistently over time.
You know, the old adage of you need to say something
three times before people understand it.
I would wager, you need to say it another three times
before they internalize it.
And having that be part of the day-to-day conversation,
it seems like such a small thing,
but it adds up to having clarity on goal, the KPI point,
and then clarity on why, the narrative point.
If you can marry those two things,
I think that's an incredibly powerful combination.
While we're on this topic,
I'm curious what Etsy's values are.

I imagine you've codified a few,
we call them core values that are B&Bs,
or something like that at Etsy,
and if so, I'm curious what they are.
We call them guiding principles at Etsy.
And we have a few of them,
and I won't go through all of them,
but just to give you a flavor,
one of them is around digging deeper,
and that really speaks to aiming to really understand
the why behind a change,
to really push on the insights
that we're learning through QUAL or Quant Research
or other inputs that we might be looking at
in order to make the best decision possible
with the information we have at the time.
Another example of a principle is minimizing waste.
It aligns with how we think about product development,
which is we want to know is the work we're doing
adding value to the customer and the business.
And so something that isn't working out,
a lot of times in product development, we're wrong.
And so being able to say,
no, this is no longer valuable,
we need to move on to the next thing,
has been something that served us really well.
Ultimately, we are quite a small team, right?
There's just over 2,000 people in the business,
and if you then scale back to engineering and product,
we're not big.
And so we have to be really diligent
about how we're investing our time
and our resources in order to be successful.
Awesome.
Okay, so another big moment as an outsider
that it feels like Etsy went through is during COVID.
There's this huge transition to e-commerce,
and I think Etsy was a big beneficiary of that.
People wanting to buy more stuff online,
go to stores less,
and it feels like it was a huge accelerant for the business.
I'm curious just what that experience was like
leading the product team through that.

It was quite wild.
I'll say that.
And to be more specific,
we, as many or all of us did in probably the world of tech,
at least, we went home not knowing what the next weeks
or weeks as we thought would bring turns out years,
but when the CDC mandated face masks in,
I think it was early April 2020,
that's when essentially we went to sleep one day
with our typical April traffic,
typical April sales,
and then it was Black Friday overnight.
And in part because nobody knew where to find face masks,
our sellers are incredibly astute business people.
And if you had been making wedding dresses
and you know how to sew and you've got material
and you've got a bit of time,
making a mask is quite a simple task.
And so we just saw this huge surge of demand
and then supply rising to meet it.
And we did something that far as I know,
we'd never done in Etsy's past,
which is we put out a call to our sellers to say,
now's the time, now's the time to make face masks if you can.
And so it felt like this is our time to shine,
to really help sellers continue to make sales,
to help buyers find this critical item
that they were looking for.
So it was a very, very exciting couple of weeks
while we were kind of adapting to that change.
And we were just really,
every day there would be stand-ups,
what's happening, what do we need to change?
I remember distinctly,
we were worried about certain sellers
not being able to meet the demand that they were seeing.
And so, we did the old-fashioned thing of,
I am not personally, but we called them.
And we said, how are you guys doing?
What can we do to help?
And some people said, we've got this, don't worry.
This is squarely in our wheelhouse.
We can absolutely meet the supply.

And others said, actually we need a little bit of help.
We need to take a pause for a moment
while we catch up with all these orders.
And then we can kind of come back to taking more.
And so just getting back to good old-fashioned,
no, your customer, what do they need from you
at that moment was just a really kind of powerful thing
that I took away from that time.
And then from there, things kept going.
And we really worked hard to make sure
that the story was not just about face masks for our buyers,
that they understood that Etsy's a place
for so many different categories
and so many different items.
And that was then kind of the next phase of the challenge.
We got a huge influx of new or reactivated buyers.
How do we keep them around?
How do we make sure that the product
does a little bit more work to retain them
and can really have hooks that bring them back time and again?
And so that was kind of the journey
that we then went on mid-2020
to probably the subsequent 18 months or so.
Is there anything you learned as a leader
working and leading teams through that time?
It must have been a pretty surreal experience,
a lot of stress, people worrying about their own health.
I was one of the fortunate ones.
Back then, no kids worked in an industry
that was clearly a critical at the time.
So I am in awe of how parents worked through that time.
So stressful, yes, but not to the extent
that other people experienced the stress of COVID.
We just tried a lot of stuff.
I remember early on, I think we had maybe even daily,
but at least three times a week coffee chats with the team.
Just like, how are you guys doing?
What's going on?
And at a certain point, we realized
all we're talking about is exactly the same things.
Nobody wants to be on more calls and more video chats.
And so we just kind of continued to evolve
and really try to keep a pulse on what the team needs.

And that, like I said, given context of being parents
or whatever differed pretty dramatically person to person.
So definitely wasn't a one size fits all solution.
That's more on the people side.
I think on the product side, we, as I mentioned,
we were really starting to get focused on driving retention
or maybe said slightly differently, driving frequency.
And that was a newer topic for us.
We've long at Etsy been a really,
and maybe roasted into glasses speaking a little bit,
but a really great experiment,
A-B testing driven culture.
And so when you think about things like retention,
you can absolutely test course, I'm not saying you can't,
but you're looking at a different time horizon.
Instead of someone making a purchase in that visit
or in a week, you're looking at,
do they come back in 30 days, in 60 days, in 90 days?
And so that forced us out of our comfort zone
to some degree in terms of how we understand,
how we measure change,
how long we're willing to wait to see it show up
back to the incrementality point on minimizing waste.
Like, is this actually adding value to the business?
And so those were great challenges to tackle.
Of course, on a pretty heightened degree of intensity
and kind of focus from the business,
but yeah, that was an exciting time.
Okay, so speaking of that,
I wanna chat about the marketplace
and the marketplace you've built
and things you've learned from building.
I think it's one of the, I don't know,
maybe top 10 marketplace businesses in the world,
somewhere in there.
And first of all, I'm curious, just broadly,
what have you learned is really important
to just building a really successful, thriving marketplace?
And then I'll dig in into more details,
but just broadly, is there anything that comes to mind?
This narrative is still there,
but I think we really focused heavily on the seller side,
so the supply side of the business early on.

And we really immersed ourselves
in who sellers are, what they need,
and how, what they need maybe differs
from what the solutions that they can find elsewhere.
Back in the day, we were doing studio visits with sellers.
We were going to their workshops.
We were going to their homes.
We were seeing how they make items.
We were seeing how they package and ship them out.
We were bringing them into the office
when we were running hack weeks to say,
like, hey, we've got this crazy idea, is this interesting?
So trying to involve them in the product development process
to the extent that it was reasonable or feasible.
And so I think that served us really well.
We have a very deep and rich understanding of our sellers.
And then the next phase was really,
and the more recent phase has been,
how do we create a world-class buyer experience
that ultimately drives sales for our sellers?
Because when you have over 100 million items,
all of which are unique,
you've got a different challenge than when you have
10,000 SKUs that you could kind of find anywhere
or on many retailers.
And so topics like structured data,
topics like how do we help you gain confidence buyer
that this thing will meet your needs
from a seller who you may never have heard of.
They don't have a brand that you've ever encountered before.
And so we have some kind of somewhat unique challenges
on that front where we need to lean into themes
that other marketplaces absolutely touch on.
For example, customer reviews play a big role
in our experience, but they play a heightened role
given the things I mentioned, right?
Unique inventory from a seller that is maybe
an independent person who is a single entrepreneur.
It's one person.
So you mentioned that initially the focus was on sellers,
which is really interesting because a lot of marketplaces,
first of all, I need to figure out which side do we focus on?
Who do we cater to most?

And the way you described it is initially was,
how do we make sure the sellers that are joining us here
most well-served?
And then later on, it became more of a focus
on the buyer side.
Yeah, I guess that I'm painting it as a linear approach.
It certainly was not, you know,
because if you've got supply without demand,
then you don't really have a marketplace.
If you've got demand and no supply to meet it,
then you also don't have a marketplace.
There's this flip-flop between, you know,
do you have enough supply to satiate the demand you have
and kind of playing that out?
Is certainly, I feel like art,
not necessarily strictly science.
Yeah, so I'm curious how you all think about that actually.
So at Airbnb, there's always this thinking of,
who do we prioritize if we have to make a decision?
Is it host or guest?
And it's shifted over the years at Airbnb.
How do you all think about that?
Is there kind of a, here's who we're gonna prioritize
if we really have to make a decision?
Yeah, and maybe to your point,
that's also evolved at Etsy.
And the place we're in at the moment is
the job of a marketplace,
even, you know, pre the technology definition
of a marketplace is a seller will go there to make sales.
And if they're not making sales,
they probably won't go to that marketplace.
And so we really see it as paramount
that we have a qualified set of buyers
who are looking for the items,
the type of items our sellers are selling,
and that we can help them make a purchase decision
and therefore sell or make a sale.
That doesn't mean that every single team is working
on building features for buyers,
because that, it doesn't work.
Not least because you have a limited piece of real estate,
marketplace, and if you have too many teams working on it

at one time, you'll end up getting in each other's way
and you won't be that productive.
And so we, of course, we have a team that's laser focused
on improving the seller experience.
How do they, you know, list their inventory?
How do they manage their sales?
How do they fulfill their items as one example?
But really back to the, the GMS is the North Star.
GMS represents a buyer buying from a seller.
So it doesn't necessarily say build only for one
of your audiences or one of your customers.
But it says that that's really the job to be done here
is helping facilitate that transaction.
That's exactly the same transition Airbnb went through.
Initially it was focus on hosts,
make sure hosts are the happiest people
and do everything we need to make them happy.
And then eventually realize like the business is
the customers buying the product.
And you have to make sure that they're the happy people.
And sometimes you have to push hosts to do things
they're not as excited to do for the good of the guest side.
And I think it's also the fact that, you know,
we as the marketplace, and curious if this was true
at Airbnb as well, but we have the insight
into information, into data that an individual seller won't.
And so we can help them make hopefully better decisions
that lead to sales, leveraging the insights that we have.
You know, if you put an item on sale during this time period
chances are it's gonna resonate with buyers
and you might make an incremental
or you might get an incremental sale.
And so trying to be really data driven
in how we help and guide sellers to take actions
that we really believe will be valuable
for them and their business.
Because they simply, you know,
they're either a small business owner
and so they don't have time to do that level of digging
or it's simply not accessible to them
because they have the worldview of their business
and we're looking at, you know, the entirety of the marketplace.
Maybe on this thread going a little nerdy

or how do you think about supply constraint
versus demand constraint?
Is that something that comes up?
I imagine maybe it's per category.
At the high level, you know, we have 100 million items.
So if you take that number, a base value,
you would think we do not have a supply constraint.
We have largely, you know,
we wanna drive buyers to that supply.
When you dig in at maybe a more category,
subcategory, subcategory level,
that's where we do start to see pockets where, you know,
maybe we wanna increase the type
and the amount of inventory we have in, you know,
wall decor, seeing something behind you.
That might not be the right example,
but that's where we then start to focus and say, you know,
are there areas where we wanna lean in?
Ultimately, really thinking about
how do we help buyers choose?
Because that's when you have 100 million items
and even in a sub-subcategory
or for a specific search query,
you still generally have a lot of results to choose from.
How do you distinguish one item
or one seller from another based on the needs that you have?
When is it gonna arrive?
How much does it cost?
You know, is it this size or that size?
So really trying to lean into those types of things.
And again, to some degree, that's E-com 101,
but given the scale we're at,
it is a pretty unique challenge.
What are ways you encourage your sellers
to offer the things that you think you're lacking?
Back to that data-driven point, right?
If we can clearly articulate that,
if you show more photos,
you will help buyers understand your item in new ways,
in deeper ways, and you're more likely to make a sale.
That's a maybe a somewhat reductive example,
but those are the types of things where we generally know
either through the data that we observe

based on activity on the marketplace
and or through the research we're doing,
that this will be valuable.
The challenge is often,
we have so many things that we want our sellers to do.
What's the most important thing for them to do right now?
And that maybe changes somewhat seasonally, right?
We're slowly starting to get towards the holiday season.
And that just has a heightened purchase.
It's a heightened time of purchasing
and contrast that with, you know,
when it's around Mother's Day,
maybe different type of inventory works really well.
And so we need different inputs from our sellers,
because ultimately they're business people.
They have limited time in the day
and they want to spend time making.
So how can we make sure that the time they spend on Etsy,
managing their inventory, offering customer support
is as valuable as possible?
Yeah.
So essentially in product messaging and recommendations
and that you're showing to the sellers
is the way you communicate to them.
Yeah.
And to some degree, we use the buyer experience
to kind of signal what matters, right?
When we're clearly highlighting photos,
then that's obviously a very overly simple example.
Sellers just notice.
Here's what the search experience is highlighting.
As an example, yeah.
And then really thinking about, you know,
some of the kind of signals
or the snippets of information that we highlight,
you know, what goes into that?
We know that great customer service,
a seller will be providing,
they'll be responding to, we call them combos,
but messages on our platform,
they'll be responding really quickly.
And that's something that we then highlight
in the experience and that, you know,

if you're meeting that criteria,
then we can start to signal to a buyer that, yes,
this person offers really excellent customer service
and you should, we can set your expectations accordingly.
Awesome, yeah.
We saw the same thing at Airbnb.
One of the things that I worked on,
that was one of the bigger shifts in the marketplace
was shifting Airbnb to an instant buying experience.
And many hosts didn't want that
because they really wanted to vet the guest
and make sure they are happy with them.
But it ended up being so important to conversion
that we just encouraged them to turn it on.
And one of the ways that worked best
is exactly what you shared where in the search experience,
when someone came and searched,
we just defaulted the search results
to only show you instantly bookable listings
and hosts started to realize, oh, shit,
this is where things are going.
I think I gotta really take this seriously.
Yeah, and that worked really well.
Yeah, interesting.
Pulling that thread a little bit more,
I'm curious what you've seen as some of the bigger
conversion wins on the buyer's side
in terms of experiments you've run
that have had some of the bigger impact.
I won't say we're consistently
because that suggests that we don't know what we're doing,
we do.
We are often surprised by what works in an outsized way
and what we think is gonna be a knock it out
of the park success ends up being of minimal value.
But coming back to kind of maybe some of the themes
I alluded to earlier, reviews have long been really important.
And when you're reviewing an item, like said,
that's unique, that's from an independent seller,
the type of information that another buyer is looking for
is maybe a little different than other marketplaces
that they, or even platforms that they might be shopping on.
And so really trying to lean into,

well, what does it look like in a buyer's hand,
in a buyer's home?
Maybe that gives the next purchaser a bit more confidence
that it's the right size, it's the right color,
whatever it might be.
And so that's long been a track
that has been very fruitful for us
and continues to be something that we iterate on,
that we focus on.
Just understand that,
essentially it's recommending to sellers,
here's the photos you should have on your list.
Rather, no, collecting from buyers.
So a seller will give us the photos that they're gonna take,
and then we can augment those with the,
we call them buyer review photos,
but ultimately the experience the purchaser is having
either through photo or video is super, super valuable.
Great, okay, cool.
So adding specific photos that you find help,
buyers convert, keep going.
And then the other side is really leaning
into maybe more the quote unquote,
behavioral economic tactics of just helping buyers
make decisions, you know, signals and nudges
is how you'll see it referred to in literature.
And we've seen great success in elevating
little snippets of information that,
really help a buyer understand,
oh, there is actually only one of these.
Well, that's good information to know.
It's something that then, you know,
fits into their decision-making process
that might have otherwise been buried.
And so really the, yeah,
leaning into the quick summaries,
the easy, glanceable information
that enables a buyer to gain enough confidence to say,
yeah, this is out of these 100 million items
or the results for this search query,
this is the one that I feel best about buying.
We've seen lots of success on that track as well.
There was a track at Airbnb as well.

One of the ways they did this is they called it a rare gem,
which is something that's available right now
that's very popular.
And they created this kind of iconography for it.
And engineers on the team in that for Halloween dressing up
as a rare gem, it became like a whole thing at the company.
And what's funny about Airbnb is every home
is a one of a kind, like there's only one left always.
And there's always jokes about,
we should always be like one left, you better book now.
We had a great, I believe it was introduced,
I don't believe, I know it was introduced as an issue
or a bug, but we ended up showing four stars
and the fifth star when it was a half star
got rendered as a horse emoji.
And so for a second there on Etsy,
we had four stars and a horse showing up
for some of our review ratings.
And that spawned a huge amount of internal fun.
And then back to the point around Halloween,
we had a few teams being four stars and a horse.
It was pretty interesting.
It was like five people or four people were a star
and there's a horse person.
Yeah, exactly.
So good.
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So going down this track a little bit more,
one of the biggest wins for Airbnb's search experience
was this very small idea of just
what if you open each listing
in the search results in a new tab
and then converting like 1%,
like increasing conversion by 1%,
is there anything like that
that you remember that you've done or just like,
holy moly, that was so simple but such a big win?
Yeah, we have similar learnings around that exact example.
Oftentimes, I think about kind of effort and reward.
So it might be a smallish GMS win or conversion rate win,
but it was a one-line text change.
And we've seen those where we add a small snippet
of maybe we feel like it's almost marketing copy
and it ends up having an outsized impact.
We had one example where we added some text
to the cart experience
and we just saw huge uplift
that we really, really didn't expect.
It was more us communicating our values as a business
and it was something that really seemed to resonate
with our buyers.
And so that drove conversion.
We've got examples where it's a one-line copy change
and it's quite shocking the impact that that can have.
I'm curious what that change actually was,
the text change that had that much impact,
if you can recall.
We've long and continue to invest in sustainability

and the text change was in our cart
where we call out etsy offsets carbon emissions
from every delivery
and just adding that simple line of text
was something that like I said, really resonated
with our buyers and the type of customer that comes to etsy
and really drove conversion.
And Ronnie Kohabi on the podcast
who's one of the leading experts on experimentation
and he had the stat that 80% of experiments fail
across at each company on average.
Does that sound about right
in terms of how you guys find experiments working out?
Yeah, yeah.
Awesome, okay.
What is your just general philosophy and experimentation?
Does everything run as an experiment?
Do things sometimes not run an experiment?
How do you think about that at etsy?
Right now, the vast majority of our changes do
and to be perfectly candid,
I think that's one of our growth edges as a product org
and maybe even as a company is bringing in
different ways to validate changes
because to some degree
or maybe the way I think about experimentation
that's the highest bar.
That proves with near absolute certainty
that there's a causal relationship between the change you made
and the KPI that you wanna move.
But I think that that is,
it maybe misses the point in some changes
or some areas where you're working towards
a bigger net new thing
or this specific change won't really be indicative
of the greater hole you're building towards.
So we've, like I said, I mentioned earlier,
we've long been a very A-B testing driven organization,
not least because etsy's kind of background in history
has deep, deep roots in an incredible engineering culture.
And so that's kind of really tried and true.
So the vast majority of things are tested in that way.
We're expanding how we think about looking at cohorts over time.

I mentioned retention earlier, that to some degree
and it necessitates a different type of tests
when we look at our SEO work,
you can't think about it in exactly the same ways.
But the through line is,
is the change that we're making adding value?
And that's what we wanna try to understand.
A-B testing is a great way to do that.
There are others, some of which we're starting to employ,
others that, you know, we'll continue to investigate
and think about how we can leverage.
Is there an example of anything?
And if there's not, that's totally cool.
Of something that you shipped
that was maybe negative on the experiment results
or you just didn't want to run as an experiment?
When we're collecting inputs from sellers,
we just simply don't feel it's appropriate
to not either show or honor, right?
Like we talk about a tried and true practice of sales
and discounting.
If a seller offers something on sale,
then we need to show that.
We're really curious about
how that actually drives buyer behavior.
And there's ways that we can kind of construct
pre-post analyses and things like that
to try to understand the impact.
But ultimately, those are the kind of areas
where we are on the side of looking at our data
in different ways.
And so we have maybe a slightly different degree
of confidence in the value,
but we're still confident that it does help
the marketplace as a whole.
It's a great example.
Yeah, I'm not sure what I do there.
That is tricky.
So we've been talking about conversion.
I'm curious in terms of acquisition,
what you've seen work and just generally,
how do people find Etsy?
How do you drive top of funnel for Etsy?

Yes, there's two sides to Etsy, right?
There's the seller and the buyer.
Getting in the wayback machine,
we would, on the seller side,
we would be at craft fairs like Renegade
and other places where our sellers were selling in person
and really letting them know that Etsy exists.
And so that was very boots on the ground.
Let's get out and try to acquire sellers
into the marketplace.
Some of that predates me to some degree.
We were probably doing it on the tail end when I joined.
And then we have a lot of great word of mouth
through our sellers, right?
A seller probably knows other people
who are similarly inclined to be incredible craftspeople
who wanna sell their items.
And so we've seen some success with our,
we have a teams platform where sellers
can come together, ask each other questions
and kind of the word of mouth type of growth through that.
On the buyer side, we really leverage the fact
that we have a ton of inventory.
And to some degree, it ends up being
quite a long tail of inventory
where we can meet really niche and specific needs.
And so that lends itself really well
to thinking about SEO.
Lends itself really well to thinking about Google shopping
where someone is not on Etsy
but is often looking for something either
somewhat or very specific.
And we can really meet their needs
in a really meaningful way by showing them
not only just a single item, but maybe that
and then other options that they might find
that are of a similar vein,
in a similar sub categories in some cases.
And so those have been long tried and true areas
that we've invested in and we've seen
really great success in driving new buyers to Etsy.
I've researched and written about that story
of how Etsy started with sellers and craft fairs.

And so that's a really classic story.
And I think there's also an element
of the early sellers drove the early buyers
because they're just like advertising
their listing page shares where you could go buying,
which is a really unfair rare opportunity
to kind of grow the marketplace
by just focusing on sellers.
I mean, yes, and a seller is a buyer, right?
And so if they're making something
that they poured their heart into, chances are
they will value that exact same behavior in someone else.
And so if they're selling an item,
they're looking for other things
in maybe not their exact category,
but in adjacent categories and they become buyers.
So it is a nice dynamic when that starts to work.
Yeah, so many natural advantages
to getting this marketplace off the ground.
How cool is that?
You mentioned word of mouth is a big part
of how Etsy started spreading.
And imagine even today,
there's a lot of just, hey, should check out Etsy.
Is there anything you've done that accelerates word of mouth
or build on word of mouth?
Referrals comes to mind.
Is there anything along those lines?
Yeah, we dabbled with referral programs a while ago.
It probably ate some years ago.
What we saw, it was a different time.
And so I think we maybe didn't value a new buyer,
for example, in the way we do today,
because to some degree, right?
You're unlocking future value.
They make a single purchase
and then the bet is over time,
they'll go on to make subsequent purchases.
We didn't necessarily have that
as deep an understanding then as we do now.
So our buyer referral program ultimately wasn't a huge success,
but on the seller side,
this was back in the days of Dropbox referral program

being a huge, huge driver of their growth
and the whole give-get concept
that was really prevalent back then.
And on the seller side,
one of the things that we really leaned into
was on Etsy, for those who aren't familiar,
it costs 20 cents to list an item.
And that may seem like a very small financial outlay
to get started, but it's a little bit of a barrier.
And the more we can do to remove those,
the higher chance that someone will either become a seller
or list more items.
So we really leaned into that
as the currency for the seller referral program
and coming back to what I said around Teams,
that was a really great way to kind of supercharge
some of that activity that was either happening,
the more of it could happen
or really like helping a seller understand,
like, oh yeah, there is a hook here.
If I offer this person, I refer them,
they'll get some listing credits.
It'll be easier for them to open their shop.
And then when I need to list more items,
I also have credits that I can apply.
So that was one small area.
I wouldn't say it was a huge driver of growth,
but in certain markets, in certain pockets,
we saw it work pretty well.
Awesome.
That also helps with fraud,
which is a huge problem with referral programs
where the money isn't, like the credit is just,
you can list on Etsy.
It's not like you can steal a lot of money
away from the business.
So that's clever.
Yeah.
Okay, I wanna talk about one other part
of the funnel, retention.
Is there anything you've learned
that has been really effective to help with the retention?
We have long had features

that are kind of retentive in their nature.
Things like, on Etsy, we call them favorites.
You know, that might be liking
or a similar action on other places.
But how do we think about the habit loop
of if you take an action, what's the trigger,
and then what's the reward?
And so using a favorite as an example,
you favorite an item, that's a pretty strong-ish,
of course, adding it to your cart
or maybe purchasing it.
That's the strongest of signals, but you've shown intent.
So what can we do with that information?
We can then say, the seller put it on sale.
You should come back and check it out.
This is selling out.
There's only one of this item left.
You know, you showed some intent.
You might want to come back and get it.
And that's just one example of trying
to like close those loops.
And that's where we've worked on things like,
we call it the updates feed,
essentially a feed of activity that you've taken,
that we're demonstrating how it's changed,
what's new, and then pulling in the tried and true tactic
of push notifications to make you aware of that,
such that, you know, you're using your phone all the time,
you see that show up.
That's a pretty great notification to get, right?
The thing that I really liked is now on sale.
I'm going to check that out.
And so those are examples where really leaning
into that habit loop framework has helped us understand,
we've got a lot of this activity.
How do we close the loop?
How do we make it really valuable for our buyers?
Zooming out a little bit,
it's kind of wild that Etsy can exist in a world
of eBay and Amazon.
And I'm just curious what it is that you think
the founders and the team did early on
to carve out the space of like,

I know you could buy things from people.
You can buy things on Amazon really quickly
to create a world where Etsy builds
this massive business that continues to thrive.
What do you think was done so well to carve out the space?
I think the, to some degree, resolves down to,
and maybe that's a little too extreme,
but a key component is the brand.
The brand stands for something in people's minds.
And that helps understand, you know,
you're not going to get the same inventory on Etsy.
You shouldn't expect the same inventory on Etsy
as you might be looking for on eBay.
It just doesn't make sense to our buyers.
They, you know, the items that our sellers sell are unique.
And so I think that that is kind of the core nugget
combined with, you know, how we think about policies
and our way to, to some degree,
maintain the integrity of the marketplace.
Those two things combined do set us apart.
And, you know, the, I think if you ask many people,
certainly here in the US, what they think of Etsy,
a very specific image will be conjured up.
That may be one that we want to evolve and build on,
but it feels quite distinct.
And it's not the same as eBay
and it's not the same as Amazon.
And I think there's real deep value in that.
And that, I think I wasn't here at the very beginning,
but it's certainly, you know,
something that was there at the very beginning of Etsy
that is still kind of like a through line
to where we are today.
That makes absolute sense to me.
On the other hand, I also don't know how that happens.
Is there anything that you think about
of how the team did that and how they built that brand?
Like what are some of the important elements?
Is there like a specific aesthetic?
Is it a certain type of supply that you stuck to?
What do you think was so important to building that brand?
I think it is, it is the supply.
If you think about the marketplace,

the vast majority of content is maybe
we might consider UGC.
It's either the item is from the seller
or as mentioning before,
the buyer review is from the buyer.
And so just being really clear about
what's okay to sell and what's not okay,
I think does really differentiate us.
I also think over the years, you know,
our brand and our aesthetic
and how we position ourselves has evolved,
will continue to evolve as it should.
But to the point where we are now,
the statement we have is keep commerce human.
And that feels really simple, super pithy, easy to remember,
but has lineage when you go all the way back
to kind of where we started in terms of really valuing,
valuing the unique, valuing the handmade.
And so that does permeate kind of decision making,
how we show up, the type of features we work on,
the things we would prioritize, you know,
maybe never say never, but like, you know,
an item getting dropped off by a drone
and a person never touches it.
Like that doesn't feel very Etsy.
That's not something that we might lean into.
It's interesting how many parallels Etsy has to Airbnb
because Airbnb is the same general idea.
It's people's homes, people making things.
And then also, I think the tagline for Airbnb early on
was travel like a human.
So it's actually a really similar concept,
which touches on a question I wanted to talk about,
which is many marketplaces, as they grow,
become supply constrained.
And then there's this pressure to add
different types of supply.
Like in Airbnb's case, it was, we should add hotels.
We should add property management,
vacation rental companies on here.
We should have everything people want to book
because we're losing business.
They could book anything here.

They should be able to.
But the tension is then we become like everyone else.
And then what is Airbnb anyway?
What is Airbnb in that case?
And I think Etsy went through that experience
where there's like a lot of cheap products from overseas
and it was kind of being flooded.
Is that true, I guess?
And then just how do you think about that limit
and where you draw that line?
Yeah, I think it does come back to some degree
to the brand and the policy point from just before.
And we take our enforcing our policies really seriously.
It's not an easy job at our scale.
And that means we need to continue to invest
and continue to make sure that only the best items,
the most relevant items are on Etsy.
That job is never done.
The team that does that works super, super hard
and is always kind of looking for new signals
to understand what maybe doesn't meet our criteria.
Generally speaking, supply is something
that we have in spades for the most part
back to the point we talked about earlier.
One of the things that we grappled with
was around how can we help sellers scale?
They sell great inventory,
but maybe they just don't have enough of it
or they can't meet the demand
because they're making everything by hand.
And so one of the things that there was an evolution
was leaning into what today we call production assistance.
And the way I think about that is
you still need to understand the provenance of your item.
If you're saying, I have this design,
I'm just gonna throw it over the fence
to a manufacturer that I've never met
that I don't know, I don't understand their processes.
I may not agree with them.
That doesn't meet our criteria.
You need to understand how it's being made,
who is making it, have a relationship
with the person who's helping you scale your business.

But that's something that we saw from people
who maybe gravitate more towards being designers
than being able to actually make the thing.
They have this excellent idea,
they just can't see it come to life.
And so they need some help.
And that was something we leaned into
to be able to like said, help sellers
that maybe weren't able to make a thing
and sell it on Etsy or for sellers
who were reaching the limits of what they could supply,
really take it to the next level
and make more items such that they could make more sales.
So it sounds like there's essentially
this just like evolving definition
of what supplies allowed on Etsy,
a team that stays on top of that.
Imagine there was just like a hard decision
at one point of just, we will limit supply
and here's what supply that we want on the platform,
everything else we're gonna take off.
We would limit the type of items, the supply,
the number of those items that, as we talked about,
there's a lot of them,
but really having that clear definition.
In some cases, it's easy, right?
Some things are just there, they violate, legal.
Definitions and those things are,
that's the easy stuff to think about.
It's where it's a little more gray
that it gets a little trickier.
That reminds me, so my wife is actually a designer
and she produces these hilarious charts about life stuff
and people take her designs and just sell them
on every platform on Zazzle and probably Etsy,
but everywhere and she's always trying to hunt them down
and get them to take them off,
but it's such a pain for like a small designer
and it's not an Etsy problem,
it's just a general internet problem.
Yeah, and back to the, you know, we have teams hard at work,
we have teams hard at work thinking about IP
and how to police it, how to enforce it.

Not a domain, I will suggest I'm an expert
in really, really tricky stuff,
but we've gotta be on that.
Yeah, another, I think problem that's sort of unique to Etsy,
something that I think people call the graduation problem,
which is where you join Etsy, things start to grow,
you become really successful,
and then you're like, why am I paying Etsy all these fees?
Why don't I just make my own website
and just sell it directly and not pay any fees?
And I think you guys went through that.
Yeah, and so if that's true,
is there anything you've learned about just how to avoid
getting people to want to leave?
I think the core thought there is,
our fees are generally low and highly competitive.
So from that perspective,
there's reason to stay on Etsy.
What we've seen and what we know,
our sellers are really smart business people.
And so if they can distribute their products
through another channel, that might be their own website,
another marketplace in person,
probably gonna try to do that, right?
They want to make more sales, many of them,
not all, but many of them are wired
to wanna grow their business.
And so really understanding the role that we play
in that kind of construct of distribution channels
to make it a little reductive,
is really helpful to understand.
And to some degree, we wanna be the place
that not only they make sales on,
but they love to sell on,
because our tools are really catered
to the needs that they have.
So there is some degree of stickiness.
I mentioned teams earlier,
there are places where sellers go to kind of congregate,
share ideas, share grievances in some cases,
but ultimately support each other.
And so there are reasons to kind of stick around.
I'm sure there are certainly sellers who scale out of Etsy

or realize I wanna build my own website
to the example you cited.
The reality is that's neither cheap nor fast.
It's hard work, it's hard work to build,
hard work to maintain, expensive to drive traffic to.
And so that may be a part of their kind of,
the way they wanna take their business,
but oftentimes Etsy still does play a role
in how they're thinking about,
about where they make sales
and ultimately where they're gonna see growth from.
A cool thing that I saw online about you
is that you built a marketplace essentially within Etsy,
called Etsy Studio.
And I'm not sure if that's around anymore,
but I'm curious just what the story there was
and what you learned from that experience
and what's the current status.
Yeah, well researched because no, it is no longer around.
The white space we saw with Studio
was essentially saying on the one hand,
you've got Pinterest fails, right?
You've got all these great inspiring items
or projects on Pinterest.
And then you have people who have no idea how to make them
and they get so frustrated.
And then on the other hand,
you've got a marketplace like Michaels
or these other places where you might go
for craft supplies, they have stuff,
but they don't necessarily have inspiration.
And how can we play in that intersection of the idea
and the items and the tutorials
to see that idea come to life?
So kind of the genesis of the idea
felt from a brand perspective super aligned.
We stand for creativity, we stand for makers.
And so we saw it as a big opportunity.
The launch happened to coincide
with the kind of pivot in 2017
to really focusing on the core marketplace
or refocusing on the core marketplace, maybe I should say.
And so it became clear that when we laid out

what we're optimizing for,
which is driving sales in the short term,
marketing dollars being as or why positive as possible,
having teams focused on the core marketplace,
it didn't check any of those boxes.
And so really, really tough decision
and hard to manage through,
but that was ultimately the right call for the business
to say, you know, this doesn't,
this no longer makes sense given the new constraints
that we're operating in, given the new goals that we have.
Make sense.
Also something that happened to Airbnb a lot,
trying new things that they didn't have time to move on.
Yep.
That's how it goes.
Yep.
Shifting a little bit to just product leadership
and writing the product team.
And just a few more questions.
What's something that you've found to be really important
to having a productive, well-run,
well-executing product team?
Yeah.
One of the things that's certainly not completely novel,
but I think we have a pretty unique interpretation of
is how we collaborate between functions.
You'll often hear, you know, the three legs of the stool
where you've got product and engine design,
and we've evolved that to five legs of the stool.
And I fully recognize that a five-legged stool
probably is not a very stable thing,
but like go with the analogy for a second.
I think it'd be even more stable, right?
Is that the most stable stool
or is it less stable with five legs?
You know, you probably need a really flat surface.
That's what makes sense.
Regardless is, you know, of course we've got product,
engine design, and we've got our insights partners.
So research and analytics,
and we've got our marketing partners really working
in a tight team to build the best products possible.

And so I think that, you know,
we can continue to get better absolutely
at how we make decisions
and how we bring the various viewpoints together.
So to some degree, it's not like,
it's not the easiest path, but it's the best path, I think,
where you're really incorporating different viewpoints,
different constraints, different considerations
into the features and the products that we're building.
And treating that as kind of the core leadership team,
I think is really valuable.
And maybe that's partly because generally
we don't subscribe to this idea of PM as the mini CEO.
You know, you're up there directing from on high
that we're gonna build that feature
and we're gonna do that.
And that's just not the type of culture that we have.
And generally speaking,
from what I've seen doesn't lead to good decisions
or the best features or product being built.
And so collaboration is something we really value
and that we try to live through how we structure our teams,
how we make our decisions.
Is it perfect?
Like I said, absolutely not.
I think it's the way that we've found
being really successful building product.
Do you give the PM like just a little more
say in decision-making and ask
because with five people in the leadership team,
you talked about how back in the day
it was like too consensus-driven maybe.
And I wonder how you navigate that
with five decision-makers.
Yeah, we're always looking to clarify or re-clarify
or restate who ultimately is accountable.
And in many cases, it is the PM, right?
You are the one who is,
who Nick, our CPO likes to say,
you don't have to have the best ideas,
but you have to choose the best ideas.
And so really figuring out how you're selecting
what you're gonna build

and then living with the consequences.
Of course, ideally successful in many cases,
back to your 80% stat that experiments,
80% of experiments don't work,
owning what's next, right?
Okay, did we learn from that?
If we did, what are we gonna do about it?
That definitely does fall to the PM.
It doesn't give you the permission to ignore
other viewpoints or make decisions in a vacuum.
It's certainly not that,
but ultimately when we need to move forward,
it is the PM that is on the hook for those things.
Awesome, so essentially the PM can make the call
if there's like an unclear consensus.
And given we're so, many places are,
but we're so heavily led by the insights,
either qual or quant,
the decision in many instances is clear.
When it's not, that's when we need the product person
to step forward and say, we're going in this direction.
Don't know if it's gonna work out,
but we'll certainly learn and we'll move forward.
Awesome, and then just to go on this topic a little bit more,
your teams are cross-functional, dedicated teams,
I imagine it sounds like there's these five leads
for each team, is that roughly how you organize?
Yeah, and the fifth leg, if you will, of marketing,
that might be product marketing in some cases,
that might be brand marketing in others.
And so there's kind of different flavors
of marketing that we pull in based on
the specific needs of the project.
But that's generally speaking,
how we try to structure our teams
from kind of the group level
all the way down to the individual squad.
We can't always have a dedicated research
and a dedicated analyst
and a dedicated product marketer to every single team.
So it's certainly not perfect,
but that's where we aspire to having
at least coverage on those roles.

Got it, so most teams have dedicated marketing person
or a product marketing person, that's crazy.
That's really rare, but interest.
Some teams.
Some teams that I imagine are most in need
of marketing support, got it.
Are you able to just paint a rough picture
of kind of the way the teams are laid out at Etsy,
just like a bench and there's a buyer side
and a seller side, how does that look for people
to get a sense?
Yeah, the way that we think about the structure right now
and the org design should ideally follow strategy
and if your strategy is always evolving,
then your org design is always evolving.
We call it the product stack.
And so we've got our core customer teams
who are unsurprisingly thinking about buyers and sellers.
And so they're the ones on the front lines
with the customers.
Then we have our, we call them our partner teams.
And so they are working directly with the end customer.
So think an organization like Payments
where they have clearly a way to capture payment
from a buyer to remit funds to a seller.
So they're really on the front lines with the customer.
They also have other constraints working
with the payment networks and card providers
and things like that.
So they just have a slightly different model.
So core customer, partner teams,
enablement teams that are really in service
of helping deliver the best possible experience.
So that might be through our recommender systems
or through our design system in order to make,
developing just that little bit easier,
a little bit faster,
a little bit more standardized in some cases.
And then the kind of the foundation of it all
sits with infrastructure and the teams
that you might expect that are much more technical
in nature that really, without that,
we wouldn't have a website.

When you're hiring product managers,
is there anything that you've found to be really important
or interesting or maybe like a unique insight
into hiring teams?
The three things that I come back to time and again
is one, the collaboration piece that we talked about earlier,
not only a willingness, but a real excitement to do that.
It's not everyone's bag, I get that.
Some people just wanna be in a,
make fast decisions and move forward place.
We aim to make fast decisions, but you need to consult.
That's one.
Two is being decisive.
We have tons of data,
but it's not always clear exactly what to do with that.
Or we're using a new input,
maybe back to the point mentioned earlier,
looking at competitive insights.
Let's make a decision, let's move forward,
let's ideally learn,
even if we're not making progress against our goals,
we're at a minimum learning.
And then the third point is just curiosity.
Because we're a relatively small organization with,
and everyone says,
ah, if only we had more people, but we are quite small.
And so there is a lot of change.
There's a lot of new priorities that crop up.
And that means there's a lot of opportunity
for the right folks.
If they're, I wanna be in this space and only this space,
and this is my specific domain,
and I just wanna be in it forever more,
that might be a little more challenging,
because you might be asked to work on something net new.
And so just having that curiosity mindset of saying,
or maybe said differently, growth mindset of,
okay, there's something to learn
from the thing I'm being asked to do.
Let me really like lean into that.
And to some degree, I'm not describing anything
that's atypical of great product people overall,
but I think we have either a slightly different flavor

or we need it in a slightly different way here at Etsy.
Awesome.
Last question before we get to our very exciting
lightning round.
Is there a framework or a process
that you find really useful that you find yourself
coming back to that you think listeners
would potentially find really valuable?
I won't pretend to know whether listeners find it valuable,
but the thing that I do a lot that we do as my team,
that others do to some degree,
is a simple exercise of weekly focus.
What are you focused on this week?
And then reflecting on,
did you get done the things you were focused on last week?
Seems super simple,
but just the exercise of thinking about what matters,
writing it down and having a little bit of social proof
or like articulating it out to others,
creates some degree of accountability.
It's something that is very, very easy and simple to do.
And if you do it consistently,
you start to see some really great patterns
of like those types of focus areas take me longer
than I think I should budget more time.
Or these are the type of things that crop up
at this time of year,
I might need to start thinking about
making some space for them.
So I've just found that to be really,
really, really helpful in the day to day.
I love that.
How do you operationalize that?
Is it like a Slack channel people post these in?
Is it a doc?
Yeah, like in our buyer experience product channel,
on Mondays, everyone's kind of sharing
what they're focused on, how last week panned out,
was it done, is it still in progress?
Things like that, it's very, very lo-fi,
but it worked pretty well.
So it's kind of like a stand-up that happens once a week
and it's a higher level, essentially is what it's saying.

Exactly, exactly.
Trying to think about the priorities and not tasks.
And that is a blurry line, I fully recognize that.
But anchoring in those, I think is certainly
for me personally, more helpful.
And is the comedian person in these
and sharing funny things in the stand-up stand-up stand-up?
No, unfortunately, well, or fortunately,
he is now actually a comedian.
Are you serious?
He's doing his thing.
He's a full-time comedian.
That's amazing.
And with that, we've reached our very exciting
lightning round, are you ready?
Hit me.
What are two or three books
that you've recommended most to other people?
Couple that come to mind, Team of Teams
by Stanley McChrystal has been,
I think it's just, A, a really fascinating read,
and B, it helped me think a lot about how you trust teams
and how you think about kind of disseminating
decision-making to the right folks,
tech language, push decisions to the edges.
But thinking about it in the context
that he describes there is really fascinating.
And it just shows that it can work even
in the most kind of egregious world of military,
which you think is top-down command and control,
shows that there's a different way to approach problems.
I was actually a fan favorite at Airbnb also.
Oh, cool.
Other is back all the way to the top
to what I love to do, surfing and being outdoors,
let my people go surfing by Yvonne Chouinard,
the Patagonia founder.
Incredibly fascinating read of someone
who just had a deep, deep passion,
turned it into a business, struggled,
iterated, came out the other side, really successful.
So the business side, but also just how they think
about treating their employees and the culture

that they've built is to me personally really inspiring.
There's a theme here around trust
and kind of how you engage with people
to make their day-to-day work lives just really fulfilling.
So that's another favorite.
And then in a super different direction,
Power Broker by Robert Caro.
That is an absolute tome.
It is huge.
It took me probably an entire year to read
because I'm an extremely slow reader
and or I fell asleep a lot.
But it is so fascinating, especially living in New York
of how one human had such an incredibly outsized
and probably terrible impact on the city,
access to waterfronts, really thinking about communities
and tearing them apart, just such a fascinating read.
I have that book and I've never read it.
It's very long and it's intimidating.
I think it might be back there maybe in a different way.
I would chunk it out.
Do like a couple of chapters at a time,
otherwise it feels insurmountable.
It's like infinite jest where you just never,
you're intimidated.
Amazing.
Okay, next question, favorite recent movie or TV show?
So my wife and I talk about this a lot.
I think we're Western files.
If that's the thing, I'm from Europe.
And so it's a whole new world, different world for me.
We've loved Yellowstone and all of the,
I guess their prequels, they've been,
yeah, just really, really fun to watch
for some people who are like curious
about that culture and that world.
Awesome.
You also have been hard to like find where to even watch it.
It's like on the weirdest channels.
You have, it's one of those where, you know,
the old world of we cut all our cords
and we only needed Netflix.
Suddenly you need all these really random, you know,

providers of content that you're like,
I have to subscribe to that now to watch the show.
I don't understand where this even is.
Just take my money.
Yeah.
Favorite interview question you'd like to ask candidates?
I'm a big fan of case studies, live case studies.
I think you learn a whole boatload
about how someone thinks on the fly,
how they react to constraints.
So we use those, I've used those a ton.
We use them pretty heavily in product interviews.
So I love those modulated for like the type of business
you're in, you know, what you're actually trying to,
trying to understand.
The other one I like to ask is around something
that people have taught themselves.
Tried to get at a growth mindset.
I think Julia, who was on the podcast a while ago
said something similar, but you get a ton of insight
into someone, ideally get a bit of passion
and you often get something to go research.
She's like, I don't know anything about that topic.
I want to learn a little more.
What is a favorite product
that you've recently discovered that you love?
You, as a new parent, maybe resonates when,
so it's not new because our kids too,
but when I was looking, you know, being in product,
of course you want to track data.
And so I was looking for apps that would be good at doing that.
And they nearly all look like hideous medical charts
where I just don't want to engage with that.
I found this one app called,
I think it's called Nara Baby or Nara something.
Dooper Simple allows both parents to enter information,
probably grandparents too.
We only tested it with two people.
Seamlessly syncs, really easy to use.
So at 4 a.m. when you can't see
and you just want to say like, I fed the baby,
you can do that really easily.
Just really, really simple, like the purpose product.

So that resonated with me.
I'm going to be downloading that right now.
I've been using Huckleberry,
which is both awesome and not awesome.
And so awesome tip, great.
What is a favorite life motto
that you like to repeat often
or share with other people either in work or in life?
One of the things I talk about,
maybe internally more than anything else,
but all or nothing, like go all in, go do the thing.
And in German, I grew up in Germany.
So that's something I say to myself a lot is,
like if you're going to do it, do it properly.
I think those are often helpful words to live by.
I love that.
Final question, what's a favorite item
you recently discovered on Etsy?
I recently bought an engraved whiskey decanter
for my wife and myself or for the home.
Super beautiful, like so, so cool.
Got it personalized with our names.
Just such a cool, cool item.
That, yeah, I wasn't expecting to find that kind of thing.
Not even sure exactly how you engrave a whiskey decanter,
but it was really, really cool.
And the other thing, I'm always on the lookout
for greeting cards.
If anyone has great greeting card seller recommendations,
I'm all ears.
I love giving out physical, like greetings cards to folks.
So that's another, like always on Etsy favorite of mine.
Tim, we've talked about growth, culture,
surfing, cabins, leadership.
Thank you so much for being here.
I'm downloading the NARA app right now as we speak.
Two final questions, working folks finding online
if they want to reach out and maybe learn more.
And how can listeners be useful to you?
Yeah, yeah, find me on LinkedIn.
That's probably, well, not probably,
is my most professional platform.
Instagram, like I said, is a farce.

And being useful, yeah, send me things
that you're excited about in the Etsy product.
Send me feedback.
Always, always really, really keen to learn
how folks are experiencing the things that we build.
Amazing. Tim, thank you so much for being here.
Thank you for having me, Lenny.
Appreciate it.
Bye, everyone.
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