

[Transcript] My First Million / Threads vs Twitter & Millionaire Sam Ovens Doesn't Believe In A.I. Hype

Parker, I think it's Parker Thompson on Twitter, he replied to that. He goes, okay, so for those keeping score at home, Elon bought a product for \$44 billion, and then Zuck built the same product for a thousand times less, stealing all of his users like an absolute Chad, and is God willing about to choke him out in 90 seconds on a steel cage soon. Huh, so that's what a cuck means now.

All right, what's up? Today's episode, we're talking about threads versus Twitter, the big debate, and we're going to talk about where we land, our predictions for what we think is going to happen, how it's going to play out. We told some funny stories, and then in the second half, we have an interview with a guy named Sam Ovid. So Sam met this guy, Sam. He used to run a business called consulting.com that at its peak hit \$30 million in revenue. He was all over our Facebook feeds as one of these internet marketer guys. And so we were curious, who is this guy? And what's he all about? Definitely an interesting interview. I would say he had some interesting stuff to say. Also, his energy was totally different than most of the guests, and also different than what you would expect out of an internet marketer. So I'm curious to see what people think of it. I would say it's a different style of interview than we've done before. Sam, what do you think? So for those watching on YouTube, I'm sweating right now. The reason I'm sweating is around minute 35. I can't stop laughing. I'm still laughing about it. You're going to enjoy it. Taco Bell story. Let's just leave it at that. Oh my God, it's ridiculous. I don't know how this story came about in a business pod. I'm happy it did. I'm sweating right now. If you are on Spotify or Apple and you're listening to this, go to our YouTube page, search my first million, go to this episode, let us know in the comments what you think. People liked when we did that the last time, Sean. We got a lot of comments, a lot of good feedback. It's been fun to read all the comments, but let us know what you think, and we'll talk to you soon. All right. What's up, Sam? We got to talk about threads, threads versus Twitter. Threads came out a few days ago. We've had

a few days to play with it, to sit on it, to think about it. And I think everybody's given their opinion on it. And why not ours? I want to hear what you have to say about this. I have kind of a way, I think we could talk about this, what I'm calling the bull and bear case, the bull case, the bear case, and then where we land. But I first just want to hear when did you get on it, and what was your initial reaction? How on your radar was this thing to begin with?

I had only heard about it three or four days before it launched, and I heard about it because of a leak. I think there was a leak, right? Somehow it leaked out that it was coming out, so I downloaded the app. You can download it before it launched, and then I got the notification right at midnight or whenever it said it launched, and I signed up. I think it's pretty cool.

Are you jealous that I already have more followers than you do on that? Because I was already going hard on Instagram? Yeah, going hard on Instagram paid off there. You got a double bonus for growing

your Instagram. So props to you on that. I think it's great. You know why I think it's great? I really only think it's great for one reason, which is Twitter, to me, is pretty great. But dude, my feed is just like fight videos and people getting shot and dying. It's kind of become a little bit sad. That's on you. I don't know if that's anyone else's fault. When you click the follow button and the like button and the save button, the algorithm will just give you more. Look, here's the deal. If you see a fight video, you watch it. You're not not going to watch that.

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It's like when you have a hot girl that scrolls through, you scroll slower through that. What is this? How does this get here? All right, keep scrolling down. Yeah, so just all these weird handles. I also think that I've become such a stand for Zuck and this whole thing, he's just proven to be like the man. He's come off very likable. And so I find myself picking sides based off of the owner of the company. Yeah, it's become sports. It's become tribal. Who's team are you on? And I don't know how the hell I ended up team Zuck, but I'm on team Zuck. It's very obvious to me. It's very clear. I think this guy's done an incredible rebrand of his personality because he went from easy to hate for a bunch of reasons. One, becomes rich and powerful. People don't like that. Two, he looked like a robot, talked like a robot, seemed to have no personality. So that was, again, for the people who didn't get turned off by the power and billionaire thing, they got turned off by like, okay, this guy's a lizard or he's a robot. Like, what's going on with this guy? And then somehow he hired the top PR agencies in the world. He hired the fixer, the wolf came in and tried to fix him. All he needed to do was start working out. The guy takes ten jitsu classes and learns how to do a pull up. And all of a sudden idiots like us are like, you know what? I fuck with this guy. Yeah, he's relatable somehow. Yeah, totally worked on me. And then to the point where you start thinking about it, this happened also with LeBron James. LeBron James at one point was super hyped. Then he became the guy. Then people started to turn on him. Then he did this thing where he left his team, went to Miami and everyone's like, oh, I hate this guy. And then somebody's pointed out to like, so you're telling me this kid who had all the pressure in the world when he was 17, 18 years old, delivered on the hype, lived up to it, never gotten in trouble with the law. You've never heard about this guy, you know, married his high school sweetheart, is a good dad to his kids, you know, is one of the best players of all time and just like keeps himself in phenomenal fitness and shape and tries as hard as he can every single year. What do you have a problem with? And in the same way, I feel like the same, that's happened for Zuck where it's like, so this guy who built this company that billions of people use, stuck with the company, he works hard every single day, you know, married, you know, his college sweetheart, never been in trouble with anything, doesn't tweet out offensive stuff, doesn't say anything just to get a reaction. Seems like a personally reasonable guy, works out hard, is a good dad, like, what do you hate about this guy again? What's going on? Do you know how old Zuck is? I don't know, he's like our age. He's like, he's a little older than us, right? He's like 37, 38, 39. Yeah, he's, he's, he just turned 39, you know, in LeBron, also 38. These guys are the same, man. They are the same. They've been, dude. Since they were 18, yeah. Yeah, LeBron got drafted what, he was a high schooler, right? 18 at high school. Zuck has been the man since he was 21 or 22. There's been nothing. I mean, there's been, like, if you look the grand scheme, it's, there's been no, like, human errors. No, no, no self. Yeah, there's been like business heirs that have been cringed, but there's been nothing that they've done where you're like, oh, that guy's a piece of shit. If your biggest crime is cringe, you're doing all right. You know what I mean? Yes, when you're the man for that long, that is impossible. That is so challenging to do that. So, you know what I mean? So, we're, we're clearly Zuck fanboys. Let's talk about Threadzo. Oh, and by the way, did you see what Elon posted? I don't know. Did you see on Twitter, he goes, Zuck is a cuck. You know what a cuck is? Yeah, yeah. I do. I had

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to look it up actually. A cuck is a cuck is a guy who wants his wife to sleep with other men and he, like, enjoys it. And then he also goes, I challenge Zuck to a dick measuring contest, literally a dick measuring contest. Like, he says stuff like that. And I'm, dude, he says something like that. And I'm like, oh, my God. He's an absolute try hard to me. I don't, don't like it. It says, by the way, there's a funny tweet from Parker. I think it's Parker Thompson on Twitter. He replied to that. He goes, okay, so for those keeping score at home, Elon brought a product for 44 billion. And then Zuck built the same product for a thousand times less is stealing all of his users like an absolute Chad. It is God willing about to choke him out 90 seconds of steel cage soon. Huh. So that's what a cuck means now.

I think it's great, man. Zuck is just looking great on this. All right. So, but threads you have on here that they grew to 70 million. It's actually a hundred. It's a hundred. So they grew to 100 million users in a week. So we'll deliver the bull case first. So the bull case is this will and the will threads win argument. So the bull case is we're five days in and they've reached 100 million users making it the fastest growing product of all time. Okay. Instagram has about a billion and a half users. They seem to be converting over pretty quickly to this. We already got a hundred million on the platform. If 20% of Instagram's users come on board, it's now bigger than Twitter. So 20% conversion from Instagram is what they're going to need. They've done, you know, like out of the 5% or something like that. I don't know, public math, something like 5% so far in five days. The next reason that this is bullish is Instagram. And Zuck shared that on threads. He said we just hit 100 million and he said we've not even really promoted it yet. Yeah. We haven't even done our promotions yet, which is nice. It's also really cool that he's revealing some of the stuff.

Yeah. Yeah. He's really active on it right now. He's part victory lap, part like community engagement, which is, which is cool. And he tweeted for the first time in like 15 years right on the day of launch, which was, which was also nice. And it was like the meme of the three Spider-Man's pointing at each other. He's in on the joke. Whoever he hired, like his nephew or whoever like just is like, yo, give me your app, give me your phone. I'm going to make you likable. Like, hey, instead of like fighting it, just post a meme. It's cool. Don't worry.

He needs a verb. So there's no verb. What do you say? You threaded it? You posted it?

Yeah. You know what I mean? You know what I'm threading? I don't know what's going on. So the interesting part is I go on threads and I expect to see the same sorts of people as I do on Twitter. And there's some, but there's a whole new market of people who were basically never on Twitter. Just didn't like Twitter didn't work for them. So, you know, you get a whole new set of people that are going to use threads that weren't, they don't have to switch off of Twitter.

They're just new people to a Twitter like behavior. So it can basically beat Twitter without getting people to switch because it's expanding the market. Twitter is, I don't know if you know this, Twitter is basically the most abandoned product, I think ever. So more than a billion people have signed up for Twitter or tried Twitter and then been like, no, I don't get it.

I'm good. Just yeah, that's not for me. And now the big question, the like sort of like the 100 billion dollar or 200 billion dollar question is, is that because the idea of Twitter doesn't appeal to that many people or that Twitter's execution was not good enough to hook those people. And if it's the idea, then those same people who try threads will eventually bounce because they're like, they're just people who like to look at pictures and videos.

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They don't want to write text and read random ass text messages from different people. So if it's the idea, then Twitter's safe. All these people will try it and they'll bounce.

But if it was the execution, if it was that Twitter didn't hook them properly, then they're screwed because if there's one thing that, that the Instagram and Facebook teams are going to do, is they're going to execute, you can already see it in the small things that they're doing with. They're like, yeah, we're just going to make like kind of like the feed work better and blocking and muting and like all of it, like all of the stuff, we're just going to do the stuff good, the stuff that they've been doing for 20 years, which is like, Hey, when somebody signs up, let's just make it really easy for them to find like their friends or interesting people for them. And like, let's just make this, this feed killer, like this is like this algorithm killer where you just want to keep scrolling stuff that Twitter never really did. Like if you go look at Twitter's ad product, like have you ever run Twitter ads?

Yeah. So this is what I was going to say. This is another bowl case, which is if you, if you've never run ads before and you go talk to anyone who has run any ads, Facebook is always in the top two or three parts of the conversation. So normally it's number one. It's usually the best platform. I've spent maybe 10 plus million dollars of my own, like me actually running ads. Facebook is always number one. Twitter is never part of the conversation.

I don't know if, I don't even know if it's any, I don't know if it's like that anymore because I haven't run ads for a few years. Well, I run ads on it now. So I'm running ads on it literally right now and it works, but the ad platform is so trash compared to Facebook and Google's ad platform, which is so surprising because that's how they make money. You would think they're highly incentivized to do it. So anyways, I guess my, my bigger point is not really about who, whose ad platform is going to be better. It's just, but that matters. It's going to be execution on all the details on getting people linked up with the right people, making the feed super interesting and, you know, and handling spam better and abuse better and all the things that Twitter has struggled with over, over the years. So the bull cases that basically this 100 million users, if they convert some of Instagram people, they'll be bigger than Twitter. They don't even need people from Twitter to switch. They can just bring net new people to the market and they can just continue to promote this across Instagram and WhatsApp. So that's the bull case. Now I'm going to switch to the, to the bear case. Oh, also part of the bull case, Twitter shoots itself on the foot a lot. So Elon does a lot of dumb shit, pisses a lot of people off. He's basically pushing to like basically put a paywall where like you have to pay \$8 a month in order to like have your shit be seen in the, in the feed. So that's basically introducing friction.

He added the tweet limit not long ago, which introduces friction because, oh, you know, which is insane. No more tweets for you. Cut off like the ability to post tweets and have them embed in other places because he was like, oh, we're getting scraped too much. So he basically put a login wall in front of the content. Like he's adding friction everywhere. So these are, these are foot faults. These are, you know, nobody, this is not threads killing you. This is you killing you. And so that's, that's part of the bull case. Now here's the bear case. Why this won't work. If I was to argue why this won't work, here's what I would say. I'd say, hey, name the last Facebook standalone product that just worked, not one that they bought, but one that they made. And that's where there's really a kind of a graveyard of poke and a bunch of these other apps that they tried to create. They tried to create a TikTok competitor. Didn't work. They

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tried to create a Snapchat competitor. Didn't work. So there is a graveyard of these things. The only things that have worked have been things that they put into the Instagram app, like stories and reels, because people are hooked on Instagram. So the standalone app thing hasn't really worked. And this is a standalone app. The next problem, just because 100 million people try it, doesn't mean they're actually going to stick. There's going to be massive churn just like there is when I have you gone back to use. Yeah, I open it up right now. But like, I'm not like hooked on it completely myself yet. Are you?

I'm not hooked yet. No, I'm definitely hooked on Twitter, but I've also built up like a big following plus a bunch of people that I follow. So my feed is more interesting on Twitter. It's a curator for 10 years. I was going to say, we might be the 1% the 1% because we make a living in part because of Twitter. And so we could be like, there could be a part of it of like, oh, shit, I don't want to use this other thing because I already have this one thing that's working. And this thing is just going to like cannibalize it. So I can't tell if there's that bias there or what it is. But no, I'm not hooked yet. But I am opening it maybe once a day, maybe once every two days. I am a little bit like, shit, I don't want another thing to have to use. But I am happy that it's text based because that's where I excel because, you know, I'm a Missouri six, but like, but I'm a Microsoft Word nine. Yeah, I don't want I'm not like, I don't I got the I got a good face for Twitter. So like, I prefer that. But yeah, we are the outliers because both of us have, I know, together, we probably have almost almost a million followers together on Twitter. And so going now I go to threads, I have 3000 followers or something. I'm starting from scratch again. And you know, I'm like that guy who I moved to San Francisco. And I bought a house. And I just read in my lawn. And then everybody started moving and they started raising the prices. And I'm like, I'm I'm dug in. I'm like, yeah, I'm dug in. I already paid for the Renault. You know, like, I guess I'm just here when everyone else is choosing places that might be a better fit. So you know, we might be the wrong person there. Here's the other reasons that Twitter might win. Twitter, after the churn, you know, threads might have 20 million or 30 million active users compared to Twitter's 300 million, right? So I think there's going to be so much churn that this 100 million number is a bit of fool's gold. The next thing, Twitter has key content. So it has news, it has sports. So it's got the journalist, it's got the athletes, it's got the people that cover the NBA and the NFL, like, it's got famous people. It's basically got like this key, like rapid breaking news and influential content. Threads is going to have new content. But like the type of person who's big on IG may not be the right type of person for what works in this text medium. We don't, TBD, there's a TBD on that. The next thing, threads is just a straight up clone. There are no product improvements. And in fact, there's some big drawbacks. Like, they don't have DMs. They don't have like, you know, dude, I get DMs. I've been getting DMs. I think I don't know what they're called. There's no inbox. People have been messaging me. Let me pull it up. But I think they're at mentioning you. There's definitely no, maybe that's what it is. I don't even know how to use it yet. Then yeah, it's a mention, but it looks like a DM. Like, the thing looks like a DM. All right. Yeah, you're right. So it's just, they cloned the app, but they left some things out. Now, that might make it better. But for the most part, I would say the product strategy, like, if you printed out the roadmap, it's like, here's some features that you turn the page, and it just says, not Elon Musk, not Twitter, right? Like, it's just basically, here's not Twitter.

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And like, there's a bunch of people who don't like Elon, don't like Twitter, and they'll just try this out. So I don't know if that's a great long-term product strategy.

By the way, speaking of mediums and leaving things out, do you use Twitter on your phone or desktop? Both, yeah. I mostly use it on desktop. And I used the Thread App, and I was like, hey, I need a desktop thing. That's why I prefer typing on it. And people were like, call me boomer and shit. And apparently. Yeah, that's some boomer shit. Dude, that's some boomer shit, I guess. But I hate using it on my phone. I want to use it on my computer so I could scroll through and click shit. Yeah, that's like if a guy knocks on the bathroom stalls, like, hey, I got to take a piss sitting down, and you're like, what? And you're like, it's not illegal to do what you're saying, but certainly not acceptable. Yeah, you're more of a, what are you more of a pee with your shorts down at your ankle type of guy while standing up? So your desktop thing, it's okay to use desktop, but let's not, let's not get out of control here. I think most, not most, I think a ton of people do that, man. I'm telling you, the older guys, I guess I'm old now, but I need that. That's who we should appeal to as a social media platform. The older guys.

Yeah, we'll call it khaki. All right. So here's a couple of other things, which is the best creators on Twitter. So the people who have basically earned a 10, 15 year period proven that they're really good at creating text based content now have a big following and don't really want to start over from scratch on, on Instagram, aka me. So, so I think those are some of the downsides of this, but I do think, you know, once you take into account the bull and the bear case, it's prediction time. How do you think that this plays out?

Let's do the interesting nuggets really quick. If it doesn't work out, Nikita, our friend Nikita, who has worked at Metta and did all the social stuff, what did he say?

He was basically like, you know, this thing's going to be at 100 million users soon. And if it fails after that, that will sort of officially make it the biggest fail in social app history at that point, which I don't think that really means anything to be honest. I think the truth is, I think it's going to end up closer to the bull than it is the bear. I think it will, it will more work than it does fail. I don't think Elon would ever sell Twitter out of like pride reasons, but I think it will, if it weren't run by a billionaire, I think it would effectively put it out of business for the ad, ad purposes. I think it's going to work. I don't know if it will overtake, but I think it's going to work so good that it's going to cannibalize Twitter and it's, they're going to be at least equal. The CEO of Cloudflare tweeted out a chart, I don't know if you saw this, of Twitter traffic, because Cloudflare has like, you know, they run like, in some way. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. Maybe they haven't paid their bill or maybe there's like a doctor. That's like a doctor like revealing like your illnesses, isn't it? It's like, it's like these two guys are making fun of each other. It's like, actually, this guy, his cholesterol is way worse than yours. Right? If you want to beat them up, but kick them in the left knee. He did that basically. He tweeted out, showing that this, that Twitter down like 5% in overall traffic so far this week from, from threats. So it's like, you know, he said like, it's plummeting or something like that, like dropping off a cliff, which is like pretty dramatic for, I don't know, 5%. I wouldn't call plummeting, but that's weird that he shared that. That's super weird. It's going to be closer to the bowl. And whatever I've learned, Nikita actually would always joke about this. He would say, never, ever, ever bet against Zuck. And I've heard so many people say that.

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What I bet against Elon, for sure. Not often. Not often. I think that he follows through a lot. He's just been closer to death so many times. And I don't think Zuck entirely has. I just think that Zuck, or Zuckerberg, when it comes to this field of consumer social, I just think that he's, I would not bet against that person. Yeah, exactly. I think that's the, that's the rub here. I think that it's not Zuck versus Elon. E-mono, E-mono. Like, you know, like, in the same way that in the cage, Zuck will probably win because he trains. He's been training Jiu-Jitsu for like, you know, a couple of years. So that's, it gives him a little head start. In the same way that Zuck probably could not build a rocket company or a car company. You're playing. I mean, he couldn't even build Oculus. Like, he couldn't even, like, do that kind of hardware. It's doing pretty well, to be honest. It's doing okay. But I think that they're going to miss, they're not going to be like the one. Perhaps. We'll see. But I guess, like, it's his domain. The social app thing is their domain. They have Instagram. I think I'm with you. I land where I do think threads will be bigger than Twitter. I don't think it kills Twitter. I just think it sort of stunts whatever slow growth that Twitter has. It just stunts it even further. And Twitter remains this kind of niche. This, basically, this thing that has really strong appeal to a niche. And I think that threads becomes the more mainstream version of it. Like, I think it becomes the more palatable, just cool, interesting thing in the same, in the same way that, like, this happens a lot with music or with TV shows or with, with stuff like that, where something has its time and then the new thing comes out. And it just has, like, a little more mainstream appeal. And it just becomes the default. And the other thing doesn't die. It doesn't go away, necessarily. But I do think that if you fast forward two years or 18 to 24 months, I think it's pretty, I think my bet would be threads is bigger than Twitter. And Twitter basically has now, like, a ceiling on its head that it's bumping into. It can never really grow from there. It might get better at monetizing those people or preventing them from switching. But the dominant place for that will be threads, which is insane to me. It seemed impossible, like, to dethrone a social network like 12 months ago. There's this cultural shift with young people where there's so much more kind and nicer than our generation when we were that age. And you see that on TikTok. So if you go to TikTok and you look at the comments, people are so much more positive. They're still something. They're not more positive. That's, TikTok is amazing at sorting comments and hiding comments. Whatever, whatever that is. Okay. Maybe, maybe, because all you see is kindness and jokes. And then you're like, Oh, that's how I'm supposed to behave here. And Twitter, right? You see, it builds the culture. Whereas on Twitter, I post something and I get made fun of so much sometimes. And I always click on the accounts. And it's clearly like a bot or I don't know what it is. But there's this huge underground culture. I have no idea how this is happening. A people who all they do is make fun of, make fun of people. And I always, it shows it to me. Do you get that when people are making fun of you all the time? Yeah. Yeah. Because it just shows you everything. Twitter says it shows you everything. You said something. Here's what they said back. And guess what? There's always going to be people that either disagree, argue, or just say mean shit to you. That's like, you know, just that's actually the way the world works. The best companies have figured out how to algorithmically like suppress that behavior. Yes. And one of the day I opened up threads, it was like Gary V saying like, I hope you all have such a wonderful day. And it was like, they like seeded it with like these positive people. And it like created this weird culture

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where it seems significantly more positive so far. You open up threads like, Good morning, y'all. Yeah. Or like, I have like pomp saying like, I hope you have a wonderful day and get after it. Like it just so much. And I have saw Hill already popping up on my shit. It's like all positivity. Whereas Twitter, it's way more negative. And honestly, it does wear me out. And by the way, Zuck has sort of said this in his threads where he's like, yeah, that's part of our key strategy. He's like, I always thought there should be a sort of like this town square conversation, public conversation type product that gets to a billion users. Twitter, for some reason, never figured it out. We're going to do our best. And then people were like, you know, oh, I noticed this place is like, you know, more kind or sort of like, you know, most more positive energy right now. And he goes, yeah, I think that's really important. That's what we're going to do. That's something we're going to really focus on and try to get right. I don't think that Twitter ever got that right. Some of these features, like setting the culture in that way are invisible. They're not like, now you could do live video. Now you could do Twitter spaces. It's not a feature that you see. It's almost what you don't see. That's the feature. I think that Facebook and Instagram have a lot of experience fighting abuse, spam, hateful content. And it's not going to be nowhere. It's not just going to be gone, like whatever, that's fine. I get that. But I think they're going to do a better job of it. In the same way that like, you remember, it used to be a common thing people say, which is like, if you ever want to see sort of hell on earth, go to the YouTube comments, like YouTube comments were considered like an actual cesspool. And now if you go to a popular YouTube video, the comments are often like, they add to the joke. They're funny and they're positive. And I don't know what they did over time, but over time they fixed that problem, which was that the YouTube comments were like, you know, where, where, you know, hope goes to die. And now it's good. It's part of the experience. And sure, there's some spam or there's still obviously like the one-off thing, but it's nowhere near where it was like in the early days. I went out to dinner last night. I'm in Williamsburg. I went out to dinner last night and I, you know, Williamsburg, everything's tight in New York. And I sat next to this guy who worked at Metta on the Threads team. And I'm not going to reveal a lot because I don't want to write this guy out, but me and Sarah were out to dinner and like I texted her, I was like, let's just not talk. And we just listened to this guy. We just listened to this guy talk for two hours about launch week and like what it was like. And he was like, it was the most exciting time of my career. This guy was so bought in to like the Threads movement. He even was talking about how much money he was making. It was crazy, man. I was just like, what'd you hear? You don't have to say the person, but tell us everything. It was, it was seven figures a year. It was seven figures in this guy. And I'm like, I feel like I know all about this guy. Kind of no worries from I, or at least I know where he moved from. I heard the very, the very typical, this is so funny. You hear people say this all the time when they first moved to New York or when they're like tech guys, they say San Francisco was all about, what have you built lately? New York, it's all about how much money do you make? You know, you're reminded every time about how important money is. San Francisco is all about what you build. Like that's like such a positive way. The guy who was asking about this is from San Francisco, New York. It's refreshing that my pay stub delivers. But he was just talking about like,

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he was like the launch and he was just saying like how the morale of the company is really high and how everyone was pumped, which is, which is something Facebook needed because it was pretty shitty for a long time with all the negative PR. Then he was just talking all about like the launch and like what they were doing. It was so fascinating to sit there. I'm shocked that he didn't like catch the hit that I was just like listening into this whole conversation. I just heard everything. Hey, there's one thing that Facebook engineers don't have a lot of awareness. Dude, I don't think you notice that you weren't talking to your wife. You ever go out to dinner and like, if you're with like a business associate or like a successful friend and you talk about money, you're talking about like, you know, like I want to buy this house. It costs as much money or like, this is what I'm earning. What do you think I should do with it? Whatever we talk about these sensitive topics, whenever the waitress or waiter comes over, I always quit talking about that because I'm like, that's embarrassing. It's tacky. They didn't get that hit. And so I remember them talking about, I remember them, they said the seven figure thing. It's like, yeah, it's not that big of a deal. You just go get like a director of startup and get a, you know, a million dollar package. And that's okay. But like, are you really doing anything meaningful, right? As the woman was like waiting to see if they wanted dessert. Yeah. And I remember seeing that I was like, Oh, I hate that. That is so fucking embarrassing and obnoxious. You got to shut up at that point. That's when you, you know, you're like, you got to lower your voice. You got to whisper a million. You know what I mean? Like that's what you're supposed to do in that scenario. But these guys did not catch that hit. I hate that. Yeah. Yeah. It's a little piece of you that dies inside every time. You know, who sucks at that is whenever I'm with our friends, Sully, Sully is horrible at that. I'll talk about shit. Yes. I'll talk about like, you know, about like what he's investing in so loudly. And I'm like, dude, shut the fuck up. This is embarrassing. Everyone's looking over. You don't, don't use that word million, please. I haven't had any more of those conversations. I haven't seen that, but I have another friend that does it like crazy. And then I'll be like, Hey, I'm like kicking him under the table. And he was like, what? Why are you kicking me? And I'm like, dude, we have a friend that we took to this place in San Francisco that I guess has like the best hot chocolate. If he likes hot chocolates or like, dude, you're a little baby for liking hot chocolate, first of all. But if you are a baby that likes hot chocolate, you got to go to this place has the best hot chocolate. So we go sits at the bar bartender comes up or whatever, like the table, whatever. And it's like, Hey, this guy loves hot chocolate. And we told him this is the best spot. So he had to, he had to try it. And that's why the waiter was like, what are you for? Yeah, he's like, Oh, cool. Yeah. Yeah. Let me bring you on. And so he brings one out. Guy takes a sip, immediately gives like an audible, like, what? And then he doesn't like it. And so we're like, Oh, you know, whatever. Okay. I guess it's not, I don't know. Guess not your, your way, your, your type. And so he just puts it, he just, he puts it down, right? So it's sitting in front of him, waiter walks by, and he just shut like pushes it forward towards the, almost like he's pushing his chips all in at like a poker table. And the guy's like, Oh, are you, are you done? And he's like, you didn't like it? He goes, No, it's not very good. Oh, my God, that's so embarrassing. What are you trying to accomplish here? Why are you doing this? So I literally just fall off my

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stool and crawl away and die and, you know, had to deal with this interaction, but it was terrible. I had a friend, we went out and got dinner and afterwards they gave us coffee and we wanted decaf and the next day we texted back and forth. We're like, Hey, did you stay up all night last night? And he was like, Yeah, it's like, I think they gave us regular coffee. And he's like, I got to call them. I got to call them and let them know. And he was like, insistent. I, he's like, I got to call them. So we like call them. I'm like, dude, what, what's, what are you doing? We're, we're on vacation. Like we're visiting like what, that's such a weird, it was such a Larry David move to like call someone to tell them you made a mistake last night. You gave us a normal coffee instead of decaf. And I, those types of people are very challenging for me. It's like likable and adorable. And when anybody else in real life does it, it's just hateable. My mother has a version of that where anytime we're complaining about something, her go to is not even like tell them and call them. She's like, call the news. I'll tell them five date. They will investigate this. Dude, I can't stand that. It's really not what's going to happen here. I've ordered a steak before and they've brought me pesto chicken pizza and I won't say a word. I'm like, yeah, whatever. It's food. I can eat that. I got to tell you the story. I can't decide. I wanted to do a segment called L of the week, because I think we sometimes brag a lot on here. We say, you know, how we're so great and all these different ways. I think it'd be nice to share a big L that we took, but I got to be honest, this might actually be a dub. This might not even be an L because the experience was so incredible. What was it? All right. So I go, I'm feeling, I'm doing something. I'm working, whatever. And I'm feeling hungry while I was driving back from an errand and I'm like, all right, I'm hungry. I'm just going to pick up some food real quick. So I go to Subway and I'll get a sandwich and I go to Subway. I walk in. There's like five people in line. There's only one guy working and it's a black guy and there's a white guy checking out and I'm like thinking about what sandwich I'm going to get. And I kind of decide. I noticed that that guy's still checking out and I look over and I'm like, what's taking this guy forever? And these guys are talking about like, it's like, so where'd you go? It's like, South Africa. He's like, yeah, they're talking about Africa and talking about race, talking about race relations. And they're just talking and like, zero, like, I'm happy that there's whatever, no racism on earth, but I really like a sandwich right now. And so are the four people in front of me. How about that meatball marinara? Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Red. That's the color of my meatball that I like right now. And so they're just talking and then they fucking they hug and I'm like, what's going on right now? And when they hug, I lose it. I leave. I walk out and I'm like, I'm hungrier than ever because I've just killed nine minutes here. I'm thinking exclusively about a sandwich and I got teased. There's no sandwich coming right next to the subway is a Taco Bell and I make a business decision. I say, it is, I guess it is what it is. I'm going to Taco Bell today, haven't been a Taco Bell like 13 years, go to Taco Bell. So I walk into Taco Bell and I'm in line. And you could always, I have this theory about places, which is you could see your future when you go into a place because it's, you're going to end up, if you go to a place regularly enough, you're going to start looking like the people that are in that place. So sometimes I'll

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go to a fitness class and I'll look around and be like, all right, if these people who are like the clear regulars here don't look the way I want to look, I'm just going to leave now because this isn't, this is not a good path. Right. It's like a good life. Yeah. What did you see in Taco Bell? Like a bunch of like tweedy bird shirts. So I go into first everybody in Taco Bell was under 17. So I was like, oh, I get it. Their body can like still tolerate this. I'm the only guy in his 30s at this place. So I'm, and there's one guy sitting there and he's probably like 28 and he's sitting down and it's just him. And he's got a feast in front of him. Like this guy, he was like, hey, Omakase, chef's choice, bring it all out. So he's Omakase that Taco Bell and he's sitting there, he's eating up a storm and there's only me, these three teen girls who are in front of me ordering and then this guy. And it's kind of quiet in Taco Bell. And I'm standing in line and this guy pulls a move that I, I still stunned just thinking about this. He's sitting there in Taco Bell, eating his feast and he just rips the loudest fart. And we all look over and I'm like, wow, so embarrassing. This guy just farted loud in public. Wow. And it was almost like he's sitting on one of those benches. It like echoed. It was like this crazy auditory experience.

And I look at the guy and he just stares back at all of us and he's just raised his eyebrows like, what? We're all here. You're also here at 3pm on a Tuesday. And that is what it is. And I was like, holy shit, this guy did not back down. He did not cower in shame. He alphaed us and was just, he literally was like, what? And I was like, nothing, I guess, carry on. You're right. We're all equals here at the bottom of society. You just got Dutch jumping by Taco Bell guy.

It was like an L.I. took kind of big dough for this guy and I just, it was an experience I had to share with you. Oh, did that happen? This is like five days ago. I've been sitting on the store. There's no one else I could really tell. Like, I started to tell the story to my wife and she was like, you went to Taco Bell and I was like, you're missing the point of the whole story. And I didn't even get to the good part. And I just thought, okay.

You should have farted back at him.

I wish I had one in the chamber. I didn't. I mean, he really just like laid it down right there in front of us. And what did the girl say? The eye contact. Nobody said anything. We all looked to laugh at him. And then we just got stunned by his bravado. And he was like, holy shit, this is the biggest power move I've ever experienced. That's the past. How was the food at least? Horrible. Honestly, the food at Taco Bell is phenomenal. Like the taste of Taco Bell is great. It is a great taste. They got like the menu. I mean, first of all, the innovation. You've been to a Taco Bell. Like, you know, Taco Bell used to be tacos. It's not like, it's like, dude, it's just the same shit. Doritos, that's become a taco. Now it's a taco inside of a burrito. And it's like, how's the taco inside the burrito? And you're like, it's, we call it a cheesy gordita crunch. And then they had like this thing called the volcano right now. And I was like, I guess just give me the volcano. Because I didn't even know what to do there. I was like, I don't really understand what's happening. I'm still, still reeling from what just happened a few minutes ago. And I got the volcano thing. It was great. It was fantastic.

You should have brought that African guy over to get it. Let them sniff up America.

Let them see what it is. This is what we're about, bro. Come on, peace, love and happiness.

That hug shit? That's not real. That's not the usual experience. This is the real.

This is why we're World War backs, back to back champions. Because guys like that, salt of the earth, they don't make them like that anymore. Can you imagine a European doing that? Impossible.

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It's like a kind person from Singapore. Never get arrested for that in Singapore. Yeah. That's like, that's like five to 20 in Singapore. There's not a chance. So Sean, I've got a funny story. So we have Sam Owens today. I'll do a little bit of an intro, but about three or four years ago, I used to see Sam's ads everywhere. And it was basically him in a bright blue blazer in his fancy apartment overlooking Manhattan. And there was a little bit of hate in me. And there was a little bit of a. You had slick back hair too. I remember. He had slick back hair. Yeah. And for some reason, he pissed me off. And I wrote like, on one of the ads, like, you're full of shit or something like that. You did a hater comment. I did a hater comment. And it sat in me for years. And I talked to my friends who eventually bought some of his products. And they're like, Oh, no, it's awesome. We loved it. And I started learning more. And I was like, I think I was wrong. And so I sent Sam this message, I think 18 or 24 months ago. And I was like, I'm sorry. That was for some reason, that one comment, it bothered me. And eventually I saw Sam four weeks ago at a party at Sophia's party. And I talked to him and my wife and I talked to him for like an hour. And I was like, you're you're one of the more fascinating people that I've ever spoke to. And I was like, did you get that email where I apologize? I said, I got it. So that's kind of like how we got here. But Sam, how do you describe yourself? You had consulting.com, which was like a big information business. But you have a new thing. You want to want to tell us how you describe yourself? Sure. I'm an entrepreneur. And I have a software company called School. I'm CEO of that. It's like a community platform for creators. You're, you're kind of minding selling yourself there, eh? What do you want me to say? The reason why I like to get out with you is, Sean, he reminds me of Jack Smith so much, like it's the same type of like, yep. The funny thing is like, Jack, you're right. There's like, definitely like a, an echo of Jack there. But Jack's, I almost feel like Jack picked business models that suited his like personality and his like way of thinking. Whereas Sam, the funny thing is that when I discovered you like Sam, I saw this sort of like, outgoing persona. It's like guy who's like, recording a selfie video of himself in his fancy apartment, telling me something, it's sort of like, oh, this guy thinks he's some hot shot business guy, whatever. And now you talk now. And I'm like, this guy owns a surf shop or something. Why is this guy like in the, like the most Zen, Zen mode, almost introverted to an extent. Isn't that strange? Was that strange for you to have like a very public persona, even though you clearly are actually more of a laid back, maybe more introverted guy? Yeah, I think that's why it rubbed people the wrong way. Like Sam, because, you know, that's kind of the thing that I didn't like about that business. Like if you're selling training or coaching or whatever, it's, you have to be very out there. You have to make content of yourself. You have to continuously promote yourself, right? And I was always very uncomfortable doing that. And I guess I used like the New York apartment and the blue suit as like a character. Yeah, like a character or like a crutch to help me. You know what I mean? Yeah. And it worked. You built consulting.com, which was like a, the way I'll describe it was like sort of like training masterminds, courses, type of thing where you would teach people how to start their own consulting business. And people would pay you a few thousand dollars and you would put out a bunch of free content and that would get people sort of in the funnel and then eventually they would pay you a couple thousand dollars to learn how to start their own consulting business. And from what I understand,

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like you scaled it up to about 30 million a year at one point, at sort of the peak on the revenue side before being like, this is too much and too crazy. And we have too many people, too little profits, we're pushing like, you know, the boundaries too much, you sort of scaled it back down to a more manageable level where the revenue went down, but the profits went, you know,

up or the same and you had less headache. So it definitely worked. Where did you get the idea for that? Were you just like in a basement watching Tai Lopez videos being like, okay, I understand I can do this now? Or like, why did you decide to even do that?

You mean like sell courses? Sell courses in the way that you sold them,

which was just like a really heavy paid ad strategy with you as this character or this persona, the face of it. Very internet marketing. Yeah. I wanted to start my own business. I used to have a job. This is going back like 12 years. And I used to watch this, this interview site called Mixergy. Do you guys remember that? Yeah. Yeah, we love Andrew. Yeah. And I watched an interview one

day and this guy was saying that he was going to show, he had a software company, his name was Dane Maxwell. And then he said he was going to teach some other people how to start a software company. And that was my first experience of being in a course. He launched a course that was called back then the software round table. And I learned how to start a software company in that and started a software company. It was called Snap Inspect. And so I first experienced being in a course, like from the student side. And through that experience, I had a successful software company. And then I was like the star student of that, of that software round table foundation thing. So then I did and he made me do an interview on Mixergy. This is back when I was very young. And then a bunch of people started emailing me and

saying, could I, they wanted to pay me so I could help them with their software company.

And I would just sell like six one hour Skype calls for \$1,000. And then very quickly, I ran out of time to sell. I sold so many of these packages. And I just noticed that I was repeating myself on these calls like a lot. And I was like, Oh, this, this could be a course. Everyone's like struggling with the same problems. And I've run out of time, right? So the next guy took through this six one hour calls. I recorded the calls. And then I put them in a Dropbox folder. And then the people that wanted to buy my coaching from that point on, I said, I don't have any time left, but I've got like a course that you can buy for the same price. And I would just sell it for \$1,000 and give them a login to the Dropbox. And they would watch the recordings in there.

And they liked it. And they didn't ask for their money back. And it's like,

and that's where it started. And then when I sold more and more of those, I was like, whoa, this is, I should put some more effort into this. So I did. And then I wondered, how can I sell more of this instead of just waiting for people to come to me from my Mixer GE interview and ask me over email. So that's when I started learning about like internet marketing. And then I remember the people back then were like, Frank Kern, and who else? There was like Ramit Sethi. There was this guy called Clay Collins. Do you remember this era of like, yeah. And so I just, I learned how to market from that world like that kind of underground internet marketing world. And then my course business started to do so good. It quickly overtook the profit of my software company.

And I just wasn't very passionate about property management, which was the niche that my software

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product was for. Was that called Snap Inspect? Yeah, it still exists. It's snapinspect.com. And I just wasn't passionate about the niche. So I sold my shares of Snap Inspect to my co-founder and just went all in on the course business. And that's what eventually became consulting.com. And in the end, I was making courses, showing people how to make courses. I just fell in love with the craft of finding a group of people that you care about and solving their problems and then sharing the solutions with them and turning that into a business.

How did you get the domain consulting.com? Because that's a great domain.

I went to the URL and it was, there was nothing on it. And then I used like MX toolbox to find out like who owned it. And then I just sent him an email and I said, do you want to sell it? And he said, yes. How much did you pay for that one? That one was 300,000. Just in the 10 minutes that you've just given that spiel and telling the background. And then the hour that I've hung out with you, you have this trait that I love that certain people have where in your brain, you're the type of person that you see a challenge and you don't think of it like a lot of people think of it as an emotional thing, but it's a very logical and you're like, this is a puzzle. I'm going to figure out this math equation and that gives you joy. At least it seems like it. With the marketing thing, it seems like the same thing where you're like, if I wear this jacket, that will pop off in a thumbnail. And that's important for a higher click rate. And it's like you just read tons of books and you put together like an algorithm on what to do. And that's why it didn't seem entirely authentic that that was who you were, but it seemed like you were just playing a game that you wanted to win. Is that how you went about it? And who did you, what interesting people did you learn the algorithm from that aren't entirely popular or that are like some strange resources? I guess I just looked at the people who are doing quite well like Brendan Beshard and Marie Folio. This is back then. And I noticed that they had like a, if you thought of their name, you could quickly assign like a couple of attributes to them. They had like a brand essentially. And I was like this kid from New Zealand teaching people how to start a business. And so I was like, whatever it is, it needs to, if when people see my video, they instantly need to think of money, basically. And my main market is America and New York is like so iconic. It's like the money place, right? So that was why I went to New York and why I found an apartment with a view like that. I heard a rumor that that apartment is almost like exactly the same apartment as something from, it was at a Wolfhawsree or one of those like iconic money movies where they like hang a guy over the balcony. I heard that you wanted that apartment for that reason. Is that true? That isn't true. I wanted the apartment because it had a really cool view. But then we were watching that movie and we had to pause it and be like, wait a second, is that this building? And we realized it's not the same building, but it must be one of the five in that area that are all very close to each other. Got it. And so you start doing this now. I'm curious, a lot of the names you mentioned, I never hear about those people anymore. I remember Frank Kerns, I remember even Pagan and some of these guys that you could kind of go study their content, their funnels, but they're not around anymore. Or if they are like, I don't know where they are, they don't seem to be like crushing it anymore like they used to. Am I wrong? Are they just out there crushing and I just don't see them for some reason? Or why do you think that they very few kind of sustained or did they just get so rich they quit? Or are they like locked into one mode and they didn't evolve at the times? What do you think happened? I think things have changed a lot and a lot of people didn't adapt. But also I think some people just got, they're just not going as

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hard or they might have got burned out and they're just relaxing a little bit. Probably a combination of all of those things. How big were some of those old school marketers? They're old school to me. How big were some of their businesses? You never know. That's why it's always so interesting. I have no idea because they never talk about that. They weren't real businesses in a way because they would make a ton of money on a launch, right? But then that product would kind of go away and then they might do another launch in six months and it was all based on this launch model and these launches would pull big numbers like millions of dollars. I'm sure there was a lot of profit in that too but they weren't like these products that were evergreen that could be sold continuously and they didn't have a team and they weren't like contributing to this body of work. They weren't building on top of what they built yesterday essentially. You had this interesting video where we were talking about Jack. Jack's one of my best buddies and he was on the last episode and you guys are very similar. But on this video, you opened it up and you just looked at the camera and you go, I'm back. Apparently the story of the video was consulting.com. Consulting got to like 30 million in revenue and you'd hired dozens of people, fancy offices, you hated it. You basically scale it down. I think you called it a ban. I think it was like five or six people. You were like, we're going to do 10 million in revenue, 5 million in profit. Everyone gets a share of the profit. What was the peak of the consulting business and then where was it when you sold it? Sure. The peak was, it must have been around like 2000 and 17 or 2018 and it was doing 36 million a year in revenue but profit-wise it was probably only like five million on that. Most of it was expenses and we had about 50 people and we were spending like two million a month on ads and it was just everything was breaking. I hired everyone way too fast and it was heavily dependent on ads, which I didn't like. I was reading this book on my honeymoon in Tulum in Mexico and it's called Lean Thinking and apparently it's like Jeff Bezos' favorite book, which is why I was reading it and in there they talk about how you should optimize a business based on customer, based on value, the way a customer experiences it. You should analyze the headcount, how many people are actually contributing to value the customer experience in your headcount and then your money flows. How are you allocating the capital? Where is all the money being spent and does the customer experience value from that? Then your time and attention and energy. You're just analyzing all of these flows and I realized that all of our time, money, attention and headcount was on ads and that customers did not think ads were valuable. In fact, they thought what you did, it actually pissed them off. I was like, oh man, I've really screwed this one up and I was like everything should be focused on the customer and so I went back after that vacation and realized that I basically had to start again. I just started restructuring that company. I realized that organic content was really good because customers find that valuable, right? Like a good YouTube channel, good email newsletter. I was like, we should do that and then if we do that, we don't need to do ads. Then I was like everyone on the team should be contributing value to the customer. They should be doing support or they should be account management for mastermind clients. They should be customer facing in some way and all of my time and attention and energy should be thinking about the customer's problems instead of advertising problems, right? With that kind of mental model, I just started restructuring the whole company. You've talked about consulting a bunch on other pods, but the story is that you eventually, and we can go back to it, you eventually sold it, but your new company school, whenever I was texting to you, it always auto-corrects the stool, S-K-O-O-L. You were telling me,

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you didn't exactly say it this way, but I read it this way. You were telling me that you're like, we're not taking any funding or at least you're not anytime soon because you self-funded it with 10 million and you're like, I'm hiring the best people. So you went from this internet marketing type of culture to startup. First of all, is that true? And second, was that number right, 10 million? You're going in on this? It's true.

Why the shift from this startup where you have hired all the... You're running things very Silicon Valley-esque versus what I imagine in my head a lot of internet marketers are not like. Well, I started in software, remember? The first company I ever did was Snap&Spec. So I've always had a love for software. The problem back then, though, was I didn't love my market like property managers, and we were constantly limited by our money. Software engineers are expensive. Subscription revenue has a cash flow trough in it. And so we were limited by money and I didn't love my market, but I did love software. And I also hated having to market. I swore I was never going to touch software again unless it had network effects because I wanted it to grow itself basically like a platform instead of the software tool. So then I fell in love with courses and the beauty of that was I was able to save a lot of money. And then I came back to software because I now was building software for the market that I loved, which was like online creators. And I had money this time, so I wouldn't be limited by that. I could get the best engineers and not cut corners on anything and take a more long-term view. And this was a platform opportunity

instead of like a software tool. So we didn't have to have a marketing or sales team and we had no like cat. And how is this growing? Because I see the traffic is like, I don't know, eight million visits a month or something insane like that. It looks like you had an affiliate program here. If you're not running marketing, where's the growth coming from? Because I get that there's network effects. That's way more than like Circle. Is it called Circle? That's way more than a lot of like high VC competitors, the traffic, I believe. Yeah. So I don't know if the number's right, but there's more than double circle. Yeah. How are you getting so much traffic?

It's a community platform. So once you start a community and you add some content to it, the first thing you do is you invite members, right? And then what happens is roughly 1% of members create their own community. So they're like, oh, this platform is cool. I want to make one of these. And then they create their own and then they invite their members and then that there's a loop there or a network effect. When you were doing your content stuff, your ads, I had read stuff like you did some interesting things like we talked about like the apartment and the suit and I don't know, like a motorcycle in the middle of the room and stuff like that. What were some interesting experiments that you ran that that either worked or didn't work, that sort of taught you something about, you know, human psychology or the way that people, what gets people's attention, what gets people interested, what gets them hooked?

What are some learnings from all those different kind of content experiments you did when you were doing, when you're making, you know, when your content, your face was the driver? A lot of people just want to make money. Like that one was annoying. So if you just put a jet in something or a fancy car or a New York apartment, like it works so well that it's annoying because you're like, oh, do I have to do that shit? Aren't people just won't they just listen to the value of the idea? But that's what I learned back then when I was doing those experiments. I think now

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people are looking for like longer form real stuff that like a podcast podcast are really taking off, right? So I think the people that are doing a good job now is like what you guys are doing. I think having a podcast and an email newsletter, that's what I would do if I was starting again right now, that those two work really well together. We have this friend, Rebecca Zamallo, who has tens of millions or maybe 15 or something million YouTube subscribers. And she only launched it in like 2017, not that long ago. And I was like, Rebecca, why'd you get so big? And she goes, I took it like a job. So like I got laid off or I quit. I forget what happened with her other job. And she goes, this is now my thing. So it was like a 40 hour week. It's like, this is all I'm doing. And I was like, doesn't everyone do that? She said, no, shockingly, no, most of a lot of popular YouTubers, it starts with a side hop hobby. And even when they're like fairly big, it's still not full time. But she's like, I just treated this son of a bitch like a company, like I just ran it like a company and it worked out. So I think they're like that focusing. No, no, no chance. He said some bitch. No, no chance. He said some bitch. I added that the same part special. Maybe, maybe I subbed that out. Maybe it was like, you know, I took this wonderful thing very seriously. You've been pretty good with focus. I mean, that's why you've been self consulting.com. If it's like doing well, you're not working on it. I mean, you're about, you seem like you're very, very, very focused on shit. I mean, just to go 10 million on that on school. Is that a, was that a significant chunk for you to do that? And was that like a verbal commitment? Like I'm willing to do up to X or did you literally wire into a bank account and say that's now in the company? That's being used for this company. We're burning that. Yeah, that. Like I bought a house because, you know, I've got a wife and family. So I bought a house and I left some money in the personal account for like family. And then I was like, everything else I'm just, I'm betting on this company. So no other portfolio? Nothing. How big do you think school is going to be? That's hard to answer. There's what I would like it to be. Which is what? I've always wanted to build something that a billion people use. How are you sleeping at night knowing that your whole, a lot of your nut is in there? That's a very stressful thing. Quite well at the moment because things are going really well. You know, the growth is compounding pretty fast and top tier VCs email us every week. I've had to just stop talking to them. And a lot of people want to give us money, but we're not taking it. And so I think the fact that a lot of people want to give me money is allowed me to calm down quite a lot. That we're not going to run out of money. Also just the growth. Is it profitable? No, it's not. But deliberately so. Okay, fair enough. And where'd you base the company? Is it remote or people in in America, in New Zealand? Where are your people? Everyone's in LA in San Frantz. And do you, like when Sam says you remind him of Jack Smith, one of the cool things about Jack Smith is that while he's clever and interesting on the business side, he's also clever and weird and does crazy experiments also in his personal life, whether it's like sort of biohacking or lifestyle choice or not naming his child until she was one years old. Like whatever parent, parenting, everything. He takes sort of like a novel approach to each thing. I'm curious, are you weird in other areas of your life? Do you do anything that's sort of non-standard that to you makes sense, but maybe to other people sounds a little strange? I'm sure. Would you like to say any examples since this is a podcast?

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I mean, I slept on a futon for like three years and I loved it. And then when my wife got pregnant, she made me give it up, but I really missed that futon. You know a Japanese futon?

I love that thing. I just like to keep things very simple and minimal. Like I only have one pair of shoes and I only have like the same type of socks and the same kind of like underwear and the same t-shirts and then like three wool jumpers. And that's all I have. And then I have the same soap, like this tea tree soap. And I just have like 20 blocks of it. And I even take one with me when I travel because I only will like that soap. I like don't wear sunglasses because I think they're unnecessary. And I just like to reduce things just to, I like to find something that I think is good and then only use that and then just get a few different pairs of that and just keep things as simple and as minimal as humanly possible.

Is your wife normal?

Yeah, she is.

We were, the reason why, one of the things you said, we were sitting around, Sean, it was me, Sam and my wife, Sarah. We were sitting around at this restaurant and Sam, you have, you've got some strange energy in a very cool way. You've got very strange and cool energy that I like. I love people like you. And we were just sitting around and the conversation kind of died and we were just, we sat in silence for like three seconds, I think. And then you just said, I delivered my baby. And we were like, we were like, what? With what? And you said, my hands.

We were like, hold on, say this again. And you're talking about how your wife, you're going to do like a home delivery or something. And the midwife didn't make it in time. And you just did the damn thing. You just did it. And I remember thinking like, the reason I love this guy is I don't think he understands like how string, like your mannerisms, your voice, this is, they're so unique and strange in such an interesting way, which I frankly love. I love people like you because you're so unique and you're not vanilla.

Do you realize that you're like that? Honestly, not really. Because I don't,

I don't try to fit in and I don't try to like, I don't even look at what other people are doing.

Like I don't have social media at all. And I never look at really what's going on or what's in the news or anything. And I just do what I want. So what do you do with that free time? So let's say no social media, no news. For most people, that's like four to five hours a day or something like that. How do you reinvest that four to five hours a day? Where do you put it? What does give you energy or what do you do for entertainment or what do you do to unwind? I mean, all I really do is focus on school and that's mostly the product. So I'm just obsessive about the product, all the details of it. And then I go home, hang out with my wife and daughter. And then I need two hours of like watching something to unwind. Otherwise I can't sleep. And so I'll watch series, like TV series. And I like old stuff, like things before technology, because it's nice and slow and it helps me go to sleep. But when you say you're obsessive, what does that mean? Like, do people like working with you? Like, are you the type of guy who like, if something very small, the footer is screwed up, you freak out over that? Yeah, I can see a pixel. So if something's off, like I'm like, something's off over there and then I'll inspect it with Chrome Inspector and it will be one pixel. So I can like, I joke with the team that I can see a pixel. And yeah, I'll go into those details. Like I designed school's interface in Figma, like the whole thing, and defined a lot of like how their entire system works, which is, it's quite complex.

I knew you were like that, because when consulting.com first came out,

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most courses don't, didn't look the way yours looked. Yours had this like, you had this really cool thing of a, it was like a caveman becoming a person, right? Is that what it was? And then it was like a picture of the globe and it, it looked like a software page. It looked very unique. And I remember seeing the design of it and I thought that is incredibly unique and it stood out and made you feel more sophisticated than most other people in the space. Do you remember that page? Am I describing it? I do, yeah. Accurately? Yeah. What, what do you think when you made that? That's what I like to do. I like to just spend a long time on the tiny details. You know, I've spent days trying to figure out the right pixel radius of a rounded corner for the, for like a button. Is that a feature or a bug? Like if somebody I worked with was spending days on a, how much the border radius should be on a button, I would slap them. I'd be like, what are you doing?

This is not, this doesn't matter and this is not going to be like high impact. So why are you doing this? So, you know, is that a, is it a good thing or is that a byproduct? Like maybe you do that in certain areas where it really works than us. I got to live with the fact that I do it in these other areas where it doesn't matter at all. Yeah. So I, I won't block anyone by doing that, right? So like when we're building the thing, like I'll be very fast and not the bottleneck of the team, but then in my spare time, I'm playing with things, thinking about the next time we update the design

system and I'm just tweaking little things in my, that's what I do for fun. So it's not like what I'm doing is my work kind of thing. How do you, how do you organize your day? Do you have like a, are you like focused on one thing? Do you have like a morning, like, okay, this is my to-do list? What, what, how do you, how do you create your day? Most of what I do, I would say it's product, strategy and design. That's like where I spend all of my time, just in those zones.

And we have got like three product teams at school. So three full stack product teams with back end, front end, QA, product manager, designer, right? And they've got three roadmaps that are all going in parallel. And I need to think ahead of them. Like I've got to dream up like the whole product strategy and roadmap and everything. And then I have to reverse the engineer into chunks, break it down, and then figure out which team should work on what thing and sequence it. And then I've got to design the whole thing, spec it, brief that team, and stay a few development cycles ahead. And so I'll either be designing something, trying to figure out a priority, talking to that engineering team, or checking, doing the final QA check before we push something into production.

I actually think that that's totally the right way, in my opinion, that a lot of companies should run. The reason they don't is because A, that's really, really hard. So you're the brain child. You have to, you probably know every single thing that's happening. That's incredibly challenging for just about everyone. Number two, it doesn't feel good to feel like a dictator. It's like, basically, you guys are a band, and you're the main guy. You're Celine Dion, and everyone else is the backup band. That's a weird reference, but it is what it is. You're Billy Joel. That's where I went. Yeah. That's where we went. You're Celine Dion. I don't know. You're like the guy. Whereas, I don't know if I can recover from that. Whereas most startups, it's like, it's a lot more decentralized and things like that. But with this type of product, it seems like you're the main person, and there's a circle around you with shit going on. Is that right? It sounds fucking exhausting. A funny example of this was, I remember Sam,

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when you were running the hustle, and I was running my company, and we would meet up every couple of weeks as part of our founder mastermind thing where we would get together. I was sort of drinking the Silicon Valley Kool-Aid, which was autonomy, and empower your people and all these things. I was preaching to my team, like, hey, whoever's got the best idea, we're going with you. Janitor, you got an idea. Let's do it. Let's make it happen. Sam showed me, I've meet up with Sam, and Sam shows me a 12-page doc that he wrote out for some new woman that he hired,

and he just goes, and the document says, welcome. Here's the things that you're going to do. Your job is to do this. Here's how you will do this. Step one, do this. Step two, do this.

He wrote this 20-page doc, and was just handed it to her, and was like,

do not deviate from this. I don't want to hear your ideas on this. I asked you, I was like, why'd you do this? You're like, because people fuck up. I think this is the right way to do it, and I just need her to do it this way. No, because whatever Sam has said, I totally agree with that. The problem is that it's fucking exhausting. You know what I mean? It's really hard to do that for a long period of time. It's not scalable. It's kind of scalable. The engineers, I'm not telling them what to do in terms of code. Then I'm not even coming up with all the ideas from my own mind. I spend a lot of my time looking at what our community wants. Going through our school community where people ask for stuff and share bugs and feedback, then I'll talk to power users. I always find who's spending the most time on the platform, get a top 100, just DM a few of them, get on Zoom, talk to them for hours about it. Then I use the product myself, and then I talk to the team too. Ideas come from all of these places, but I'm like the filter and the sorter and the prioritiser basically. Then when I go to engineering, I know what the feature should be, but they might push back on a lot of what I say based on how easy that is to implement with code. They might be like, oh, do you really need to do it this way because that's going to make the code messy? Why don't you do it this way? That would be way more simple for the system. I'll listen to that feedback and adjust the actual feature because I'm trying to give the users what they want, but I'm also trying to keep the code clean. I'm trying to build things fast too. I'm like, how could we shrink the scope of this to make it so we could deliver something faster? It's not like I'm just dictating to everyone. There's a lot of collaboration.

Do you know that company, Jasper? Yeah.

Have you talked to those guys? The founder's name is Dave or David.

Yeah, I see him on the website of consulting.com.

Dude, that's what I was going to say. For one, if you go to Unsplash, I think it was called, one of those stock image websites. For some reason, Dave is on the picture of so many stock pictures. I used to use a picture of him, and then I met him. I'm like, dude,

I use your face for a stock image. You're on this royalty-free website.

And number two, he used to be part of consulting.com, didn't he? So Jasper's, for the listeners, is like, I guess a billion-dollar now company that does AI stuff. Was he part of your crew?

He bought my course many years ago, and he was one of our most successful students.

He used to sell coaching, like training and stuff, but then he wanted to get into software.

So then he did this thing proof. Do you remember that, that little pop-up?

Yeah. Yeah. And then that turned into Jasper.

And did that, why did someone, someone told me to ask you what you think about AI. Why did

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they say that? I think it's like massively overhyped and somewhat like just unnecessary. Like, I don't know about you guys, but chat GPT hasn't replaced my Google usage. I still use Google every day. And I found no real task for it, honestly. It seemed, but the hype is extreme. The hype cycle is there around like the growth and like, well, it's not there yet, but I could see the future of this. So you're not bullish at all in the future of it?

No.

I'll take the other side of that. Sam, anything else you want to ask before we wrap up?

No, I appreciate you coming. I want to talk to you again another time. I find you fascinating.

I think that you're an original thinker and I appreciate people like you.

Thanks.

All right. Well, that's the pod.

That's it.