

Real Life Superpowers - Episode 01 - Brian Halligan (HubSpot)

Noa Eshed 00:00

In this episode we interview Brian Halligan, the co founder and CEO of HubSpot. For whoever doesn't know HubSpot is an inbound marketing company that trades more than 100 million in funding, gone public and brought in 375 million in total revenue in 2017, alone. He's also the co author of two books, and a senior lecturer at MIT. Brian is a real life superhero. We hope you enjoy this episode as much as we did.

Noa Eshed 00:48

Great. Thank you so much for doing this. I'm here with my co host, Ronen Menipaz.

Ronen 00:52

Hey, Brian, pleasure.

Brian 00:53

How are you doing guys?

Noa Eshed 00:54

Great. How are you doing Brian? What are we interrupting you in the middle of?

Brian 00:57

We're just having a long conversation about pricing and packaging actually, a lot of fun.

Noa Eshed 01:02

Oh, cool, what are you packaging?

Brian 01:03

Oh, our software. How do we price it? And how do we package it? We have some new products coming out that are really compelling. How do we bundle it? And how do we package it in a way that it's easy to buy? And we can grow along with our customers? It was the meeting I just came out of

Noa Eshed 01:18

Oh, that's super interesting. And it's actually one of the things that I think one could argue that you're best at seeing as you grew HubSpot from zero to where it is today.

Brian 01:27

I'm not sure we're that good. I'm not, I'm actually not sure whether I'm good at pricing and packaging. I think we build a good product and the value props there. And it delivers a lot of value. But I would give it a "C" on our, the way we price it, I think we can do it in a much smarter way.

Noa Eshed 01:43

I see. Okay, and would you say that it actually brought Hubspot to where it is today? It's an, it's an entire movement?

Brian 01:50

Yeah, I think there's a couple things that we did, right. One of which was, we had a good idea. And the idea was the timing of the idea was pretty good. The basic idea was we thought that humans were sick and tired of being marketed to and super clever at blocking it out with ad blocker and spam protection and just nearly impossible to reach humans. And we said, well, let's help people market in new ways and match the way they market with the way people shop and buy, how you get out and Google and blogs and social media and really flip it on its head. It turned out that was a decent idea and it turns out the timing on that idea wasn't too early, where we wandered through the desert for too long or too late, where we had a bunch of competitors. I think we get pretty lucky on the timing,

Ronen 02:39

Brian, like was that your dream as a student? Did you just go say we're sick of the people getting marketed, like were you marketed at that age.

Brian 02:47

It was in B-school and there were two kind of, two things that lead us to the idea. One of the things was mine, I was working, spending some time in a venture capital firm as an entrepreneur in residence. And I was working with founders and CEOs that just saw how much the money they were spending on buying lists and spamming people buying lists and cold calling people doing crappy advertising, doing the big trade show, and just how futile it seems to be and kind of being frustrated with how much money they're wasting on traditional marketing techniques. And at the same time, my co founder blogged its way through business school, we went to B-school together. And his blog was doing extremely well in Google organic and doing really well in Digg and Reddit and early social media sites. And in sort of the juxtaposition of those those things like the old marketing is not working and there's a new way people are seem to be living and working and shopping and learning. And that's through the blogosphere and social media and Google. And so sort of the juxtaposition of those ideas that we've said - wow, it's a new way to do this - called inbound. And boy, the world needs a new type of software platform to pull this off. And we call that HubSpot.

Noa Eshed 04:02

And how would you define inbound marketing? I know it's a difficult question. But I think many people aren't exactly sure what that means.

Brian 04:09

Yeah, if you hear to describe it, in the inverse of what was not outbound is interrupted, more interruptive marketing when you're, you're cold calling a human when you're sending unsolicited emails with

somebody, when you're sending a crappy ad to somebody when somebody interrupts you on the sidewalk. Those are all kind of outboundary things. Inboundary things are more gentle ways of marketing that you're pulling people in. Like, how do you create a great piece of content so that's discoverable inside of Google? How do you create a great piece of content so it's discoverable inside of Instagram or Facebook or something like that? How do you get people to subscribe to your site? How do you use a freemium model to give something away that pulls people in. It's the newer lighter touch. Well, when I look at what's happening in the economy, so much of what's interesting that's happening of the companies that are exploiting these days, is not so much that they're building kind of a new type of product or technology. Oftentimes the disruptors, the companies that are really taken up having new types of business models inboundy that really matches the way people want to buy today, but it's less than less they think about what you're selling and more and more about, about how you're selling it. It is a how game, not what game now.

Noa Eshed 05:28

I actually have a funny story about that with respect to HubSpot, because actually, the way that I started using HubSpot, as an agency is I started taking courses on the HubSpot Academy because I had challenges in my day, day to day job. And I was taking courses and I was really learning a lot. And I remember one day I called up my business partner and I said, Listen, this is incredible. I'm learning so much. And I have no idea what these guys are selling. I can't find any any info about that anywhere. But I just I want to hear what they're selling because something huge is happening here. And more or less along that time, a salesperson from HubSpot called me. And clearly I was all ears just to hear what you have to offer. So I think that's really incredible. And exactly, I think that's exactly what you were trying to do. And what you're preaching.

Brian 06:15

Yeah, that's kind of it. We give, we started by giving away content, in blog articles and ebooks and things like that. And then we saw let's give away basically little courses, Academy courses for people to get certified in. And now we give away you know, a ton of software, we have a lot more free software users than we have paid software users. So it's, it's sort of the way the world is how do you get people in today, I think people are very dubious of vendors these days. And if you give them something for free and add some value, that they will be very willing and happy to pay for it. Whether that is Spotify or Gmail, you name the service you're using in your consumer life, almost everything is is freemium these days. And the internet makes that happen.

Noa Eshed 06:58

Yeah, exactly. Because you have access to everything. And then instead of being interrupted, if you get an experience where you're actually learning something and getting value out of a company are much more open to now listening to what they have to offer you and what they have to sell.

Brian 07:12

Sure. I'm with you, I'm with you

Ronen 07:14

So Brian, you're one of the most respected CEOs in United States, top 10, in high scenario, the CEO and Glassdoor, and also named in Ernst and Young, Entrepreneur of the Year in 2011. So like, what how do you do it? Like what's your superpower? What distincts you right now and from anybody else?

Brian 07:31

I think there's maybe two things that I do that are a little unusual. One is a kind of a healthy disrespect for conventional wisdom, which can be very irritating at times. But yeah, we came up with the value prop for HubSpot. And we've extended the value prop for HubSpot in ways that many people advise us not to do. And if everyone's got the same idea, you know, it's gonna be a very crowded world. And so we oftentimes went the opposite way of conventional wisdom, whether that's the way we hired people, or that our value prop or whatever it would be, we weren't afraid to rethink something from scratch. And to think a little bit about, you know, what's the future gonna look like two, three years from now and try to think about how we post future forward a little bit. I think that's a superpower and not afraid to buck by conventional wisdom. And that was sort of the value prop at the beginning. I think the thing that served me well over time, is kind of learn-it-all, I really liked to learn. I don't like to take things necessarily at face value, I like to unpack them and learn them. I like getting feedback feedback, kind of the breakfast of champions. And I'm always trying to get better personally. I'm trying to be a better manager and leader for HubSpot. I'm trying to improve our products and trying to improve everything is constantly pushing and learning. And I'm never, I'm never satisfied. And I don't have a know-it-all mentality. I feel like it can learn a lot. For example, for someone who just, just join HubSpot who have kind of a beginner's mind. I can pick, pick a lot of learnings out of almost anything or anywhere just constantly trying to learn from our customers and our partners or employees and get better. I just have a real learners mindset.

Ronen 09:13

You started off the conversation with not being satisfied. So you like telling your packaging is "C". So you know, you're very honest with that, like, I appreciate that. Are you as honest with your employees as well?

Brian 09:25

I'd like to use the word transparent. I think if you're transparent with your employees and tell them what's really going on good and bad, it's never always good. They'll end up trusting you. And that trust you build is very, very useful. And so I've always been super transparent. And we did something very unusual that really bucked conventional wisdom when we went public. That transparency we have, that HubSpot was was valuable. We feel like when we give our employees all the same information we have, they are better armed to make decisions, better armed to give us feedback and they're just more powerful, the insights come from everywhere. But when you go public, it's supposed to change that only four or five of your top executives are supposed to have all the information. And then your employees are really limited what they can know. And that's for good reason. People have discouraged kind of insider trading and things like that. But we still we want everyone to continue doing everything. So what typically happens is those top four or five executives can only trade the stock in certain periods of time. And there's big giant blackout periods when they can't sell and they're called insiders. And I think we were the first company to ever do this. But we basically said, every darn employee in the company, whether you're the receptionist, or you're me, we're going to establish you as an insider. And the

downside of that is everyone's got these blackout periods inside of HubSpot. So you can only trade the stock in certain windows of time. But the upside of that is everybody knows everything that's going on at all times is very well informed. It feels part of the journey and has a very transparent experience with us. That transparency served us very, very well.

Noa Eshed 11:08

But how do you execute such transparency, because there's 1000s of employees and Hubspot is a worldwide enterprise?

Brian 11:15

We did a couple of things. We probably have the world's most active Wiki. Like, it didn't happen unless it happened on the wiki. And my co founder and I are very frequent posters to the Wiki on what's going on in our heads and whatever issues going on inside the company. And we debate stuff on the wiki and the wiki encourages a lack of hierarchy. So some frontline employees can say, Hey, Brian, I think that's BS in and we don't care, we want we want the idea. We don't think we all have all the best ideas. We often often times that that idea comes from frontline employees. So we keep super active. We have company meetings that are pretty good. We spend a lot of energy thinking about the company meetings, preparing for them and executing on them. We have customers on them. We have AMA, asked me anything. So once a month or so, Dharmesh or I will do an AMA with all the employees where they can just show up via video or, or live and ask us anything. And so we're transparent, any one of our management team meetings, one member of the management team is responsible for taking notes and posting that to the wiki. Same thing with the board meetings, pretty much one person is responsible for taking notes in the board meetings, you post those in the wiki. So if you're interested in digging in and knowing a lot, it's very easy too. Not all of our employees are like that some of the employees are like, Hey, I trust you guys. I don't have to read all the management team notes on the wiki. But there's a decent percentage of the employees, who are right on top of it. And they're very valuable employees and are like that.

Ronen 12:43

That's incredible though. Two questions about that. First of all, was that from the beginning your strategy, or is it something that evolved in? How do you do that on a global level? Like how many employees right now, do you have in HubSpot, like how do you implement that?

Brian 12:57

We have, I think we have 2200 2300, I forget how many

Ronen 13:02

That's a lot of AMAs

Brian 13:03

Oh, no, no, I just did one two weeks ago, and I do an AMA and it's in Cambridge. It's done over Zoom, the video conferencing software, and people can ask questions by a Slack during it. And so all that kind of stuff we do is global first, you know, we don't do it just the United States. And I just, yeah, I do that stuff frequently. Same with the company meetings. So we use we're aggressive users of video

conferencing technology. The good news is that stuff is trending better over time, and it's gotten better quality. And so it's gotten easier to be transparent, when it was really when I was really early in my career and my 20s worked for this other software company. And they moved me to Asia, and I lived in Japan for a while and visited Hong Kong for a while. And man, it was about a 12 hour time difference between where I was and our headquarters. And I was on an absolute island. And the only way they can communicate with me was back and it was asynchronous. So this too bad something I respond to them the next day, they're back back. There was no videos, there was telephone calls but the time zones from brutal. Times are changing in a really positive way for companies that want to communicate broadly and transparently. It's a heck of a lot easier than it used to be.

Noa Eshed 14:13

Did you have many obstacles, while experiencing this pretty rapid growth? How do you keep control of everything?

Brian 14:21

I don't know if we keep control it. Control wouldn't be the word I've used. We've had plenty of obstacles like it looks. Maybe from the outside, it looks like Hubspot kind of straight up into the right. But it's it's a bumpy road up into the right. It's an up and down. It's a sign way of up into the right and we have, times when we're just humming and times where we're struggling and it definitely goes up and up and down over time. And we have lots of problems and we do our best to solve our problems. I think one of the things that served us well is my personality, of being a learn-it-all, sort of, and I'll get to that as I never like to make the same mistake twice. And I'm fine with making a mistake, I'm fine with one of my employees making a mistake, so long as we learn from it and don't do it over and over and over again. And we're quite good at that. But we have made many mistakes over the years. And we do our best just to document the mistake and look at data that might predict when that mistake might happen again, and try to avoid it. And so it's kind of a learning culture and a culture that tolerates mistake, but doesn't tolerate repeating them. I think that served us quite well.

Ronen 15:36

In 2007 to 2010. Like there was an incredible growth. Like, what was the turning point, there? Like, what happened that it exploded?

Brian 15:46

I mean, for HubSpot, we only started the company in 2006, I think HubSpot really started to take off frankly, in my head around 2012 2013. One of the things we did at HubSpot, that everyone told us not to do was to be a very horizontal platform. And so we started with really blogging, social and search back in 2006. So we did a lot like we have a lot of search engine optimization, competitor, blogger, competitors, social media, marketing competitors, but we tried to do all three. And frankly, when you do all three you have to be very thin at first and then you build functionality and quality over time. And so I kind of think of the first five, six years of HubSpot, we were very thin and buggy because we we not only did blogging, and social and search, but then we started doing marketing automation, emails, landing pages and automation. And then we get into CRM and our service. So it took us a while to get to kind of table stakes that we had a high quality functioning, very valuable product and the word of mouth would spread. We always had good marketing, we always could sell, I think we were slower to

have a product that really worked in scale and delivered on the promise. In around 2012. I feel like we started, we were less sizzle more steak. And now we're a lot of steak. And frankly, we're a little less sizzle. I don't think I think our marketing is still great. But I do feel like we're more of a product light company today than a market and a marketing light company. We invest a lot in our products and our service and our customers. One thing we've discovered over time is people used to just buy HubSpot based on our market and read our blog and then see a social insertion or admission and I based on our Marketing. And today that no one does that, what they do is talk to all their friends that have bought Hubspot before. And hopefully the word of mouth is good. And so I think marketing has changed a lot where humans are distrustful, more and more distrustful. Certainly humans don't trust the government anymore. Certainly they don't trust the media. They don't trust social. They don't trust anything but they're friends and colleagues. And so word of mouth today is is far more important. So if you if you look at HubSpot from the outside and see how we invest our money, it's really shifted from a sales and marketing driven budget to a product and customer driven budget. And I think that's the way they'll have the world these days is no matter what you're selling. It's word of mouth.

Ronen 18:17

Real Life Superpowers doesn't do the whole sponsorship thing. But we do like to holler about awesome ideas and things that are useful. So great job quality time app. No, I don't know if you know this, but I've been using Instagram about half an hour a day. And I put a timer for 10 minutes a day. So twenty...

Noa Eshed 18:34

That's working out for you?

Ronen 18:35

20 minutes accumulated of more time doing anything more efficient than going into Instagram. No offense, Instagram. Is great for me. It's a great job guys.

Noa Eshed 18:44

Now I want to do that.

Ronen 18:45

Yeah, great idea.

Noa Eshed 18:50

So do you remember a moment when you figured okay, this is happening, we've reached a tipping point. I think we are truly onto something huge here.

Brian 19:00

There's one point that was there were a couple of financing points that were tipping that were points that you could kind of step back and say well we're on to something. We did a round of financing that was led by square capital and then Google invested and Salesforce.com invested. That was like it was like if you're in the mafia and you became a made man in the mafia, that was a moment that was like, okay, these guys are legit, we must, we can't be that big of chumps if all these guys are investing in us. And that helped the business that gave us the tailwind. The IPO. It's kind of similar. You're just on the

road. We, Dharmesh and I are on the road with our other team members. And there's a lot of time at night and over the weekend when you're on the IPO to really just reflect a little bit on your success. (Yeah) I'm thinking recently is the we give away our CRM. And that free CRM product has really resonated nicely in the market and it's starting to drive a lot of successful customer adoption. In different points of view, we tend not to be, Dharmesh and I tend to be never quite satisfied. We're deeply paranoid about the competition or potential competition down the road, we feel like we have the opportunity to build a real anchor company that is a lot bigger than we have today that has a lot more impacted customers and partners and investors and employees. So for better or worse, we've always got this you know, we're not there yet mentality. I think it serves us well. But it's probably not good for our mental condition.

Ronen 20:33

That what's the end game? Like if you're not satisfied, and you're just talking about this in the future? Like, what's the end game for HubSpot? Where do you want to be?

Brian 20:40

A lot of people say, you know, why are you still in HubSpot, like startup journey is over, it's no fun anymore. To me, that is the whole point of starting a company is to get to something big and impactful. And financially, that's the personal, personal financial gain. Like, we have plenty of that. That's not sort of the goal anymore. What we're starting to see those real impact, like 2200 employees, a lot of them are buying homes and getting married and are financially stable and learning a lot. We have alumni that have left HubSpot, that are starting companies that are really impacting their local economies. Our customers are growing and telling us stories. Our partners - same thing. We have lots of partners that started and they just had two employees. And now they you know, they have 20, or they have 50 employees, and they're growing, we're starting to have a real impact on Dublin, where we have a European headquarters in Cambridge, we have our Boston headquarters. We think we're having, starting to have an impact on actual human lives. And we think the potential for greater impact is very high. And so we want to be as impactful as we can. We want to build a company that our kids like, Dharmesh's kid is, I think seven now my kids 14, we want our kids to be bragging about HubSpot. We want Hubspot to be around when our kids are our age. We want to be something we're super proud of. We feel like relative to our potential, it's still early.

Noa Eshed 22:01

That's inspiring. Do you want your kids to work at HubSpot?

Brian 22:05

I'm not sure I want that.

Noa Eshed 22:06

Got it. And I want to revert back to what you were saying about mental condition. So how do you deal with your stress?

Brian 22:11

I do have stress, my stress goes up and down.

Noa Eshed 22:14

Do you have any daily habits, things that keep you in focus that keeps you balanced?

Brian 22:19

Yeah, there's a couple of things I do. It's gonna sound really cheesy, but I have like in my notes section of my phone, and it gonna sound weird, but my to do list at the top of my to do list says I'm happy, I'm grateful. And so every day I look at that...

Noa Eshed 22:38

Affirmations.

Brian 22:39

It's sort of like affirmation, I guess. And I think while I'm lucky I have a great son, my, my mother is healthy and happy. My my siblings are healthy and happy. I've got great friends, we got a great company. Like when I started to get down in stress, I tried to take try and take a step back and look at the big picture. Like things can't be that bad. I do try to meditate a few times a week, that helps me to get into that mode of, you know, get out of the weeds and get into the big picture. That's helpful for me. I certainly exercise like lots of people probably do. And I play guitar, which helps me a little bit. I try to take a vacation. I'd say one thing that helps me a lot of some more introverted than people think. So every Wednesday I work from home and I have no meetings, no calls no nothing. I just think and work on projects and try to catch up on stuff. And that's my catch up date so I don't have to spend the entire weekend working. I don't mind working on the weekend a little bit but I want them the entire weekend working. And what happens I think a lot of people during the week from Monday to Friday just are completely booked. And then a nicer book with dinner to the POI investors whatever, and the only time they can actually think and do high quality project based work is on the weekend. And so that Wednesday helps me get projects done, free up my weekend a little bit, and the Wednesday also helps me, I get to check out from humans, like humans make me tired.

Ronen 24:13

Wait, are you good alone thinker you don't, like are you like a people brainstorer?

Brian 24:19

I'm a good alone thinker?

Ronen 24:20

Yeah, I was never a good alone thinker. I always need feedback. Feedback was important for me for ideas. I'll try my alone thinking now.

Brian 24:27

I'm good at the alone thinking I meditate and I take naps and I think through stuff. I do a lot of reading and I collate a lot of stuff into a file and think about it. And then I'll write about it. And I'm getting feedback through the written document. But I need some alone time to bake if I have a big decision. Dharmesh is the same. He needs a lot, he needs a lot more alone time than I do, he's more introverted

than I am. Once in a while, we'll have a big idea together. But oftentimes, if it's over email, we'll have a big idea. And oftentimes my good ideas happens. It's gonna sound weird. But when I'm waking up in the morning, or I'm waking up out of a nap in that in between space when my brain is really relaxed and not thinking about a particular problem, and new connections are being made inside of my brain, it's like in the semi dream state, a lot of good ideas for me happen in and out of a nap or waking up in the morning. So a lot of times I'll try to lie in bed in the morning, when there's nothing else on my mind and kind of let let my mind kind of ramble and roam. It's almost like the more I'm thinking about a given problem, the less likely I am about to to come up with a creative solution.

Noa Eshed 25:35

Yeah, rather than sort of lay the gates to the unconscious, just open. I think a lot of people also mentioned during a hot shower, that happens as well. So because their brain is just slowing down, and you can let other thoughts surface that aren't on your, on your conscious

Brian 25:48

Doesn't happen to me in the shower probably, it might happen to me in the shower, but I don't have a like a way to write it down.

Ronen 25:58

You change too many phones. So like we've been talking to really impressive entrepreneurs. And there's something that that we're intrigued about. So I'm talking to you about your, your business partner. So it's a long term relationship. How do you maintain that? Because there's a lot of successful businesses, that it's one of the biggest problems to maintain that process, because it's sort of like a couple relationship. So, what's your trick to keep the chemistry happening?

Brian 26:25

Chemistry, that's really good. Well, there's a couple of hacks we did early that helped. One hack we did is we decided how we'd make decisions and how we break ties. And the way it sort of works, if this is a big decision. And by the way, as you get bigger, like all you do is just make decisions, and oftentimes make unpopular decisions, but your professional decision maker at the end of the day. And so we get scientific about how we make decisions. And so the way we make decisions is if one people, person feels really strongly about to say I'm gonna lay on the tracks, if we both agree, obviously, we do that. If we kind of disagree and one key person feels strongly and they say, Hey, I'm gonna lie on the tracks in this decision, like we got to dig higher on what we're working on right now. And I feel pretty good about the person and I have a meeting with Dharmesh, I have to, feeling he might lie on the tracks against this person. And I have to respect that. Same with me, it's a lie on the track. It doesn't happen often every couple and maybe every couple of years. But if he's like, I feel so strongly about this, I'm lying on the tracks, I'm blocking it I'm cool with that and vice versa. If we both are lying on the tracks and feel super strongly about it, then I get to break the tie. And that almost never happens. Like we see the world that very, very similar way. That has helped, I think upfront talking about. He didn't want to be a CEO, and he wanted to be more in the in the background, be a CTO, and that's working very well, for the both of us. But largely, we run it as a partnership, almost every big decision, I would run the, run by him. It helps, then I've got a great co founder, he's very, very smart guy, smart guy I've come across exceptionally high integrity. Yeah, it helps to have chemistry when you've got a person who's really easy

to deal with and very thoughtful, and you respect their opinion a lot in so we were a good match. He's got skills I don't have I've got skills he doesn't have. And I think we both respect what we bring to the table. I think the number one cause of death for startups is founder conflict that I see a lot founders don't see the world in the same way. And and yeah, you got hard decisions in the in most of the time, there's no right answer, you don't know what the right answer is, it's you're guessing you have as much data as you can get to make the decision. But in startup mode is usually just not a whole lot of data to make the decision to cut deal. And I think that's, that's the high cause of death for founders. We went to school together, and went to business school together. And so we got to see each other in like in a classroom, which is a decent way to see someone, we got to work on some projects together. And that helped a lot actually.

Ronen 29:05

Yeah, but I'm interested in your feedback here. Because a lot of the entrepreneurs said something, that sometimes the beginning, there's a lot of enthusiasm. Usually they're single, they don't have a lot of responsibilities. And then when the company grows, things change in life, not in the business. So sometimes the the death of startups or, or the complexity of having that kind of relationship is not really from the business is because of the changes because you evolve as a person. Right? And I'm sure you you napped less and you meditated less when you were younger, and you evolved into that and suddenly, Wednesdays, you took them off. So So what do you think about that?

Brian 29:45

I suspect that's right. Hasn't happened with us. We certainly evolved as humans, and we actually spend less time together personally outside of work, and it's kind of we limited business to business and personal is personal, and we haven't let it overlap. There's been a couple of times. Like when he was having his child like, boy, that was a busy time for him. And he didn't do everything. But it's been pretty good. One thing that we also did at the beginning, I think that's helped guide us is we went to business school together, and we went over to business school rather late. And so we both had some success prior to HubSpot. And we both agreed when we started the company that we swing for the fences, that this wouldn't be a small ball kind of game. And I think a lot of the tension happens with founders when one kind of wants a short term success, and the other is looking for something long term and sustainable. And that's a great way for incentive to get out of alignment. Those incentives were aligned early that we both were going to be patient. And thinking about this as a multi decade thing, not a multi year thing and something that, you know, we count success in the millions of users, not the tentative users kind of game. Think that's helpful to keep those incentives aligned. And that hasn't changed as my son's gotten older, for example, or he's having a child that that's remained the same. The other thing that hasn't happened is we're both relatively young, we're both 50. Like neither of us. ready to retire, which presents some interesting dynamic for how it happened. So now it's so far, so good,

Ronen 31:22

Good. That's, you guys are lucky then

Noa Eshed 31:24

I think it's more than luck, I think you have like a some sort of mechanism, like describe where you actually know how to resolve whenever conflict arises. And I think you're in sync with your goals. And I think that's probably something to learn from and understand.

Brian 31:40

It's three things. One is make sure you know what your partner's goals are short or long financial, like what do you want. Two, have a mechanism to make decisions and three upfront early on decide how you're going to split the equity, I think it's important as well.

Noa Eshed 31:54

Split the equity between people that will join the company, as you grow?

Brian 31:59

No, between you two, or you three, who start a company.

Ronen 32:02

Right, right. But that then it also becomes complex afterwards? It's an easy decision at the beginning, but then, you know, involves in who's more major and minor.

Brian 32:12

It has involved a bit for us. Neither of us are that motivated by money. And yeah, hasn't been a big issue. The other thing that happens after you go public is there's like standard amounts that people make inside companies if they're CEOs and CTOs. So it hasn't been super contentious. And, yeah, I'm probably the lowest paid public staff CEO out there. And he's probably the lowest paid staff CTO out there, we want to take our money and put it back into the company. And so that hasn't been a huge issue, either.

Ronen 32:43

Right? By the way, your stock is doing amazingly, for a long while. Like, is that because of the transparency or, or global growth? How do you explain that?

Brian 32:54

I think you have to ask our investors? I think, I think a couple of things are going right. Things like, our value prop is kind of obvious. And how we help companies grow, lots of companies have that problem. The products pretty unique in the in this part of the market, they buy the vision. And the numbers look good. Here, we're growing in the high 30s percentage growth rate, we're profitable, and the bottom line is growing, top line is growing very fast, the bottom line is growing. And they think they see that there could be a real big company out in the future that is very valuable. But it goes up and down. It goes up and down based on how we're doing and how our peers do and how the markets doing and all kinds of reasons they can go up and down.

Ronen 33:39

And the question that most interests me is as a real life superhero, what scares you?

Brian 33:46

First of all, I'm not really a superhero.

Ronen 33:48

For us you are, for us you are, it's subjective.

Noa Eshed 33:50

You know why you're called the Steve Jobs of marketing.

Brian 33:52

No, no, not really. There's only one Steve Jobs. Okay, I'm gonna tell you something that very few people know that I have been a lifelong absolute scared shitless flyer. I am the you don't want to sit next to me on the plane. I am very, very nervous f---. And I will put down six beers on a flight to California from Boston. That is kind of a kryptonite actually. It's been a it's been a it's a pain in the neck. It's a real pain in the neck for me. I can't rent a car when I arrive, I have to arrive at night. Like it's been, it's hard to manage. In this year my New Year's resolution is to get over it. And so I have spent 16 hours with a hypnotist trying to get through it and I'm making a lot of progress. Like I've flown to California and flew to New Orleans. I flew to Dublin last month, no booze in the flight. So I think one of my many kryptonites, I think I'm getting get over it this year, I'm making some serious progress. I'm feeling really, really, really much better about my flying

Ronen 35:06

But is it because you're scared of flying or is it because you know too little about what's happening in the plane? Or because statistics would have helped you out.

Brian 35:13

I'm not scared of flying. I'm scared of being stuck in that tube with a lot of other people for six hours.

Noa Eshed 35:19

Claustrophobic

Brian 35:20

Kind of like claustrophobia, yeah. It'd be completely illogical fear. It makes no sense. But I have, had it ever since I was a little kid, and I fly but man in every time I fly it takes a month off my life. But since, this year I'm making, I'm making nice progress.

Ronen 35:39

Wow, I wouldn't imagine the room when you decided to go global.

Brian 35:43

Yeah. When we decided to go with my teammates. No, I said, that's fine. We can go global but just know I'm not flying to the Sydney office.

Noa Eshed 35:52

Or anywhere for that matter

Brian 35:53

You guys can go visit the city, and I'll be...

Noa Eshed 35:57

And also, thank God for all those Zoom and other video meetings

Brian 36:00

Yeah, yeah, absolutely.

Noa Eshed 36:03

No, but I hope for your sake that you get over it. It sounds like this time next year, you're gonna be laughing about this.

Brian 36:08

Yeah, I hope so.

Noa Eshed 36:11

Okay, so Brian, what can we wish you?

Brian 36:13

What can you wish me? I wasn't expect that question. You can wish me, okay, you can wish for me what the Dalai Lama wishes for people. When the Dalai Lama says you should live a good and honorable life, so that when you're old and gray, you can look back on it and enjoy it a second time. Wish me a good and honorable life. So I can look back on it when I'm old and correct.

Ronen 36:36

We're so, so that's exactly what we're gonna do.

Noa Eshed 36:38

Yeah and you sound like you're on the right track,

Ronen 36:40

Brian, thank you. Thank you so much. This is great. I'm gonna kind of just summarize the key points and you tell me if I'm missing anything. So first of all, I think optimism is something that you've said a few times in different variations. So being optimistic is important. Rethinking something from scratch, which you branded that. What do you call it, dimensional?

Brian 37:03

I don't like conventional wisdom,

Ronen 37:05

Conventional wisdom. Okay, so non conventional wisdom, learn and unpack information as much as possible. Alignment related feedback is breakfast for champions. Some people are scared of feedback. So that's great. And never be satisfied. As a management try to be as total transparent as you can and make mistakes once but not twice.

Brian 37:28

Those sound great.

Ronen 37:30

So you said them not me. So Brian, continue being successful and we thank you so much for your time.

Noa Eshed 37:39

Really appreciate this.

Brian 37:40

No problem. Pleasure to talk with you, have a great day guys.

Ronen 37:43

Will do.

Noa Eshed 37:44

Bye for now.