Speaker 1:   [inaudible]

Speaker 2:   All right. Welcome to our second episode. And this is just a series where we get a chance in a round table format to dive behind the scenes and talk to some founders and executives, and really just help our community of entrepreneurs level up wherever they are. Learn from other's mistakes. Copy people's wins and, uh, and take it from there. So Ruth, why don't you take it away? I'd love to introduce you first.

Speaker 3:   Yeah. Hi. Um, nice to meet you all. I am Ruth I'm the co-founder of studio ops and mainly element board act easily convert. We develop apps for e-commerce in general, mostly for Shopify, and reconvert currently serves over 30,000 Shopify merchants from all sizes, um, providing post-purchase upselling and retention tools, um, for an emergent.

Speaker 2:   Fantastic. Thank you for joining us and John over to you.

Speaker 4:   Hi, I'm John Tedesco. I am the CEO of drip, uh, super excited to be here. Thanks for having, um, having me on, uh, drip is an email and SMS marketing automation platform serving, uh, e-commerce merchants, helping them build their brand and grow their revenue. We've got over 7,000 customers, uh, across the globe, uh, 80 employees, and we've generated over a billion dollars in revenue for our customers over the past couple of years.

Speaker 2:   Fantastic. Well, we're thrilled to have both you, uh, on this episode and I figured where we could start is the last year. It was the time of this recording. We're looking back on a year of a pandemic, which has been a very interesting time in our space, which we're lucky and fortunate that we've had a lot of success in our space during this time period, but as you're looking forward, uh, and John would start with you as you're looking forward into 2021. What are some of the challenges, but also some of the opportunities facing direct to consumer e-commerce brands as they're trying to grow in scale?

Speaker 4:   Yeah, so I think as you look at 2020, the methodology for the consumer around online purchasing has now been, I think, permanently altered for the positive for D to C brands. And I think the greatest indication of that has been kind of, you know, when you see groceries and grocery shopping, which used to be the most tangible hands-on type purchasing now being done with, uh, uh, per service providers, uh, Instacart, et cetera. When, you know, when you used to have to touch produce, et cetera, when now that has crossed over to online, then I think the world is open for all services and goods to be transacted online. So, and again, we talk about, you know, 10 years being fast-forwarded over the last year with, uh COVID. So I think online as being a method or the primary method, actually not shifting from a, from a certain minority purchasing to the method of purchasing has now opened up the player, playing field.

Speaker 4:   The challenges I would, you know, foresee is a lot of noise, a lot of competition, a lot of complexity. And so it's really going to be hard for brands, harder for brands to stand out and differentiate what their, uh, you know, unique selling proposition and to get a cut through the noise and get onto the, into the mind share of, uh, these consumers who now have a plethora of choices. And so I think the ability of a brand, uh, whether it's

brands like drip or D to C brands themselves to have an authentic and meaningful value proposition, uh, is going to be critical, uh, in general, because that's the core. And then the ability to amplify that through all of the channels possible to get in front of their audience is going to be a kind of a critical to success.

Speaker 2:   Absolutely. Yeah. Ruth, what's your take on this upcoming year challenges opportunities.

Speaker 3:   So I really agree with what John said about, um, basically the fact that e-commerce has grown so much this year creating so much more competition, um, is just something that will force brands to focus more on retention and more on blending and not just on selling and getting new customers in, but actually just making the most out of each customer, each existing one by creating an actual relationship and just building something that is more than just a store that is selling to end customers.

Speaker 2:   Definitely. Yeah. I think one thing that we're seeing, you know, on the media buying side is just as these platforms continue to get more expensive and there's, there's more competition. Like there's more opportunity, but there's more competition in these brands need to start looking beyond customer acquisition and they need to be looking at repeat purchase rates and the whole post-purchase experience. So with maybe we can start with you cause obviously, uh, you know, reconvert does this in spades, but what are some of the ways that your brands are making use of the tool and how does that kind of impact, I guess their overall maybe unit economics of acquiring new customers?

Speaker 3:   Yeah. So I think, uh, we frequent vert because it is something that is a tension that is directly on the thank you page. It's the moment the customer completed their purchase. They see whatever the cost the merchant is doing on a thank you page. So we see two different roads that, um, stalls usually go in. It can either be, um, direct sales. So basically upselling and cross-selling on the thank you page, getting the customer to buy again before they even left the store. And for a lot of people, it sounds like something that is not very realistic. Like most customers would finish the purchase and they already bought, but it's not actually true. A lot of costumers are like warm customers when they get to the thank you page. Um, and when it comes to the actual, um, 11, the DCS generating for businesses really depends on the type of products, the type of audience, but we can see people going from basically a 0%. Thank you page all the way to 5% conversion rate for people who are really doing it well. And this just increases the bottom line for a customer that ideally already returned the investment on the ads or however you got into the website.

Speaker 2:   Absolutely. Yeah. I mean, I think what you're highlighting and underscoring there is just that you can't ignore these intermediary steps in the funnel. Uh, every piece counts to your bottom line and in an increasingly competitive space, you have to make use of things like a thank you page or things like an upsell sequence. So all of those touch points matter. And I think we're seeing that even more this year, like you're saying, you know, John I've been hearing for years, that email is dead and yet all I'm seeing is more and more email, especially in the e-commerce world. So talk to us a little bit just about maybe those post-purchase sequences, uh, how your customers are using drip to continue engaging with their clients.

Speaker 4:   Yeah. So, uh, email's dead long live email. Um, you know, so I think at a high level here, um, you know, taking a step back a lot of what direct to consumer people think about as kind of a channel. Um, but in reality, the power of direct to consumer is owning the customer relationship. And, um, you know, in the old days you'd put the product on a shelf, but the targets are the best buys or the, or the merchant, their own that relationship. The customer came to that store, that brand, and they checked out and they had that data on that customer. So email and direct ownership, you know, that is that, uh, identity. Now that that relationship is directly with the brand. And while you may use a channel for paid media acquisition, but once you capture that email address, you can start a direct relationship.

Speaker 4:   So I think that's step one on our 0.1 on direct to consumer the power of direct. I think the second piece is we really have to be careful that, um, we don't lose the humanity in the entire process here. Like, um, we should be trying to replicate physical world relationships in a digital world. So when I hear about things about sequences and funnels, and this is the challenge of our industry and we have to kind of, you know, cause we're in it all day long and we program it in the platform, um, we're, we're really thinking we should really be thinking about a relationship we're trying to build with the customer. How would you, how would you act in a physical world and then how do I replicate that in a digital world? So, um, the initial purchase immediately, our customers should be asking, how was that first?

Speaker 4:   You know, how was that initial? Did it meet your expectations because that's really the trajectory for that customer relationship going forward. It's negative, it's an opportunity to understand and salvage it. If it's positive. Now you're starting to film, uh, to build a path in which you can have repeat purchases or understanding, you know, have them move towards a loyal customer base. And so when you think about all of that, then you, if you think of that high level, then you work backwards and say, what information do I want to capture digitally to then feed back into my business? Not just my efforts, you know, the, um, you focus on the inputs, the outputs will be greater lifetime value, greater reprieve purchasing, um, uh, shorter CAC payback periods. Uh, but really think about that relationship because at the end of the day here, if you have a loyal customer base, which will generate, you know, the industry 60 to 80% of your lifetime revenues, that's also the foundation in which you create, um, word of mouth, influencer, marketing, et cetera. And so, um, so for using trip, uh, what we're helping, uh, our brands do is, uh, map out that customer journey in a digital way to help them capture this information and then really put them on a path towards better understanding. And then again, either giving them products, they want recommending products, or if it's a, uh, a suboptimal experience, how do you capture more data? How do you contact the customer? And that is the information we're just helping them power digitally through the platform.

Speaker 2:   That's really good. I love that point just about focusing on relationship and then these tools, either the ones that you're building or that we have available to us in the industry should be amplifying and extending that relationship. And so I think what I'm, what I'm getting at, even from the other end of this is if you have a bad experience, these tools will only amplify about experience. So it's important to get that.

Speaker 4:   Well, I think the thing is that when we lose, we would act differently. You know, when you have another human or you're facing another human, you would act very differently. If you can read the body expression, you can see their face. You know, you can see if they have a return in their arm or not. You know, you're just losing all of those signals. And the key is at the end. I think, you know, we sit in our offices or our home offices and look at screens all day and we forget that there's another human on the other end of the line. And that's why the biggest challenge I think, is in the digital side, is this losing of customer intimacy. And that's why communities and voices and being embedded, no matter whether you're a service provider, uh, like Ruth or I, or you're the brand itself, you got to remember there's another human, um, um, uh, at the other end, who cares about, or wants to care about kind of what you're doing. And that's kind of going back to the bright, bright, greater brand positioning, but I think sometimes you would get so lost in the tools. We forget kind of the bigger picture of what we're trying to accomplish.

Speaker 2:   Hundred percent. That's great. Let's actually take that angle and flip it on its head. So that's great advice for the DTC brands who need to maybe dig in a little bit more to that qualitative insight from their customer and to get closer to the customer. But Ruth, I want to go over to you just as a, as a founder and as like a creator of this product, how have you been able to speak to potential customers? Like let's talk about user research and getting that same insight into your end users of your product. Like, how did you, you know, how did you start with that? I'm curious because we're launching products. So sorry for the selfish question, anybody who's listening, but you know, how do those user interviews look like? How did you get good feedback from those users in the early stage and how that may be direct your product roadmap?

Speaker 3:   Um, so to be honest, our, uh, approach with, uh, market research is maybe a little different than a lot of other, um, SAS blends. Uh, we started off, um, my brother and I, uh, who's my co-founder. We started off being Shopify merchants ourselves, and we convert and all of our other products from our personal needs. Uh, we built it because we felt like there was something missing that we wanted to create. And we generally, our market research is to build an MVP, a very, very lean MVP and really ship. Uh, we found that this is the cheapest way to do that. Uh, it wastes the less, the least amount of time and we start getting customers. Um, we also still have, even though we're not merchants ourselves anymore, we still have a lot of friends who we use kind of a small feedback group for any idea that we have.

Speaker 3:   And when it comes to new features in existing products, it's even easier. We basically have a very, um, setting Stonewall with our support guys that whenever a customer asks for a feature, they have a list where they actually write down any feature requests and we count them. We see how many times each feature request was made. And then we decide what to work on next, according to how much time it would take to develop what is the marketability of this feature? Is it something that is going to help us reach new customers? And what is the value of this gives to merchant merchants? Is this something that is going to give them so much value that they are going to want to stay with us even longer?

Speaker 2:   Yeah. That is highly practical. And I lost you there for a minute. So I want to just make sure I recap that and anybody listening can catch this is that you've really blended a

highly, just practical, sensible approach to using the sun product. Does it add value to what I'm doing as a merchant, but then you're also pairing that with a data-driven approach of what's count tickets. So let's actually take a look at this objectively and not fall in love emotionally with, with a feature set that we think is cool, but let's also hear from the people who are using our products in the trenches and yeah. And be sensible about it that way. So it's a great blend of both like the qualitative, like is this work when I use it, but also the quantitative of how many people are asking for this. It's great. Yeah. I'm going

Speaker 4:   To piggyback off that if you have me. Cause I think what's great about Ruth is when you from, you know, she was a Shopify merchant, um, she, she has a deep understanding of the problems her target customers facing. And so, um, that proximity is so critical and I think sometimes you can get it. So I think it's an, an statement just to kind of amplify the comments she made is it's an, an statement of data, but that qualitative piece, um, what we do at drip is, uh, many times we'll adopt a customer, particularly for new employees who have not been, uh, in the e-commerce sector and particularly on the product teams and the benefit of seeing the day to day, you know, what they do in the app, but also what their, you know, their work environment is, their challenges are how much they move, you know, through the app and outside of the app.

Speaker 4:   Cause many times it's around business process. That's also going on at, uh, with the marketer or the person using the product is to understand that entire, their day to day will help you build a better product as well. And so, um, so that intimacy and not just seeing the output, the exhausts through data and metrics or tickets, but also just realizing, you know, um, when a customer is using your product or platform, what else is going on in their world, whether there are other apps that are up simultaneously, you know, uh, lay in for 10 minutes and then out, or they have two hours or do you know for us, uh, many times the problem is you can, you know, build customer journeys in the platform, but then I have to write email copy or get graphics and design. And so all of that goes outside of the app or, you know, getting that goes to other parts of the company. So it's just understanding that we'll build a better product. And, and then of course there's the data and the metrics that also help sort out opinions from fact. So that's always helpful. So

Speaker 2:   Really tactical follow up question to that. So besides a ticketing system, are you guys using any sort of tools or processes to track all this and kind of be able to take a high level view of all these different stakeholders in your case, John, or all these different users in your case, Ruth, are there any kind of practical tools that you guys could recommend to our listeners? Um,

Speaker 3:   Yeah. So for us, we don't have any kind of tool to actually follow up on, um, specifically requests. We do use, um, segment and mixed panel, uh, to actually follow up on adoption to new features that we released. Cause we want to understand, okay, so X number of customers ask for that, but how many actually are using that after we released it? And we just make sure to follow up on any kind of usage metrics of these features and the value that they are providing the merchants. So we don't just release things because they're cool or pretty. Uh, and we actually give them the value that they are looking to get from the app.

Speaker 4: And I'm plus one on that we use mix panel to get the usage, you know, the qualitative product usage data. And then we combine that we have lots of places in the app where customers can give us, you know, you know, thumbs up, thumbs down and feedback, feedback, NPS type, qualitative feedback. And again, the challenge on all of that, depending on the scope, I mean, you know, roots got tens of thousands of customers. We got, thousands of customers is just sorting the signal from the noise and all of that. So sometimes you can have too much data. And so you have to really have some discipline because it can get super noisy. Um, and when to help sort through that, it's really truly understanding your ideal customer profile. Who is your, you know, who out of your thousands of customers truly represent, um, the target customer and ensure that, that, that feedback is getting elevated out of all of the customer feedback. Because again, when you have, you know, you can have a sea of data, but you don't have necessarily insight. And so that's going to be a challenge for any, um, kind of SAS leader. Who's looking at that feedback loop. It's almost too much data at times.

Speaker 2: Yeah. It's hard to believe, but can it become really expensive to you to track all of that?

Speaker 4: True. Yeah. Well, that's a whole nother yeah. There's multiple levels of expense on that. Yeah,

Speaker 2: For sure. For sure. I'll throw into the mix. Uh, perfect recall.app. Uh, these are some guys out of Y Combinator that have been in one of our betas for another tool that we're building and it's really cool. It allows you to actually record either sales calls or user sessions, right. From zoom creates a nice transcript. And then that transcript is actually searchable to the clip. So you can hone in on clips very quickly. So yeah, we've been really impressed by that as well.

Speaker 4: Yeah. So, I mean, in the total business process, we also use gong for kind of the sales and customer calls. And again, for what you're doing is hearing direct customer voice. And so again, probably very similar in terms of seeing transcript themes. That's great to get customer language. And also as you think about product marketing and then full story to actually see an app recording of how a customer is, you know, rage clicking on something that we might've poorly designed good. That never happens, but drip of course, but yeah, of course, um, you know, at other companies I hear there's, you know, there's a rage clicking, but you know, seeing the full story cause that, that again is again, it's the over the shoulder as if you were there again, you, you build this, you know, going back to your user research and testing, and even if you get it out to a beta test, but you see how customers, where do they intuitively move their mouse and, and you can kind of see what their patterns are on there. They're going left when your, you put the button, right? So that's always, again a great feedback tool as well.

Speaker 2: I'm definitely adopting rage, clicking into my vocabulary. That's, that's fancy.

Speaker 4: It is, uh, it's, uh, it gives you context for sure that it gives you a lot of empathy. And again, everything we gotta be doing, uh, as software builders has to have a high degree of empathy. So, uh, uh, watching a, a full story, uh, replay is always super helpful for, uh, empathetic, uh, product building.

Speaker 2:   For sure, for sure. I want to switch gears now to, to leadership and, uh, you know, particularly I'm interested in leadership kind of in this remote era. So feel free to take this question wherever you'd like, but I'm interested just, especially over the past year. I'm not sure what your teams look like if they've been co-located or if they've been remote, but I'm sure it's been some blend of both throughout the last year. So John would start with you, you know, you've, you've been a leader in a number of SAS and MarTech organizations over the years, including lead pages. Um, how, like what have you taken with you just from a general leadership principle of growing and scaling a team, but particularly, I guess with this remote flare, like in the last year, what are some things that you picked up to try to keep the culture coherent and consistent and to deliver a good experience to your team?

Speaker 4:   Yeah, so I think, um, I think one of the principles that I've always appreciated, but only have appreciated probably more over time. And particularly in these current times is, uh, around the power of focus as a leader, the tighter, the focus, uh, the greater, the overall benefits to the business. Um, there's a, there's a saying for startups, you're going to, you know, most of them will fail due to, uh, indigestion, not starvation. And so when you're starting a SAS business, you know, many times there's lots of markets, you can go after, it's a horizontal tool that can work here, here and here. Um, and so that plethora of choice creates, uh, inefficient product development. It doesn't hone your ability to get your message out to your market, get repeatable customers, et cetera. And so, um, over time I've seen that focus allows a greater excellence or chance of excellence, uh, knowing your target customer, uh, more precisely than you do, uh, building a product that then meets their pain points.

Speaker 4:   So it's a, it's a painkiller, not a vitamin a, the ability to then message in a way that resonates with that target customer just creates efficiency end to end. And when you go to the COVID land where we have been, um, you know, fully remote, Oh, you know, four year now we are Minneapolis headquartered, but, uh, have employees all over the country and have been remote the whole time is that focus, the greater, the focus, the better, the simplicity and the simpler, the message, the greater, the chance that resonates. So whether it's the company priorities, um, our values, uh, our customer messaging that, uh, allows people in a noisy world or a world of distractions or a world of anxiety and mental health, you know, aloneness, um, I think focus has just been more powerful. So I've appreciated it, you know, through my career, the power of focus.

Speaker 4:   And then I think you can always have more focus. Um, but in these times of, uh, uh, this remote time of COVID, I think that focus creates simplicity and really people just need a couple of things to anchor on repeatedly and to drowned out the noise. Um, uh, it's just really helpful. And so that's what we've tried to do at, at, I think the only second piece I'd add to from a leadership perspective is, um, transparency and accessibility, people are feeling alone. You know, initially, you know, a year ago we were really worried about kind of the psychological impact of everyone being distributed. Uh, you as a leader, have to work harder to, um, make yourself accessible. You know, for most of the year I was doing, you know, ask me anything lunches on a week and we would just sit there and eat lunch together just to show that I'm a human, you know, challenge doing the same thing, eating some, you know, you know, super oatmeal or something, and they can ask me any questions. So I think as a leader, that was also important when COVID hits and

it's an important theme for, for sure, ongoing, but in particular during COVID when we're distributed.

Speaker 2: Definitely. Yeah. I can say from, you know, from experience, we've been a distributed team since 2015 and that's one of the challenges that comes up time and time again, is how do we make sure that, or our conversation isn't just transactional, but how do we create that space for people to relate on a human level? And it's really

Speaker 4: Hard when people are zoomed to death is to say, Hey, do you want to zoom to do a social hour? You know? And so again, you know, not making it mandatory gives people the space not to attend when they're zoom fatigued. Um, but you're right. That is a great term by the way, um, avoiding transactional relationships. And that is that's, what's also really hard. And, you know, people have found is that you just don't have walk, you know, drive-bys where you walk into somebody's office and can plop on their couch or in a chair and just talk about a business issue or shoot the. Um, you know, now we're scheduling increments on a calendar to have a zoom and that's nobody wants to do that. So just we've lost it. And it does create that risk of everything just being transactional. And

Speaker 5: I think, um, John, um, my name is Sasha. I'm one of the co-founders here and I've been remote since 2010. And then we started this in 15, uh, all remote. And it does feel like if you can take away that transactional, uh, nature of, of the culture, then people don't feel as zoom to death. Um, it is, it feels like kind of a delight to get on, hop on and, and, you know, do a founder Fridays or excuse me, or a lunch and learn or something like that. So we've actually seen the same thing here when we, um, because we, we know that's, uh, you know, that there there's fatigue there for sure. But if we can build in kind of a less transactional nature of, um, planned, um, opportunities for that to happen then than it does. Um, I don't know if you guys are taking any pulses or anything through like, uh, we use 15 five or something like that, just to get kind of the, the emotional health check on, on folks, but we've seen that, um, be helpful for us. We kind of try to be less transactional.

Speaker 4: I think companies that started that way or have been working in that model for a longer time. Um, when you're meeting in person, there's a lot more inefficiency, I guess. And so when it comes in and like, you know, everyone's distributed, there's been a magnifying glass on, uh, um, what is the purpose of meetings? You know, so that's a great place in which to do it. And so for a lot of companies, they have to undo, how do we communicate? How do we drive outcomes? What's the purpose of us getting together? And so people just shifted many, you know, bad meeting habits into bad zoom meeting habits, which gets to the fatigue piece, but I've found that companies that have been remote for a long time have built in better systematic communication methods, better check-ins. And they've been much more time efficient for the employee and consistent across the entire organization from onboarding to ongoing. Um, and I think companies that didn't have that luxury of being, uh, having remote as a primary mechanism have, um, those inefficiencies just had a magnifying glass in the last year. So I think that's part of, uh, some of the fatigue that most many companies are facing, who were physically located primarily.

Speaker 2:   That's a great point. Yeah. And Ruth, I'd love to turn this question to you as well. And with specific reference to, I guess, your military experience, cause I know, uh, both you and your brother, you come from a military background. So how, if at all, has that kind of, uh, entered into your leadership style or managing your team out of, of also just to hear kind of, you know, how you've, how you've led your team over this time of, in the pandemic.

Speaker 3:   So actually it's funny that you ask that because one thing both of us agree on because of our military experience is that we never want to walk with people who don't want to be there because this is something that happens in the military when it's mandatory, people are there and you don't always have a way to motivate them. You can't incentivize them, you can't fire them. You basically have to kind of create motivation out of nowhere. And these can be very difficult and frustrating. So one of the things we feel very strongly about is that if someone wants to walk with us, they will do their job and on the best way possible. And we have a lot of patience for learning processes for human problems. We, I mean, I, I really, uh, I agreed with a lot of the things you guys said, but I think one of the most important things is to remember that your employees are people and they have, you know, whatever needs that they might have, if it's a need to take a month off.

Speaker 3:   Um, we always tend to say yes, even if it's not the most comfortable thing for the company at the moment, uh, I never want to feel my employees to feel like they are employees first. I always want them to know that we see them as people first, and we also have a smaller team. So this is a little easier to do for us at the moment. Um, but one thing we've always said to any new employee that comes on is that if they want to be here, there'll be here. And we don't, we trust them by default. Um, they can break this trust and if they do, then they will not remain with us, but we don't really want to work with any kind of, um, issues of lack of motivation or things like that. It happens to everyone, but you kind of have to walk forward with yourself.

Speaker 3:   So this is something that does STEM from our military experience. And in general, we are a company that started off with moat. Um, everyone we work with, uh, for the first three years were, um, freelancers that work full-time with us, but they all distributed globally. And one of the methods that we use to actually stay in touch and create this personal connection is that other than our Slack channels and everything, we have a weekly meeting with each team. Um, and it's not just it's, it is a walk meeting where we talk about this week and the progress from last week and everything. But we also talk about personal stuff. We started off by just checking in on everyone, seeing that everyone is fine and kid more of a friendly conversation, not just a straightforward walk in conversation.

Speaker 2:   I love that because it beats the transactional communication that we've been talking about, but it also just reemphasizes that you're human first and we care about what's going on in your life. So it's prioritized us in the meeting. Let's prioritize this in the agenda. Let's plan on talking about it because it's important. It's important to us. It's important to you. Yeah, that's great. Well, one thing that we found just in talking to a lot of leaders and a lot of founders in particular are that, you know, you guys are lifelong learners and there's usually, uh, just a treasure trove of resources that you can

recommend just as you're continuing to learn and improve. So I'll buy you a minute here. Uh, but I'd love to kind of wrap up and just hear from you. Like, what are some of the podcasts you're listening to the books that you're reading, the blogs that you frequent, if blogging is still a thing, uh, it doesn't have to be super aligned with leadership or entrepreneurship. It could be totally out of the box and just a guilty pleasure that you have, but what are some resources that you could, you could share with our audience and, uh, and recommend? Um,

Speaker 3:   So for me, to be honest, I don't regularly listen to a lot of podcasts. Um, one of the podcasts that I love, uh, is the faster, uh, podcast that talks a lot about SAS, basically. Um, and I really enjoy, uh, Y Combinator that you mentioned before. Um, and basically whenever there's something new that I need to learn and other, uh, place the businesses is going, that I feel like I don't know enough about I search on YouTube and I just listened to other founders, talk about it. And that's, that's the main resource I use, um, for mindset and for basically the new ideas on where to take the business and how to go at and how to manage it. That's fantastic.

Speaker 4:   Yeah, I'll add, you know, I think there's lots of, you know, business podcasts. Assessor is one of them, for sure. You know, seeking wisdom from David cancel out of drift is a, is another one. So I think there's, uh, lots of those, but, um, I think the most exciting ones are, or the, you, you can get really buried in the business ones a lot. And so sometimes a lot of the ones there's like how, as a founder, you're really a leader as you talked about it. And so what is leadership? How do you become a better leader? And I think to some of Ruth's points around, uh, being a whole leader, the whole self, and being in tuned, you know, the stronger you are mentally and understand who you are emotionally, the better you're going to be a leader, which means the better you're going to lead others and your company is going to be successful.

Speaker 4:   So I think, um, podcasts like a reboot from Jerry Colonna. He is a former VC, but he talks about the whole self as a leader, um, uh, is really going to be helpful for, um, founders as they go on that journey to understand who they are and realize also that they are human in this process because many times there's the perception of what a founder has to be and in defeat and, you know, uh, you know, tireless, um, always be positive and all that stuff, but reality, they're human too back to kind of roots points as well. We're all, we're all people at the end of the day relationships. So I think that's good. Um, I think some of the other ones that are kinda, uh, getting deep in his sports psychology books that are now being applied to, um, uh, you know, human performance, eh, you know, in the business place.

Speaker 4:   So there's some interesting books. Uh, Jim lore is a sports psychologist who trains athletes, how to have that inner voice to be positive for tennis players, et cetera. And then how do you translate that into your own, you know, leading with character type model. So I think those are the things that founders should be. I think it's an add on statement. You know, you got to listen to SAS or you have to be shorthand on the things relative to your industry, but also make sure you also read non, you know, listened to and read non-business books. And, you know, cause sometimes the best ideas are orthogonal. They're not direct, you know, it's, it's the intersection of ideas and creativity occurs there. If you're just down there, you're going to just repeat everyone else's

playbooks and also understand the whole self as a leader. Cause I think you think the best thing to do is to listen to every business book or listen to every business podcast. And sometimes that just gets you kind of my OPIC and the whole thing.

Speaker 2:   Yeah. Brilliant answers from both of you, you know, Ruth from your part, just being able to listen to other peers, just leveraging YouTube for the resource. It is the second largest search engine in the world. Uh, and maybe not over-indexing on thought leaders, but also listing from people who are in the trenches and just talking about it openly. And then your point about getting outside of the echo chamber of, of business books or business podcasts, and then, you know, borrowing ideas from other industries or other disciplines can be incredibly effective. So I love, I love that. I think that's a great place for us to wrap up. I want to thank you both for joining us and we'll have plenty of notes here in the show notes for where they can find, um, both of your tools, uh, from the DDC side, but also just on social media, uh, hope that people can reach out and, uh, you know, keep the conversation going. But thank you both for your time today.

Speaker 1:   [inaudible].