

David 00:00:01 If you think about humanity, we've been around for hundreds of thousands of years. And for our entire existence, we communicated via voice. We didn't even create a keyboard until the 1950s, and the idea really germinated from—as you want to remove the friction between the individual and the AI.

Matt 00:00:24 To thrive in a rapidly evolving landscape, brands must move at an ever-increasing pace. I'm Matt Britton, founder and CEO of Suzy. Join me and key industry leaders as we dive deep into the shifting consumer trends within their industry, why it matters now, and how you can keep up.

Welcome to the Speed of Culture. Up today on the Speed of Culture podcast, we're thrilled to welcome David Steinberg, the CEO and chairman of Zeta Global. David is a serial entrepreneur and marketing technology pioneer who has built and scaled multiple companies at the intersection of data, AI, and digital marketing. David, so great to see you today. I'm a huge fan. I'm really looking forward to this.

David 00:01:05 Well, Matt, I'm a huge fan of yours, too. Thanks for having me. It's great to see you again.

Matt 00:01:09 Absolutely. So my first question for you is—and so refreshing to speak to a fellow entrepreneur here on the podcast, especially one who's accomplished as much as you have. You've built multiple companies across telecom, ecommerce, and now AI-driven marketing. What's the pattern you see across each wave that most founders miss when trying to scale during times of rapid change?

David 00:01:30 Well, first of all, you know how it goes, Matt. You're an entrepreneur, too. Right? How do you become an entrepreneur? You're unemployable. Right? I couldn't get a job out of school. But it's sorta like—I do this thing I call "triangulation," where I read a lot. Call it five, six hours a day. I'm reading different publications, white papers, scientific journals, so on and so forth, and I try to triangulate sometimes incredibly disparate data points that lead me into believing that certain things will happen.

So with Zeta, it was 2017. We had bought a bunch of customer acquisition and ESP assets, and we were sort of running these platforms, but we had started the beginning of building this sort of data ecosystem. Now it's pivoted a lot to the Data Cloud, but we had a lot of data. And what I was looking at at the time, Matt, was there was no way to process the amount of data we were ingesting in time to make an even somewhat intelligent decision—meaning it could take hours to make a decision that would be best served made in a millisecond.

And that's when I started to explore and learn about artificial intelligence, and sort of—it came from reading about different things about AI. It really started with Natural Language Processing. How do you ingest information, synthesize it, and so on and so forth? But you just have to be willing to be open to incredibly new ideas, and you are, too. Right? I've seen it with you in your career. You have to be incredibly open to new ideas.

A lot of people ask me how did I get from telecom to AI data-driven marketing. I had founded four telecom companies, sold three, taken one public. When the fourth one got purchased, I found out from the private equity firm that had bought it, I had signed this incredibly comprehensive non-compete in the wireless space that, quite frankly, was probably one of a hundred documents I signed without reading the day we went public. I didn't make that mistake of not reading everything this time, but, you know, I sorta was like there, and I remembered how incredibly complex it was for my last company to run its marketing. It needed 15 to 17 different vendors.

And the vision was not—I mean, listen—in 2008, the vision was not data and AI. We would have been way too far ahead. It was just: how do we put everything a marketer needs in one place and eliminate all the different point solutions? And on our journey to that sort of North Star vision, we figured out that without a Data Cloud and without AI as foundational to the platform—native to the application layer—we couldn't deliver on that North Star vision. So we sort of happened into data and AI in 2017 as a part of continuing with that very early founding vision.

Matt 00:04:31 So, fast forward to today in 2026, how would you describe the Zeta business? Who do you guys serve, and what are some of the benefits they are gaining from your product that are moving their businesses forward?

David 00:04:43 Yeah. So we help very large enterprises to meaningfully better manage their customer acquisition, customer retention, and customer monetization. So you have acquisition. Full—I mean, literally from the moment you meet to keeping them from churning. Like, literally.

And what we have found, Matt, is that flywheel starts with acquisition, or it starts with retention. But the data that informs acquisition then informs retention, which informs monetization, which better informs acquisition. And if you look at it recently, there was a Forrester study that just published that for every dollar spent through the Zeta marketing platform, we return between 600% and 700% on ad spend. So, I mean, it's really, I think, one of the reasons that going into 2026, where we are now, right, we've projected our fourth consecutive 30%-plus growth rate year.

Matt 00:05:45 Which is not easy to do as, you know, as a software company. You see all these headlines about the SaaS apocalypse and companies losing their moat. And you guys—that clearly hasn't impacted you guys. Why? Like, what is it about your business that's different than so many others that seem to be really hurt by all the recent innovations in AI that make it easier for new entrants to enter the space?

David 00:06:07 Yeah. I mean, I would start by saying that the biggest difference between us and our competitors—we are the disruptor, not the disrupted. Like, we're the guy. Like, last year, if you look at the marketing ecosystem, it grew about 10%. We grew 30%. So by definition, you're taking meaningful market share from your competitors.

And if you look at it, when we started programming with AI in 2017, we launched the Zeta Marketing Platform in 2021 with an entirely new architecture that put AI and data as native to the application layer, which, by the way, removes latency and by definition drives massively higher return on ad spend. So, I mean, let me also say that I think there's gonna be major winners, major losers in the large language model ecosystem. Right?

I'm old enough—I was around when the internet was gonna kill Walmart, was gonna kill JPMorgan Chase, was gonna kill FedEx. And what we found were companies that adopted the internet massively accelerated. Ones that didn't are dead. Same thing with cloud computing. When cloud computing first came out, remember, Matt? "All enterprise software is going away. You're gonna have little apps that sit on top of, like, Snowflake, Databricks, or AWS." The exact opposite happened.

I think when you look at what's gonna happen, companies that embrace artificial intelligence like us—and I'm sure you saw at CES this year, I think I saw you there—we announced one of OpenAI's earliest enterprise-grade partnerships where we've built Athena, which is, you know, we just launched the other day. We've built Athena in partnership with OpenAI. We can get to her in just a second.

But I think the biggest differentiations between the winners and losers are, A: who has first-party proprietary data that doesn't feed into the large language model? So just to rearchitect our model, we set up a consumer data platform for all of our clients. We had 603 enterprise clients, including 51% of the Fortune 100 at the end of last quarter. If you look at that, we ingest all of their first-party data into the CDP.

We merge it with the 552,000,000 opted-in individuals in our Data Cloud, where we have an average of 5,000 to 7,000 data elements per person, and our first-party tracking pixel is sitting on trillions of pages of content. And all of that is feeding into a proprietary algorithm inside of the consumer data platform. Do you see a scenario where Fortune 500 companies start giving their first-party data to large language models to build enterprise applications for them? No.

Matt 00:08:57 I mean, that's the thing, actually, they're most concerned with.

David 00:09:00 Correct. In fact, it's what we hear from every one of them. In addition to that, our Data Cloud has never been fed into a large language model and never will be. Second: are you creating return on investment for your clients, or are you a major cost center? At Zeta, we're a revenue center. We're returning six to seven dollars for every dollar a client spends.

And then three, Matt—I mean, you know how hard it is to sell into a Fortune 500 company. You've got procurement. You've got data security, data privacy, the CIO, CTO, legal, accounting. Then you have to do SOC 2 audits, and everything has to be delivered. I just don't think the large language model companies are gonna build expertise in that. I think what they're gonna do is partner with companies like Zeta that embrace them.

And, by the way, they'll become a meaningful component of our cost structure. If you look at our first adoption, Matt, of AWS—which I think we did four or five years ago—I mean, we had 26 hosting centers at one point, and we work with everybody. We work with Azure. We work with Oracle. We work with Google. We work with AWS. We do the most with AWS.

But everybody said, "You're crazy. You can't do that. The computer will be too expensive." We tried it in Europe, and we loved it. We've now adopted it globally. In the last four years—actually, the last three years—not only has AWS continued to drop as a percentage of revenue, but we've added 500 basis points to operating margin, and we've grown the business on a compounded growth rate of greater than 30% top line, greater than 50% EBITDA, and greater than 75% free cash flow while simultaneously making AWS one of our larger global expenses.

I think you're gonna see a similar thing with the large language models. We'll adopt them. We will pay them a fair rate for their software, which is very valuable, but I think we'll continue to grow at a faster rate than that cost structure will grow, and I think we'll continue to expand operating margin.

Matt 00:11:11 And you mentioned Athena, which to me really signals the shift—which I believe is definitely occurring—away from traditional dashboards more to answers. People want answers. They don't wanna have to understand the knobs and dials of a product. Just wanna hear, like, what was the journey for you to launch this new product, and what do you hope that your customers will get out of this new innovation?

David 00:11:33 Let me start with the second part. I'm gonna use—innovation. I like that. I like innovation. Athena's goal is to solve our clients' biggest problems. It's really that simple. Right?

And if you think about it, like almost all software companies, anybody who's watching this has a piece of software that they've paid for that they use 10% of. You're paying for 100% of it, but you use 10% of it. Right? So what I say is: we have built a 747 jet for a platform and a Data Cloud, and our clients know how to fly a Cessna. Athena is our voice-enabled, fully conversational co-pilot for the platform.

So instead of using the keyboard, which I think if you think about, and I don't want to get too existential here, but if you think about humanity, we've been around for hundreds of thousands of years. Right? We're the last second at midnight from a time of the Earth's existence. And for our entire existence, we communicated via voice. We didn't even create a keyboard until the 1950s. We didn't have a mouse until Xerox created it. Like, you have all these different things that came out, but humans like to communicate with the voice. And the idea really germinated from as you want to remove the friction between the individual and the AI.

Matt 00:13:02 Yeah. And humanize it, really, because that removes all the learning curve. Everyone knows how to talk. They don't know how to use every part of your tool, but they know how to talk and explain what they want.

David 00:13:12 Exactly. They know how to explain their problem and ask how to fix it. I'm sure you saw the other day when we launched Athena, we did it as a birth announcement. We sent hundreds of boxes out with a beautifully done, like, birth announcement, and then we did the birth of Athena instead of the "Birth of Venus"—you know, the old Botticelli painting. We had her clothed, by the way.

And then we did baby pictures of Athena and really sort of rolled it out because she's a person. Like, Athena's meant to be your friend. She's meant to help you navigate the platform, so I thought a birth announcement versus "we're making her just generally available" was a cool idea. It seemed to have been very, very well received, but when you think about it, the journey started years ago—to answer your first question second.

We created a program called Zoe, and Zoe was our first voice-enabled platform. She was very clunky. She was—you remember the old sort of walkie-talkies? You'd say, "Hi, David. Out." And you'd, like, have to, like, really stop—whereas you can interrupt Athena mid-thought. Like, she's fully conversational. But we integrated and launched Zoe a few years ago.

We actually found something super interesting, Matt. Companies that adopted Zoe spent between 250% to 275% more on the Zeta Marketing Platform than clients that didn't. So when I came to the team with the idea for this voice-enabled co-pilot that could run your entire life—but starting with marketing—everybody was like: this is a good thing to invest in because we had already seen the ROI from clients that were using Zoe, and we went into full build mode. I would tell you from the germination of the idea for Athena until her going generally available was approximately ten months.

Matt 00:15:17 Which is incredible if you think about how much time that something of that nature would have taken three to four years ago.

David 00:15:24 And by the way, everybody talks about the SaaS apocalypse. We're using Claude, Anthropic, to build her.

Matt 00:15:31 But you know what, David? You say that matter-of-factly, but I think a lot of people, especially ones that run a company of your size and scale, have a hard time with that sort of change management internally. I know I did at my company where just getting people to say, "No. This is not the way it's done anymore," and you have to make some hard decisions, and you have to look at your leadership.

Like, talk to me about the internal transformation—because, obviously, you're a visionary. You know where things are going, but there's a lot of visionaries that don't know how to execute. One thing I've always admired about you is that you execute, and the numbers follow. But executing isn't easy when you have people who are stuck in their ways, and you have this massive change that, uh, washes over.

David 00:16:09 So I'll be very honest. I came back—this all sorta happened. I came back—I had taken—I have three older kids, two younger kids. I took my three older kids and my wife. We went to Kenya for a long weekend to go on safari. It's just—the kids were working or in school, and their calendars were really tough.

And we literally red-eyed to Kenya on a Thursday. We were on safari Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Monday was a holiday. We did safari Monday morning. We flew back, and we red-eyed back to New York. And I went into this, like, incredibly manic state. I hadn't slept in four or five days. It had been a really—I mean, an amazing trip, but, like, rough.

And I was so unbelievably agitated that a human who worked with me had just messed up something super basic. And I wasn't mean to them or berating them, but I was agitated sort of in my head. And I was like, "Why can't we rearchitect everything to put AI at the heart of this?". And I built with Steve Gerber, our president and Chief Operating Officer, three different workgroups. One workgroup became Athena's workgroup.

Another workgroup was: I want every one of our employees to have AI in their hands tomorrow. And we started with Copilot because we're an Outlook shop. So that was like—we just added it for everybody, and then we started tracking who was using it, who wasn't using it. Instead of calling the people who weren't using it and saying "we're gonna fire you," we called the people out publicly who were using it as exceptional and asked them to tell their coworkers how it was making their life better, at ease.

The other thing we did was our CTO, Chris Momburg, who is just such a rock star, and our Chief Data Officer, Neelish Gore, I pulled them into these workgroups. And because we still feel like we're a startup—we still feel like we're "intrapreneurs" inside the organization—I said to them: I want every one of our engineers using these tools within thirty days, and we then need to go hire the best people in the world using these tools—I don't care what it costs—and put them in charge of pods.

So instead of trying to get all—you know—I don't know how many engineers we have. We have, you know, hundreds; might even have a thousand engineers at this point. But instead of trying to get everyone of them to pivot overnight, we started moving the pods over. To put in perspective: at the end of last quarter, our existing engineering output is now up to 125% of where it was just twelve months ago on a net basis. The reason I say a net basis, Matt, is because it creates 150% productivity, but you gotta QA it down to get rid of the noise, and you net 125.

Matt 00:19:03 It's one of the downsides of it becoming so easy to engineer is—like—there can be a lot of noise.

David 00:19:08 Well, as AWS found out, right, that you've had a lot of guys have outages because they pushed code that then, of course, they fixed it. That wasn't trying to pick on

AWS, but it was just in the news last week. But the reality is: I believe we're gonna get to a world where we can get to 200% or 300%.

Part of that, Matt, was employees who didn't embrace it, we moved on from. And—and I don't mean to sound heartless. I'm sure they got great jobs the next day and—and so on and so forth. And the people who have embraced it, we are doubling down. And I think that if you look at our business, we're not, like, looking to massively cut headcount. You know, we just did a big acquisition, so there was a little rightsizing in that. But really, I think on a net basis, we will end up at the same headcount by the end of next November that we started last November with. And I think we'll grow the business another 30%-plus this year.

Matt 00:20:05 We'll be right back with the Speed of Culture after a few words from our sponsors.

So, going back to Athena, and I completely agree with you in terms of voice is so natural, and one thing AI unlocks is the ability to interact with technology like you do other people, which reduces the learning curve. I think there's two implications there that I wanna ask you about. The first of which is on the customer side. So for years and for decades, really, in order to leverage tools like what Zeta's—I wanna say—pre-Athena product was, you needed knowledge of the knobs and dials. You needed specialists. You needed specialists to run paid media.

But now if you're just talking about your problems, does the need for specialism go away, and does that democratize the ability to use tools like yours, which then widens the customer aperture? Like, could a CMO much more likely log into your platform now because they don't need to know how to use the dials and dials? They can just talk.

David 00:21:01 Yeah. I'm not sure the CMOs wanna do it, but they could. I mean, you're, as usual, very intuitive. Right? As you remove the barriers between the individual and the AI, you open up the aperture to who can use it and, by the way, how much they can spend. Because the big component of this has been—as we've meaningfully increased return on ad spend—our clients had meaningfully moved wallet share to us. So it's been sort of a really good flywheel for us.

What I would say is strategy and creative are still gonna be very, very important. By way of example: the beta clients who are using this—and as you saw, there were a bunch of quotes from major organizations, the owners of UFC, WWE, Red Roof Inn—we have—we have—great companies using this. Not only is it driving greater than our normal return on ad spend, so my goal for Athena, Matt, is to get to a thousand percent return on investment, and I think we can do that. But it also allowed them to massively lower their headcount and the workflow management components of managing their marketing.

Matt 00:22:16 They're spending more time on the critical inch that moves their business forward versus everything else that comes in between.

David 00:22:21 Right. I mean, listen. In a next-generation AI world, right, we've spent a lot of money societally—whether it's coming through Big Tech, whether it's coming through government, whether it's coming through private equity, whether it's coming from very, very large enterprises—building out the foundational layer of large language models, which require massive, massive training.

But the next generation of AI—which we're calling the "inference generation"—that's the apps that are—and the agents that are—actually going to do stuff. They require far less energy, they require far less data, and they require far less time to make a decision, and that's where Zeta's been playing since 2017.

So if you look at Athena—interestingly enough, like, people were asking me that day, well, what new large language models or what new models were being put? We didn't need to add any new models. We already have them. Athena is the driver of that. So, yes, one of the cool things about Athena, because of the relationship with OpenAI, is she gets smarter about what you personally need, and that's a separated model.

But the data that she focuses on—when you say to Athena, "I'd like to drive an incremental 2,000,000 customers this quarter, and I'd like to do it at an average of a 7% cost savings. How would you recommend I do that?"—Athena will then say, "Well, we have these 6,000,000 people who are actively in-market through our Data Cloud, and these 4,000,000 can afford your products. Here are the best ways to market to them."

You could say, "Okay, great. I don't wanna start with 10,000,000, Athena, but let's start with 500,000. And by the way, I have to be out of the office today. Could you email me the return on investment report every hour on the hour so that we can continue to do that?". And because she's fully integrated into ChatGPT, they can jump into ChatGPT and change the campaign.

Matt 00:24:24 Right. Just through talking to it.

David 00:24:26 Correct. So it's really sort of the next generation, and I think it's gonna keep us—and I've said this publicly, I'll say it again—I think it's gonna keep us a 20%-plus organic grower for many, many years to come.

Matt 00:24:41 And when you talk about running ads to reach consumers, the—the—other major change that is undoubtedly happening is—I was spoke at a conference last week, and I asked people by show of hands how many people have used a tool like ChatGPT in the place of, like, Google or a traditional search engine in the last month, and 80% of the people raised their hands. Right?

So the way that people are finding about products—full funnel—is gonna change to chat on their side the same way that you're imparting this new change for your customers. How does that change the way that you look at kind of—reach—consumer reach on behalf of your brands?

David 00:25:15 Yeah. I mean, there's no question that you're gonna start to see more and more traffic answered on-platform. I mean, if you look at Google a year ago, 97% of all searches resulted in a link off of their platform. Today, 60% of all answers are answered on their platform. So there are a lot of implications of that.

And first of all, we partner with Google. We partner with OpenAI. We've built a very comprehensive GEO platform to help our clients get into, and we're fully doing that now.

Matt 00:15:31 Optimize for AI?

David 00:15:31 Correct. So "Generative Engine Optimization." But I think that's gonna be a meaningful business line for us in the years to come as we help clients get ingested into the simplification of answers from OpenAI, Claude, and Gemini.

But the other thing that's happening is—for a very long time—Google and Meta have made up 50% of digital marketing. As more and more questions get answered on Google, there's still the same demand. So you're starting to see fewer clicks, which is massively driving the price-per-click up. For the first time, we're starting to see our clients saying, "How could we conceivably supplement budget and move budget?"

I'm not suggesting Google is not gonna dominate the landscape, but I'm a massive Google fan, and we partner with them. But at some point, enterprises do get to the point of diminished margin return on what they can spend to create a customer, and it's something that we're very, very good at.

Now, once again, some of that includes involving search, and some of it includes being outside of search, but I think that there's a lot going on in the ecosystem. OpenAI is moving to running ads, and we've already got one major announced partnership with them, working on others, and I think that we should be in good shape.

Matt 00:27:12 Yeah. A lot of people are curious to see how the OpenAI ads product performs, and, you know, I think that whole experience, it will be fascinating to look at from a consumer side as well, but we're entering uncharted territory.

So, to shift gears to wrap up here, would love to hear your thoughts. You know, there's been so much in the news about the elimination of entry-level jobs and how AI is—and, obviously, you—the people that believe or disbelieve that, have polar opposites, and then most people fall somewhere in between. But regardless, what's some advice that you have for some of our younger listeners who are starting off in their career, who wanna end up in a CEO role one day—um—in terms of the areas they should focus on?

David 00:27:54 Well, be careful what you wish for. Right, Matt? I mean, seeing the CEO is not always the funnest kid.

Matt 00:28:00 The king wears a heavy crown. Right, David?

David 00:28:02 I had to say that to my wife just this morning when she was complaining about something, but it's funny. Yesterday, I spent the day with one of my dear friends, Dan Ives, and we went to Penn State, where he's a big benefactor and very involved. And he does the Dan and Robin Ives AI Day, and they asked me to come; senior Palantir people were there. It was really—like—an interesting day.

And, you know, I don't get to go to universities all the time. I enjoy it. It's really cool, but I'm busy. I don't remember in the past seeing students as concerned as they are now. Like, they were talking about sky-high unemployment rates for new grads. They were talking about this.

And what I said to them was: listen. If you looked at the stage, you had this extraordinary woman from Palantir who started her career, you know—not shocking it—in the Intelligence Bureau, and then went into public consulting, or consulting, and then ended up at Palantir and now helps to run all of their product. Dan started his career at HBO. It's just working as a finance guy. I started my career on the Hill.

And what's happening is you've got this "Hunger Games" going on for the internships at the elite banks or the internships for the elite consulting firms. And my advice to these kids—which would be the same advice to the people watching this podcast, maybe in a slightly different way—is think out of the box. So if everybody's trying to be at Google, Meta, or OpenAI, go somewhere else. Go somewhere where you can really get hands-on quickly. Go somewhere where you can really build your career.

This belief in our industry that if you don't start at these ten firms, you're never gonna make it is just so nonsensical. I think if you look at the CEOs of most of the agencies, the CEOs of most of the Holdcos, the CEOs of most of the technology marketing companies—almost none of us started in those traditional routes.

And it's sort of—in today's world—I think it's gonna be more important than ever to build your soft skills, to understand creativity no matter what you do. Even if you're a finance person or an attorney, you're gonna have to be creative. You're gonna have to understand how to build relationships with people—things that made us what we are today.

Right, Matt? It's—the days of being somebody who starts at one of the "Big Seven" or a bank and works their way up and becomes CEO... it's one in 300,000 employees per location. Whereas if you're willing to go out and break new ground with the new tools that are available from Anthropic, Claude, OpenAI, Google—I mean—you can start a business pretty quickly. My advice is: get a job somewhere innovative where you can learn how business works and find a problem you think you can solve if you wanna one day be running a company.

Matt 00:31:04 Right. That's fantastic advice. And to wrap things up here, we always ask our guests if there's a saying or mantra that's helped encapsulate their professional journey. And I have a feeling that you have no shortage of them, but what comes to mind for you?

David 00:31:17 I have many, but there is one that—if I didn't say, everybody who worked with me would call me on it—"Never waste a crisis." It is your single biggest opportunity to effectuate change in your life or in your business.

Matt 00:31:32 What do you mean by that, and can you give me an example?

David 00:31:34 During COVID, we rearchitected a tremendous amount of our business. We happened to see it a little earlier, coming a little earlier than others. I had taken a trip around the world. I—you know—we have offices in India and Japan, so I was—I was there, and I happened to be in Japan during the Chinese New Year.

And everybody was coming from China because they travel—that's their thing during the New Year. And outside Tokyo, I had gone—it was one of those—you know—you spend ten hours a day in a conference room. I try to wake up the first day at 5 AM—I went to the fish market. You know, the second day at 5 AM, I went to some village to see Mount Fuji.

But from 10 AM to 10 PM, I was working. Everybody was sick. Everybody was wearing masks. And I got back home and said, "This is real, and it's coming to the US for the first time," and we swung into action. We rearchitected all of our global employees to be able to be remote.

That included getting 28 separate flats in Hyderabad, India, for our employees who lived in more communal housing. We kept two flats for—in case people got sick, we could move them there. We had to buy 400 of our 800 employees—we bought them Chromebooks with Wi-Fi that they could take with them to their homes.

And by the time everything shut down, we were ready. We grew that year. Everybody else shrank. But what was our downside? There was no downside. If the downside was, "Okay, we paid for some apartments, and you bought some Chromebooks, and you changed processes..."

In 2017, we had all these different platforms that didn't talk to each other. They couldn't ingest information fast enough to make a decision that could drive meaningful return on ad spend. So what was our downside? We went from making—pick a number—50,000,000 a year to nothing for two or three years, which, you know, hurt.

And there's a lot being—you know—people talk about the board meeting that I went into, that I had to convince my private equity-backed board to do this. I think, honestly, if I didn't control the company, there's no way it would've gotten done. But at the end of the day, when you're in the middle of the crisis, your opportunity cost to change is the lowest that it most likely has ever been.

So why not do it? And I literally say it all the time. Now, a lot of people give Winston Churchill credit for this. The truth is—I've done a lot of research on this—and we have to actually give it to Machiavelli, who said, "Never let a little crisis go to waste." So this goes back a long time for some really great thinkers. I've stolen it. I didn't make it up, but it is my mantra.

Matt 00:34:21 Well, it's clear that you're a dynamic leader and one who isn't afraid to take risks and leap forward. And, obviously, your recent announcements in the AI space around Athena prove that, and just wish you nothing but success and continued innovation in the year ahead. So thanks so much for taking the time today, David. It's been a great chat.

David 00:34:38 Always great to see you and catch up with you, Matt. Really appreciate it.

Matt 00:34:41 Likewise. On behalf of Suzy and the Adweek team, thank you again to the great David Steinberg, the CEO and chairman of Zeta Global, for joining us today. Be sure to subscribe, rate, and review the Speed of Culture podcast on your favorite podcast platform. Till next time. See you soon, everyone. Take care. Bye-bye.

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