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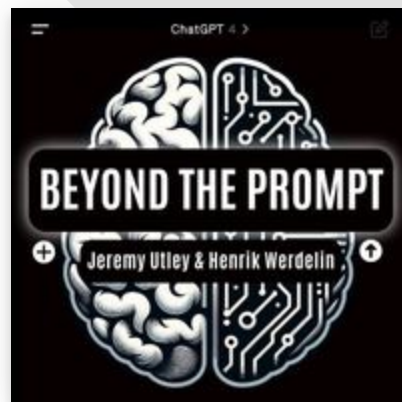


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## Rebuilding from Inside: How John Waldmann Led an AI Shift Without Breaking His Team

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a very impactful thing. But I'll tell you by the end of the conversation, it was a. When can I get access to what you're building? Hi, I'm John Waldman. I am the founder and CEO of Homebase.

We are the leading team management platform for local businesses, serving over 150,000 of your favorite local businesses and over 2 million workers. Uh, we have spent the last year reinventing ourselves as an AI first company.

[00:00:52] Jeremy Utley: Wonderful. Well, maybe one thing that I've really been excited to talk to you about, John, is I know when we reconnected recently, it was because you had posted on LinkedIn about how you are reinventing the business from the ground up with ai.

And so I thought it could be fun just to kinda hear you talk, maybe first home base historically, and then what has changed for you as you've thought about rebuilding the business.

[00:01:19] John Waldmann: Yeah. Um, it's, that's a big topic. Uh, 'cause I think right in this moment of time, it cuts across everything. What are we building?

How are we building it the way that we operate as a company so we can talk about any and all of that. Um,

[00:01:31] Jeremy Utley: okay. Uh, well, I like, I like even those, that distinction, right? The what and the how. What are we building? Yeah. How are we working and how are we, maybe let's start with

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product, uh, as much as I have in the last 10 years.

And it was super exciting and fun in that moment. And I think what I. I'll just, I'll, I'll take the way that we build product as an example from like a product and design standpoint. I think getting to the part of like, okay, we're back into the rapid prototyping, working closely with design partners, the pace of iteration and learning, you know, all that stuff has been radically accelerated in the ways that we're building any product.

Uh, and that's been, that's been one of a hundred ways in which we are, are changing how we work to kind of meet the moment.

[00:02:56] Jeremy Utley: When you talk about getting closer to the customer and the speed at which you're prototyping, what's enabling that?

[00:03:03] John Waldmann: Yeah, so getting closer to the customers, you know, I think that's something that we've always been super pride of ourself on.

You know, we serve local businesses, we serve a lot of local businesses. They're an incredibly fun customer to serve, right? You can go walk into and talk to him live. Their problems are so tangible, their stories are incredible. They're the best possible customer that you could hope for. You get to a certain level of scale though, and like some of those interactions become a little bit abstracted.

You know, you, you've got 150,000 plus customers. You can launch

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see like, what are you reacting to? You know, the, the most basic, take it back to the roots of building product and design. Like take it back, see what the reaction is.

Come back a week later with a slightly different version of it, like a slightly more expanded version and just like keep pulling on that, that thread. And I think the, the great enabler here is all of these new prototyping tools. You know, we, we are now probably, uh, pumping out prototypes on bolt new or lovable, uh, or so, like all of these things have to be some co so core to the way that we do product and design at home base.

Uh, and has really changed the way that we're able to interact with customers and each other

[00:04:55] Jeremy Utley: well. Well, let's, one thing that's fascinating here, John, and I love that you went this direction, is I think when folks who maybe aren't so familiar with collaboration with ai, leveraging AI tools, when they think of AI conceptually, they think it's gonna get you farther away from the customer, and it's going to put you more towards abstracted AB test.

But what you just said is, now that we're using prototyping tools. We're getting back in front of people more quickly. More rapidly, which I think is a very counterintuitive impact. Right. So what's changed there or why has that led to more in-person almost, you could say analog interaction.

[00:05:32] John Waldmann: Yeah I i it it it totally is that analog

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What, what are the ways that people want to interact with that? I think you just get such a faster pace of learning on that. Versus, Hey, let's build Figma prototypes that are so high resolution on the, what does it look like, but are maybe not giving you the same cycle times on just the customer feedback.

[00:06:34] Henrik Werdelin: Do you take a bolt kind of like, uh, prototype or lovable or replicate or whatever and you throw it straight to the customer? Or is that like, is that more for testing? Like do you throw it in production already?

[00:06:47] John Waldmann: So we've done all, all sorts of things. Like this is the thing we're evolving through in real time.

Uh, yeah. I sat through a, a roadmap review meeting last week where it was every single item on the roadmap had a lovable prototype attached to it. And so instead of talking about like concepts or, or designs or anything like that, it was, let's talk about, let's just go through all of the prototypes and spend two minutes on each of these prototypes.

And these were like out there ideas, right? It allowed us to kind of like pressure test of thinking.

[00:07:17] Henrik Werdelin: It's the whole of if a picture is worth a thousand, a thousand words, then like a prototype is where it's a thousand pictures, right? Yeah.

[00:07:21] John Waldmann: I think it was like the idea is true, right?

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But you kind of evolved to the point that the way we communicate with each other is 20 page PR docs. I can imagine even the bandwidth required for a human understanding to get up to speed. I can't get in the field. I got all these PR docs I gotta read. Right, exactly.

[00:08:09] John Waldmann: Like, you know, and you think about just like for me as a CEO, then sitting there and being like, well, shit, to stay current on what we might build that, that requires so much reading and.

The process had become incredibly linear. You know, we pride ourselves in like our cultural value is oh, day wasted. That's one of our three cultural values. And yet, like we had fallen into the trap of very linear kind of product building, very stepwise product building in a way that was leading to these very, very heavy artifacts that were great and served a purpose.

Don't get me wrong, like we got there for a reason, but at the same time was leading to very slow cycle times on feedback. And leading to very big checkpoints for us getting customer feedback. And I think the thing that this has allowed us to do is just blow that up, uh, and allow anybody to kind of go out and get feedback in a new way.

[00:09:03] Henrik Werdelin: I think as an entrepreneur, obviously you're, the people that you serve are incredible fascinating because to your point, like these are these incredible people who. Maybe don't get like the glory and the fast company articles, but like they

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spending the weekend, uh, using chat GPT to generate a bunch of descriptions for all of the tees that she was gonna like put on her her website and how long that would've taken her before.

Honestly that was probably like May of 2023. It was relatively early on, maybe even earlier March of 2023, and she had like found a very specific use case in it. Now I think of like there, there is still a technical gate to like really unlock the power of AI and to push really hard on some of these applications and use cases for which that's very, very hard for a small business owner.

That's, that's where we come in, right? Is how are we bringing AI at scale to make building and managing a team incredibly easy so that you don't have to think about all of the minutiae and tasks that come with it. Uh, and I think there, there, there is an interesting dichotomy. You know, I, I always remember the, the conversation with, uh.

A friend who, uh, ran restaurants very plugged into kind of hospitality scene broadly, and, and I, I talked to her about what we wanna do from an AI standpoint. I'm like, right out of the gate, I'm like, I wanna talk to you about ai. And her initial response was, I hate ai. I hate the companies building with AI companies, building with ai.

I don't care about humans. And it was like a fundamental, it was like, I'm coming from a place of living in hospitality. Everything I do is about the human interaction. Putting an extraordinary amount of

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[00:12:13] Jeremy Utley: connect from, I hate AI to these hated or dreaded workflows.

You go, oh, I didn't know it could do that. Right? Yeah.

[00:12:21] John Waldmann: Yeah. And so I think that's a little bit back to our, our. Job as product builders is to like bring it back to the real problems that they're dealing with every day and not make it some like philosophical, uh, technology. Some grand debate around, uh, technology and back to like the, hey, we can make your life easier.

I.

[00:12:40] Jeremy Utley: Could we go back to that conversation? 'cause I think that's actually kind of a really cool use case. So you're talking to this hospitality leader who's really, I'm sure, uh, prides herself probably in this kind of handcrafted artisanal care right in, in the hospitality space. I'm familiar with some of those folks.

Um, she starts the conversation by saying, I hate ai. What? Is your approach, I mean, 'cause you're not like an AI evangelist, it's not like you're trying to sell her on ai, but what was the conversation like that moved her in? It seems like relatively short order from, I hate AI to When can I sign up?

[00:13:16] John Waldmann: Yeah. I think, um, moving is, is like the most trite answer imaginable, but moving it from the technology to the problem, right?

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was kind of talking about the demise of SaaS.

Um, and of course you're doing many like a SaaS product for specific customers. Where do you think the companies like yourself, and I definitely have like a, you know, like a, maybe a suggestion, um, where do you sit in the question of how concerned you should be? That a chat GBT becomes so powerful that the uh, yeah.

That the features that you provide are kind of like, uh, just something that people will just do on that app.

[00:14:40] John Waldmann: Listen, I, I'll be the first person to say, I think SaaS is dead. Uh, I said it in, you know, we had our leadership offsite in May of 2023, and I sat there and like the theme of the presentation was.

The age of SaaS is over. Uh, here's how we have to think about our company going forward. Uh, I totally believe that. I think at the end of the day, if what you are doing is, uh, if, if your advantage is the code base that you had built up over however much time the size of your code base, the surface area of your product.

You are in a bad position, uh, because it's pretty obvious that AI tools are gonna be really good at writing code and therefore the barrier to entry of just building product is going down incredibly fast. Uh, that the moat of a code base is pretty much done and that the relative ease of expanding our product and things like that is going to.

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use tools to just do the work for you.

You are a profoundly more valuable company to your customers, and that customer hasn't changed. You have just evolved the way that you serve them. And I think that is the jump that every software company needs to make. I don't think every software company is in a great position to do it, but, uh, I believe that we are.

Uh, so that's gonna be our focus.

[00:16:50] Henrik Werdelin: Yeah, I think, I mean, like, I think you are too, which is why I dared asking the question. Uh. I'm biased. I have a book coming out on the subject, uh, August 5th called me My Customer in ai. And the thesis is basically that entrepreneurship is gonna be much easier. So you're gonna see more types of entrepreneurs to companies are going to look different, right?

So the object that is a company is changed. And, and then thirdly, when now more and more people can do it. How do you stand out? And we talk a lot in the book about this thing we call relationship capital, which is, you know, how do you create the authenticity and the authority? To understand a customer so well that you can be predicting what are kind of like the problems that we can solve with technology, and then exactly what you're doing, kind of bundle that up because at the end of the day, it requires real cognitive kind of resources to figure out how do you take this specific problem that is in the real world, and then how do you apply an LM model to it?

And another event is that I think you will have is that. While it's not a

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And I think one of the underrated powers of AI is that it allow, including reducing the cost of building software. That it allows for verticalization and purpose-built software in a way that it never existed before. And that was true whether you're building software, but I think, or AI agents. But I think it's doubly true going forward.

And I think like, you know, you still end up with these massive pockets of the software economy that are completely horizontal. Serving wildly different types of business and users with subpar solutions for all of them. And I, I think that is a thing that we should all be optimistic for, kind of the flywheel accelerating on of giving more purpose-built solutions.

[00:19:23] Jeremy Utley: I, I love, you had said a second ago, John, not every company is positioned to make this shift, but we are, you know, from, call it your advantage being your code base to your advantage being your customer. Can you talk about. How you, 'cause now it sounds like you've been undergoing this transformation for, call it the last year.

What were some of the key early moves you had to make as a CEO to shift your kind of company mindset? From our, the basis of our advantage is blank to the basis of our advantage is this other thing.

[00:19:53] John Waldmann: So I think, uh, I can sit here and say this, you know, give change is really hard. Uh, I sit here and say, if like.

We were so far ahead in our thinking of this in May of 2023, we're

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getting the, the flywheel going was actually when we started to be more directive on it. And that, that was, I don't know, nine months later, uh. Coming out and saying of like, okay, actually we're gonna pick some very centralized teams and we are going to, uh, use them to prototype in different ways, whether that's internal operations or the products we're building.

We are gonna take the people that we have seen the natural curiosity for around these tools, and we are gonna elevate them to different positions where that curiosity and kind of experimentation can spread throughout the organization. We were going to recognize that and reward that more publicly in the things that we're doing from a show and tell standpoint, from a team learning standpoint.

And then ultimately just being far more directive on you have to use these tools, you have to change the way that you work. And ultimately of like, this is what the roadmap is. And I'll tell you as a part of that, I took over product again. Uh, so, you know, I hadn't been running product, but I took it over about a year ago for that reason was like, we gotta be more directive.

[00:21:48] Henrik Werdelin: I think it's. Incredible important point you are making and, and I think a lot of the companies I'm involved in, we've seen exactly the same, where there's kind of like been this invitation to start with from the founders often and then, you know, like business as usual, uh, because you know, people don't like to change that much.

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You had to build factories. And with autonomous driving, you probably can't use exactly the same roads and signs. Suddenly you have to rebuild stuff. And so what I hear you say is in many ways the same, that if you want to take full advantage of ai. You kind of have to kind of almost rebuild on a quote unquote AI stack, not technology stack, but kinda like technology acceptance stack.

Is that, is that what I hear you say? A

[00:23:21] John Waldmann: hundred percent. A hundred percent. And I, I, I do think, um, I. That most people will get to an oh shit moment using these tools and realize how powerful they are, and then kind of the natural curiosity can kind of emerge around it. But I, I do think at an individual level for change, you, you kind of have to get people, help people get to that oh shit moment, and then give a lot of the tooling to your point and infrastructure and change and be directive of how different the world is gonna be in a, in a post world share.

Um. One of our board members said something really profound, uh, probably a year ago, uh, when he was talking about trying to get the company up the, up this learning curve, and he said is if you want to get people who are, uh, further ahead on thinking about ai, hire some people that are unemployed right now as point was one.

They're the people who have the time to tinker. They're not day to day in the, uh,

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This is where the world is going. And if they're not developing the toolkit here, we have not served them. Uh, we should be the place where you can get up that.

[00:25:12] Jeremy Utley: How specifically. So say somebody accepts that premise, John, and they, and they hear you say, I wrote this down. I'm, I'm taking diligent notes here.

You're doing a disservice to employees who aren't up the curve if you don't push them into the deep end. If a leader accepts that premise and they say, well, where do I push? How do I push? What are the kind of levers that you use to push people?

[00:25:37] John Waldmann: Well, so there's a lot of, I think things that are not gonna surprise here.

It was things like lunch and learns and trainings. It was. Hackathons. But I'll tell you the thing that made all the difference in the world. We did two hackathons, uh, six months, maybe nine months apart. First Hackathon was like, Hey, we highly encourage you to use ai. Second hackathon was you have to use an AI tool.

Like that is the theme of the hackathon. And we do company-wide hackathons. So it's not just engineering. A product design is company-wide. Uh, guess which one was more impactful for the change management? Right. It was like, I can get people over that inertia a little bit of the, the fear and all of that.

Because everybody's got like, well, I got all these other ideas that I'm

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In some of this. And then frankly, it's a lot of the commitment of like bringing the tools in. Uh, yeah. Making the investment of third party tools as well.

[00:27:14] Jeremy Utley: Yeah. And then how you integrate, 'cause I wanna circle back to your board member's comment. I think it's so profound and so astute. The comment that higher people who are unemployed right now, I.

One of our favorite, one of the, one of probably the most popular episodes of this show to date is A CMO named Russ Summers, who was a, is a very pragmatic episode about how he basically unleashed what he calls a GP team to do the entire marketing function of his new company. And we get deep into the conversation, we go, Russ, where did your knowledge come from?

And you know what he said, I was laid off. That's so funny, right? I mean, yeah, and he basically had, and, and I think one thing there, there's two really important aspects to what you're saying. One, somebody who doesn't have a job actually has time to invest, whereas somebody who has a job has plausible deniability.

Like, when am I supposed to learn this stuff? Yeah. I'm shipping PRD docs. You want me to stop writing PRD docs, right? It's like this weird chicken and egg problem. The other thing is that, that I think is really profound that you said is this person, say Russ or the unemployed that you're hiring, this person knows it's unacceptable.

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the technology, who's spending their time on it, whether they're at a company or not at a company.

And, um, you could unpack the motivations around that, but it almost doesn't matter. It it, it is about the curiosity. And I think we're at a moment in time in a, a period of profound technology change where like curiosity is rewarded disproportionately. Uh, and so I think that is part of it, is making sure that we've got the, those people coming in, uh, and folks who have been tinkering and learning with the tools and all of that.

I think that's true across every single discipline. Uh. One of our, one of our core operating values is around mastering your craft. And like, if you're not thinking about how AI can help you in whatever you're doing, you're probably not mastering your craft. Uh, there's just too much going on. So I, I, I'm like a big believer of like, a lot of this is top of the funnel and just kind of like the signal through the front door, then bringing 'em in.

I think it actually kind of happens pretty naturally because I do think that there is like a lot of latent energy people want to learn. They want to. Figure this stuff out, but I think just seemed to be shown, you know, they need to get to ship. Can can we just double click on

[00:30:17] Henrik Werdelin: the, like to learn? This is a question I'm not sure from who owe you it might be best.

Um, and John, you probably from experience in, in Jeremy probably from you know academia. But um I was talking to a friend of mine

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Because like the classic boundaries is kind of, I guess, being also torn down by ai. Yeah. How do you think as a manager that we encourage that? Or is it purely in selection of candidates that we can kind of do that?

[00:31:30] John Waldmann: I, I think both, and this is as much to do with the experience around AI as it is the last 10 years of running homebase.

But I, I think in the recent experience, I do think, um, first that you have to give permission to your team and like really unlock that latent curiosity in the things there. Uh, and part of that is establishing a framework and setting the expectations higher of the previous way of working is, is not gonna cut it anymore.

We were very intentional when we kicked off this year. That it's day zero. We are a new company. We are approaching everything in a new way, and that is our expectation going forward. We have a a, a counter in Slack every day that just increments up from January 1st on what day is it at the company to just kind of instill of we are not this company that we were in the first 10 years of our life.

So I think part of this is setting the tone as a leader and that enables your team to do the same thing that enables your leaders to be more aggressive and. Kind of expand the Overton window of what was possible in the company again, 'cause that's that, that tends to get narrower over time. I think the second part of it is, you know, hiring a lot of people over time managing a lot of people seeing a

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And I think it's back to like, if you actually care about the person, stop trying to like hammer them into the round hall and instead just like acknowledge that it may not be the, uh, the fit that it once was.

[00:33:32] Jeremy Utley: Can you talk for a second about, I mean, let's get super pragmatic. Let's just geek out for a second.

Yeah. Things like KPIs, OKRs. What is the evidence? And it, it could be soft, right? They, they just have demonstrated they aren't curious. But like, if you think about managing people and you've gotta manage their performance and in some cases help them find a better fit, what are the specific things you've baked into the system to alert you to when it's become clear someone's not a fit?

[00:34:02] John Waldmann: Um. I think, you know, we do use OKRs. We've used a different variants of OKRs the last few years. Uh, for better or worse, we use OKRs. Uh, and, and I do think some of this is like increasingly the objectives, uh. Are very clearly aligned to the future AI driven company that we want to be. I think it, it, you know, back to roll the clock back, it was like we're setting objectives for which, like this solution to it probably requires AI to now the OKR is explicit on it will require, uh, ai.

And so at some level you have to set the outcomes to require the things that you want to see. And if you're then not seeing it. The gap is quite clear. You know, it, it becomes less around kind of like the qualitative traits and things like that and the outcomes that those qualitative traits would lead to

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you've got the benefit of being a more nimble organization, more agile, et cetera.

Mm-hmm. I think part of the challenge, if, if I look across especially larger organizations, the reason some folks aren't, um, you know, collaborating with AI tools is because it's okay not to, inaction is an acceptable action, so to speak. I think what increasingly has to happen is leaders have to take inaction off the table at inaction has to become the punishable offense, and that doesn't mean success is required, right?

For example, I can imagine a KPI where you say, Hey, I wanna see 10 AI driven experiments in six months. If you show up, all 10 can fail. That's perfectly fine. I we're gonna high five, whatever. But if you show up and say, I only did two, we're gonna put you on a performance improvement plan. And if that happens again, you have to look for a new you.

We can't have people who aren't constantly experimenting on this team. Right.

[00:36:40] John Waldmann: That that's exactly right. That's exactly right. And I think what we had to do was make sure that we were being. Um, clear to the team on the journey that we were going on and giving them the support and tools to make that jump.

Like I, I, I want to make sure that we are a place where people could be trained and developed and find the resources available to make that but at some point it does have to be pulled

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and said, Hey, I run this restaurant, I do this thing. You know, how should they think about like doing the same journey as you've done with your company through this

[00:37:47] John Waldmann: change?

That's a great question. Um. I'm sitting here as a technology company, and it's very easy for me to say this as a builder, as a company full of builders of like, how am I unlocking the, the best version of the team that we have who are incredible, who are curious, who have learning mindsets? H how am I giving them the, the, the room to run?

You know, I am all about like, let your wild stallions run. Uh, like that's who you want at the company is the people that are just like born to run at a certain speed and accomplish great things. Tech is full of that, right? It's very easy for me to sit here as a, as a company and say of like, that's what we're gonna culturally be as a company.

I think you're running a local business. The nature of your business is so different, you know? And, and I think that is why like company like Homebase can be so successful because I think for the longest time, uh, technology frankly did not honor these businesses in what made them so special. So.

Important to the world, what made their teams so unique in what they provide to the world? We are absolutely doing a disservice to our customers if we're saying, Hey, in order for your team to take the next step in the journey to be a great restaurant and serve you

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customers.

It is almost never around the ways that they choose to run payroll. Uh, there is no unique advantage in that there is just time spent. Uh, the thing that we can hope for as a company is we give them that time back. The other thing we can hope for is like, give them the tools to be incredible managers and leaders and automate some of that work for them too, because.

A lot of 'em are not classically trained managers and are coming at this as a first time manager or first time leader. So I think we have a role to play there, but I, I think the part of the world we serve is like, should be more enabled than kind of technology first.

[00:40:22] Jeremy Utley: Is there a world, John, where your recommendation, uh, I dunno if this is a statement or a question or what, it's possible that your suggestion to these folks, if, if they ask you, how can I become augmented with ai?

To your point, it's not about them automating their own payroll or whatever, but is there something about thought partnerships, strategic thought partnership? I think one of the comments, and there were kind of recurring themes on this show in these conversations is. There's something about kind of workflow augmentation and automation and all that stuff, but then there's just the thinking partner.

Like for a small business owner, basically they've got trillion dollar coach Bill Campbell in their pocket who if they know to provide

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[00:11:00] John Waldmann: The second thing that they should do, uh, yeah, I,

[00:41:40] Henrik Werdelin: you forgot to say that. You're, you forgot to say that. UL prove entrepreneur. I do the,

[00:41:43] John Waldmann: yeah. Join home base.com. Uh, start for free today. Uh, perfect. We are a freemium product. Uh, no. The after, after going through that journey. [journey@joinhomebase.com](mailto:journey@joinhomebase.com) and getting set up. The next thing. Yeah, I, I think that's a great point around using chat GPT and just the, the amount of coaching and support available in that, uh, founding a business is a lonely journey and it is an incredibly hard journey. And I don't think the work and uh, kind of courage that every single local business that exists in this world has, is demonstrating, gets the amount of appreciation that it should. Behind every single local business. There is an incredible story. Like that's one of the best parts about serving these local businesses is like that.

The courage that it took for this person to put a big part of themselves out into the physical world, serving their community and the people that they know. That is a very, very profound statement of entrepreneurship. It's vulnerable. Yeah. Yeah. So much vulnerability in that. Forget about like the financial, uh.

Risks that people are taking and doing it, but like the emotional risks that people are taking that are profound and yeah, I, I think chat, GPT or whatever, LLM of choice, dude. Dude.

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might be a really interesting way to kind of build trust with small business owners. It's like you can act if you pay what, you may not even have to pay open AI to get access to GPTs, but we've built these tools to demonstrate the power of, you know, coaching expertise, creative assistance.

[00:43:56] John Waldmann: I think that is a wonderful and provocative idea of. You know, there, there's so much of this that we are putting in and building home base around of how are we bringing help to the tasks and the things that you have to do and the regulatory risk, and how are we offloading all of that from you to us in your brain.

Uh, but I do think that there is a part of this that is emotional too, and being able to provide that coaching and support in a way to a, to a business owner or a leader. You know, we all know as, as. Leaders and managers. So much of what we do is the support that we're providing other people and yeah, it's a hard thing.

Uh, so yeah. I I like that idea.

[00:44:40] Jeremy Utley: Well, that's o one thing that we aim to do on this show is always give a gift back to our gift. There you go. There's your the My friend. So thanks so much for joining us, John. This is an awesome conversation. Okay, Jeremy, professor. I know you're, this is catnip for the, for the BarkBox guy.

Huh?

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Every founder is now trying to figure out. And I thought he had some incredible suggestions. And, and I think also just kind of, it was nice to hear somebody else who kind of like is, is trying to do the same thing and find it complicated. Um, so I think that was one thing I I I love that you're, you had a quote on, uh, inaction is an acceptable action.

And I think for people who run this organization that thrive to be more AI first just will have to stop accepting that, uh, 'cause there's just. You know, and I think, you know, as we've been doing this podcast, I think we also started with this curiosity mindset of like, how do you do this? And how do you get people to walk through path and how do you inspire and make sure you do the Slack channel and stuff?

And I definitely, I think interestingly, you have. Failed a change of tone in the last year and a half where a lot of people come on now and a little bit have the attitude of like, okay, playtime is over. You know, like, we, you got access to it now you actually have to use it. Well,

[00:46:40] Jeremy Utley: I, I mean, you, you know that I'm obsessed with play, so I won't say playtime is over, but I will say, uh, it's no longer optional.

I don't think playtime is over. I mean, not to, not to mince words, but I think playtime is now mandatory. Yeah. Whereas perhaps before it was optional

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with a product. And just get into the rhythm of practice. The wax on wax off, kinda like motion or ate kind of, uh, reference, but the, to just practice in productizing solving the problems with ai.

And that is, I think, increasingly also just something that we should just ask people to do.

[00:47:55] Jeremy Utley: Well, no, no time spent kinda building with AI is wasted time. So even if that product doesn't ship, even if that lovable prototype doesn't go anywhere. You're building kinda muscle memory and familiarity with tools that you, that will become more indispensable to you over time.

Therefore, play and build, and I mean, I love the example that he gave at the beginning of the show, which is the product review process. The roadmap process has totally changed now instead of reading a bunch of 20 page documents, which basically becomes the job. Now we're doing two or three minute demos of real live prototypes, and all of the time that we were spending reviewing our plans is now been redeployed in the field.

We're able to be learning and inspiring and getting feedback. It's just this incredibly counterintuitive reality. I think that an ai, I. Augmented workforce is far more able to be more human than the workforce without. And I think the fear of kinda cybernetic organization and cyber, like all of this vernacular, is actually, there's scare tactics that keep people from being able to be more human, to spend more time with their customer, to find better problems to solve, and on and on.

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[00:49:46] Jeremy Utley: all, that's all you took out?

Uh, I've got, I mean, I have like nine pages of notes here. I can't read and speak at the same time. I think, you know, one thing I will say that's pretty, uh. Was was great is, you know, the, the irony of, I dunno if it's irony, but the hospitality person, you know, who hates ai, who, once you start to imagine what you go, oh well I don't really want to do that.

Oh, and I don't want to do that. And I thought John's kinda clever shift from, it's not, the conversation should be about the technology, it should be about the problems we're solving and the the how is up to us. Right? But if you can help someone. Be clear on, you know, the fact that they've gotta screen a hundred resumes for the hostess jock.

Nobody's raising their hand and saying, I can't wait to read all these resumes. They're saying this, these resumes are actually keeping me from running my restaurant. Right? Think shifting from a focus on the technology to the problems that it solves, I think is really brilliant.

[00:50:45] Henrik Werdelin: I think that's it for this wonderful episode.

[00:50:49] Jeremy Utley: Henrik, what's our, what's our, um, what's our code word?

[00:50:50] Henrik Werdelin: What about uh, small local business?

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It's not to you, you're good to choose. Do you wanna say, you know, support small business? That's because

[00:51:43] Henrik Werdelin: I think you look like data from uh, star Trek today. And so for people who watch it on YouTube, they can un unbelievable. Unbelievable.

[00:51:52] Jeremy Utley: I'll leave it to you to wrap this program.

[00:51:55] Henrik Werdelin: Okay. And with that, thank you so much for listening to another episode off Beyond the Prompt and as always incredible.

Incredibly just ex incredible. We just really appreciate that you're staying to listen all the way to the end. And. If you are here, will you please, please, uh, give us, like, give us a subscribe, send it to a friend so that we can grow our, um, listenership, uh, would very much appreciate that. I totally killed that one, but

[00:52:20] Jeremy Utley: there you go.

I love it. No, leave it. Leave it. Thank you. Leave it. Thank

[00:52:23] Henrik Werdelin: you so much for everything and we will talk soon.

[00:52:27] Jeremy Utley: Aio.

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