



Leadership in the
Age of AI



Fred Crosetto on Transforming Traditional Industries

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Andy Sack: This is AI first with Adam and Andy, the show that takes you straight to the front lines of AI Innovation business. I'm Andy Sack alongside my co host Adam Brotman. Each episode we bring you candid conversation with business leaders at the forefront of transforming their business with AI no fluff, straight talk, actionable use, cases and insights for you. I'm so excited. For today's episode, we have Fred Crusetto from Ammex. Fred, welcome to the show.

Fred Crusetto: Great to be here, Andy.

Andy Sack: Happy New Year. Glad you could come. Uh, Adam and I have known Fred for over 20 years. Um, and when we were talking over the holidays about AI, Fred was like, oh, I've done some AI work. And so we really wanted to use today's episode, uh, to hear Fred's story about how he's implemented AI at Ammex. Fred, let's start with introductions. If you could just tell a little people a little bit to the audience about who you are and what Ammex is.

Fred Crusetto: Well, I'm the founder of Ammex. We're one of the largest disposable, uh, uh, distributors of gloves globally. Been doing it for almost four decades. Um, I would consider that we're kind of in a blocking and tackling business, not the kind of company that would kind of like lean in and try to embrace AI. Actually was just the opposite. And then we have a number of other businesses. Uh, we have a large E commerce business that does a significant amount on Amazon. Uh, we control almost 25% of the global glove sales on Amazon. We, uh, also have a significant business in China, which is a replication of what we do in North America and the Americas. And then we also have a large, um, BPO business that helps American, uh, actually companies build offshore teams in the Philippines. And we're leaning in big time in AI there too.

Andy Sack: And just so I'm clear, uh, Fred and the audience is clear, is the BPO business part of Ammex or a separate business altogether?

Fred Crusetto: It initially started as part of Ammex, uh, and then about eight, nine years ago was spun out. Ah. And that business today, we're going to be approaching nearly 2000 team members and with over almost 125 clients in a number of different verticals. All those clients are tend to be ones that are uh, entrepreneurial mid market companies, 50 million to a billion that are looking to just like now go scale their businesses, save money and go faster.

Andy Sack: And, and Fred M. What's the history? How long, how long have you been doing Ammex? Uh, when did you start the company?

Fred Crusetto: Started back in 1988 when I was 24 years old and I even got a picture to prove it. Yeah.

Adam Brotman: By the way Andy, it's, it's, it's probably worth mentioning our company is called Forum 3 because we were in the Young Entrepreneurs when we were all Young Young Entrepreneurs organization. Uh, the Forum, the third forum of the Seattle chapter and we were, all in it.

Adam Brotman: Yeah. And that's uh, so you, you've, you've been spiritually along the ride with our company. Fred, I wish we were spiritually along the ride with your company given how well you've done, but that it's, it's great to talk to you and I and, and Andy just to jump in real quickly. Are you, you know, you mentioned that you know, Ammex is you know, blocking and tackling business. Like before we get into how you applied AI, just along the same lines of what Andy's asking you.

Can you, can you talk a little bit about what, like when, when did you first think about chat GPT or generative AI or like this, this new kind of AI, like what was your first kind of holy moment for you and how did, and were you skeptical of whether it would apply to your business because you're blocking and tackling business and how did you overcome that skepticism?

Fred Crusetto: It's a great question. And you know I do want to just full disclosure, unlike you guys, I am not a technologist. I, I struggle with it. You wouldn't want me to like even download Google Google sheets for you? Um, so for us is one of the things and you know I would say in a traditional business model where we you know, work globally but we sell like to dealers across the world. Automation was a big, has been a big thing for us for the last six or seven years. So I use kind of automation as a precursor for AI on um, where we were looking at, you know, what can we do to automate, semi automate or just flat out eliminate processes as you go along. And how do you do that across the business, across supply chain, across customer service, across logistics? Um, you know we're buying. We're kind of like the Nike of gloves. We work with a network of factories around the world. They brand, we have our own brands, we have our own marketing. And then we have to bring this all in and distribute it out all over the world. I think for AI really it popped up for me a little over two years ago. I mean, you heard it and things like that. And kind of the ah, not the holy. But the aha moment was I was in a conference in Milan for uh, a group, I mean called ypo. And I ended up sitting. I got there late and I sat in the back. Unbeknownst to me, all the speakers were sitting in the back. And I met this really cool guy that had this, you know, Apple, um, advertising agency. And they were doing stuff projects globally. And they were talking about. I said, well, you should be happy with all this. This has got to be really driving your business, you know, doing really well. He goes, well, just the opposite. A project that I used to be able to bill out at half a million dollars. Now, um, you know, I might get 100,000 for. And I said, well, why is that? And he pulled out his laptop and he showed me this concept of this pizza company that, you know, like, kind of like a mod pizza, if you will. And. And he, and he showed me the whole thing. 3D renderings, all this. He goes, everybody in these photos, everybody, insider, they don't exist. They're all AI generated, every image. He goes, that means I don't have to have photo shoots, I don't have to have actors, I don't have to have not disclosure forms, everything like that. And I was just looking at like going, holy smokes.

And then my left is this guy who was there to talk about AI. He got up there and he just. And now this is kind of old hat, but this was kind of an AI magic trick. Two years ago was okay, we wanted everybody to talk about a picture that's in their mind about what they think about this conference. And you can all add in words and from the 300 people in the conference, the words went in. And it created this image of what the collective thought was of everybody in the room. And I'm going like, wow, you know, holy smokes. And so I went back is began to just kind of look at it and talk with our team. And I came to this realize realization like, look, you're really at this. Another one of these massive inflection points in technology. In my mind, it felt like kind of the biggest thing kind of since The Internet. Um, and my takeaway was, look, we can either act on this, we can react, or we can be roadkill and you just decide what lane you want to be in and you want to lean in this now. So I just said, let's just start acting on this right away. What are we going to do about it? You know? And we went and started talking. And so the first thing we did was, you, um, know, they kind of came out of that. Adam was, um, we brought everybody together because there was so much. I don't need to tell you guys this. You guys are marinated and immersed in this. There's this spectrum of everything about AI from magical fairy dust over on the far left that you sprinkle on your business and it's makes you faster, better and stronger to like, oh my gosh, if we do this, you know, we're going to be, uh, you know, like terminated. Um, and I thought, well, okay, once again, how do we reel this back in?



And once again, I guess I really looked at it as a realistic kind of like action focus. What can we do about this? Um, we're not a technology company, but how can we become, for lack of a better term, the fastest running dinosaur in our industry? So what I told, I shared with the team was I went out and talked to two really smart guys I knew at Meta and I said, would you come and talk to our leadership team for 90 minutes? And we brought in 40 of our top leaders from across the company. We had a 90 minute discussion. They kind of laid it out, gave this framework, did, uh, an excellent job and really began to engage all the leaders across all the companies because a lot of people had a lot of different opinions. In the second stage, what we did is we went to another person that was a friend of mine who had written a book called the AI Factor, who was an adjunct professor at Columbia, uh, and also a YPO member. And we got the book for everybody. We took the group up to about 60 and then brought her in, Asha Saxena. And she spoke for an hour and went through it and just talked through kind of, you know, how you go from A to B to C, uh, and all the factors. And from there the takeaway was, and this was in about 18 months ago, we would just break into individual companies and individual groups and then start to say, break this down, say how, how can we in each of our areas inside the business bring generative AI if you will, uh, to, to play and where do we want to go with a low hanging fruit.

Andy Sack: And, and Fred Just so, uh, that's a great story. Just so I understand, where, where was your own personal usage? Like, it sounds like you went to this conference, you talked to these two people, uh, in Manila, and you come back and you're like, oh, this is a big, you know, you add some kind of epiphany. Were you personally using it at that time?

Fred Crusetto: You know, No, I wasn't because once again I'm like, I'm like the village idiot of technology. So I'm like just reading about it and doing everything and trying to figure it out.

Andy Sack: But this is Fred as the village idiot. How, how did, how did you, how did you go from. How did you have the instinct that this was a transformative moment and that, that, that it was something that you wanted to act on as CEO?

Fred Crusetto: Well then finally Chat GPT came out with the ah, app, you know, and so I got, I got the app and I just started playing around with it and I'm like going, holy smokes. And then I would go out and I would ask everybody that I knew, particularly people that were like sub 30, and said, hey, tell me how you're using, you know, uh, AI and Chat GPT in your daily life. And then they would come back with this anecdotal story about what they were doing and how was, you know, how they were doing this. I was talking, I just, prior to this call, I've got a young guy who worked at Blackstone for three years, wicked smart kid that was a valedictorian at Penn. And I posed the same question to him. I go, wouldn't you. What was like your aha moment? And he goes, oh, uh, well, we're sitting at Blackstone doing these deals and I got a 200 page deck and I don't want to read all three of the decks. And I just go to chat. I first start using Chat GPT and goes, take these three decks. Tell me what the eight, you know, what are the five cross reference things on this, the eight cross references thing on that. And then you just break it down and I go, what you think? And he goes, he goes, it was just like transformative.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, yeah, that's that what's amazing to your point. And you, you've now hit you, you've got a theme that you've mentioned a couple times, which is like, how do you take this thing that's so almost like overwhelmingly interesting and hard to get your brain around? And then how do you make it practical for yourself? And you were asking people, how do they make it, you know, what are their practical anecdotes? And then you did that with your company and then you guys ultimately ended up doing some initiatives. Right? Like you, you. And I don't know if we can talk about them, if you're comfortable talking about them, but like, you did some stuff using AI.



Fred Crusetto: We kind of, we kind of sat down and we took this basic framework. We, uh, looked at like optimizers, extenders, innovators. And where could you start? And we just started in the lower left hand quadrant, which just optimizers. So what are we doing and how can we use AI to optimize our business? And then simultaneously I threw a goal out there for the, on the glove side of the business to say, you know what, we're going to double the size of the company in the next four years and with the same amount of headcount. And the goal here was because, look, let's just face it, there's scary stuff about, of AI for employees. Like, hey, you're going to get rid of me. I look at this the other way was no, if, if I was just going to take the business sideways, yeah, there would be a concern there. But we're going to scale, we're going to get bigger, we're going to go flywheel is going to spin faster. I want everybody on this team to have AI superpowers. And you, uh, know. And what are those AI. So how can you use those tactically, the superpowers? But what we did, Adam, was first off, we began to break the teams down and we said, okay, what are the, what could we use AI on? On each of the individual areas, let's say like supply chain, customer service. What could you do internally, externally. But the big aha, uh, moment is that I think my guess is probably for most people working with, uh, with this is, is, is data because you just think, oh, I'm just going to plug this AI thing in. Okay. But it's great if you're using chat GPT and you want that throw your out there and have uh, in the common, you know, market and everybody suddenly has access. But what if you have security issues and you want to use your own internal data? You don't want to share that across those, those open platforms. For us was, and I think I mentioned this to Andy about a month ago, was. It was just the data is that, you know, you've got to have data and it's got to be clean data. And because if your data is not any good, you're not going to have any outcome. So without data without any rules. You know, we had done that now. So we kind of put together, I guess I would call a data rate readiness framework of what that data readiness would work. And then based upon that, and we overlaid that in to say, okay, what, what departments can we go after first? Because we had issues like for some security issues with like finance. There was things in finance that we. Do we want that information out there? Do we want everybody to have the cost of goods? Do you want everybody to have your gross margins on a product? Do you want everybody to know that we make 62% of our. Our net income from two products? Or, you know, a hypothetical. If that data falls out there into the wrong hands, that could be a bad outcome.

Andy Sack: So, Fred, where did you go back to your story? You basically break into your cut different companies. You're focused on optimizing what was your first step and tell us what worked and what did it.

Fred Crusetto: So we decided, Andy, to just look at it. Think about this. This was kind of like late 23, 24. Suddenly AI is just out there, you know, and we went to some people to help us with some things. And you know, by the time we're talking to them, um, by time we get their package back, let's say four weeks later, you know, you seen like a 3x increase in what it's going to cost or a 5x increase. So. And we also said, well, this project might take six months and the way AI is going, that could be outdated before it's even delivered. So our CTO and the team, they were really, they, they said, look, we want to see strict ROI on whatever we do. We just don't want cool that we can all like make 3D, you know, new. New avatars of how we all look on our LinkedIn pages. And. Which is great. You can go and you can download that on your own time. We looked at supply chain. We did, we did some work in finance, uh, we did some stuff in customer service. We did stuff in hr. And we were doing stuff.



Fred Crusetto: We did. We took projects, Andy, that were both internal and external. So let's.

Andy Sack: And you're doing. And. And you're doing all of these projects concurrently, or was there one first that. That you wanted that you did? Like, what was your approach? You know, after, after the two sort of the meta speakers came and the, and the, um. And the, the person from new. The woman from New York, the author from New York, that step of like.

Fred Crusetto: Right. So I think one of the first ones they started with was marketing and, and then marketing so what we could do, how could we start to take leads and how could we start to break things down to, you know, to. And we were using, we were using Salesforce. This is before Salesforce had rolled, kind of rolled out their initial, their, their AI capabilities. We said well we're going to go in there because what, what is AI like is data and rules. So we wanted to kind of create that and go through that. And then how do you sift and sort and say what's uh, you know, what's the prospect? How do we do this? What's you know, what's the TAM on the client? Everything like that. So they dug into that, they went on that first. I'd say that one was like fairly successful. I mean none of them were. I guess it looks like you kind of talk about like there's iterations. Like the first time we did it it was like eh, uh, it was okay. We, we made progress but through that progress and it's like okay, then what's the neck? You kind of got to keep going at it and going at it. Part of it you learn is like once again, oh crap, we don't have the best data so we have to clean that data up once again to get where we need to go. So we did it. I would say we did two or three of them that were like okay. And the one that was kind of.

Andy Sack: The two or three. And the two or three just to name them were what?

Fred Crusetto: Well uh, we did like I said we did. We went on marketing. Started first kind of internal marketing for Outbound, you know, prospecting. We did supply chain. We um, did some stuff on finance. But the big one came when we went to um, internal kind of, if you will, customer service, HR and internal issues for our own people. That's where we really had uh, we started to put everything, you know, in together like okay, if team members from around the world want information on their HR benefits, when are they going to get paid, what am I? You know, all the different things. We, that was the biggest win. We went through that. We rolled that out and within the first two weeks we had about a 19% deflection rate in the number of questions that could be immediately answered by the bot and not by the team members. By the end of the quarter it had jumped up to 68%. So 68% of the team members were being self service and getting the questions answered correctly by the bot doing, you know, what they wanted to do. And now they're just taking that one step further. So that was Internally. Then we also then took that same approach and went outside externally with clients, um, through uh, we use Salesforce to use that same kind of inbound deal and we crushed it on that too. So those are two of the bigger wins.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, it's, it's a couple observations Andy and I talk about like, oh, is this about, like, is this gonna, you know what, how many jobs is this gonna take away? Is this about job elimination? This is about productivity gains, etc. Fred, you said something that I want to highlight, which is, and hover over for a second is because I said to Andy, I said, yeah, there's going to be real issues with some people losing their jobs over AI, of course over the next know year or two. But, but I've never met a growing company that isn't under resourced. I've never met one, I've never seen a, a growing company. When you ask them, when you ask their teams anyways, you know what, what do we need to do to grow faster and better?



They're always going to say, I just need more people or I need more help or whatever. And so to your point, Fred, there's this trend, whether it be Moderna, which is says they're doing the work of 100,000 people. If they're 5,000 people, it wasn't about laying people off. We did a case study with a company called Suzy, uh, where he was able to mostly triple his sales without having to like, you know, reduce staff by very much, if at all. And then there's, of course today there's this company called Karna that famously their CEO is saying, I'm just going to allow natural attrition to occur. I'm just not going to hire as many new people as I used to. And I just want to like, become a bigger company like naturally and organically. And I, I, I think you, regardless of how that all plays out, because it's going to be bumpy, right? There's going to be some job loss. There's going to be some stuff where it's actually not about job loss. And I, I don't want to, I don't think it's one or the other, I think. But I, what I love is that you said you kind of put a goal out there that said, hey, if I want to double, triple my sales of my company over the next five years without adding net sales, staffing expenses, like is it, I want to see if it's possible using AI. Ah, I believe it could be. Let's, let's have that be an aspirational goal and it just sets the tone, right, because it allows for this sort of give and take. It allows for experimentation. You're not trying to solve things in the next three months, but you are, you've got kind of a, a, uh, North Star on horizon saying like, why are you doing this? It's about improving speed, quality, productivity. It's not about like letting people go. Because I like how you put it. Like if I was planning on taking the company sideways and maybe, but like we got a lot to do. So I, I just wanted to highlight the way you said that. I thought that was worth, you know, hovering over. And uh, you know, I, I don't know Andy, if you wanted to comment on that, I, I, we, you know, you and I talk a lot about that topic and I just appreciate Fred laid that out there.

Andy Sack: I mean Fred like it, you articulated an Adam sort of hovering over it. This notion of like your, your instincts as CEO, you know, have helped you grow your company from when you were 24 to what it is today, today, which is a massively successful worldwide import, export leading company of gloves. And your instinct which was like a, I want to, I'm going to put a goal out there and I'm going to, you can rest assured I'm not trying to fire you. Which is what's in a lot of employees heads, um, is fear about the technology. It's the first time that a technology has really come for sort of knowledge, work level, staffing. And by putting the goal and saying like, look, we're going to double the size of this and do it with the same headcount inherent in that is like, hey, you're safe, let's be more productive. So that's, that, that was just an instinctive leadership moment which is, which is obvious to you and instinctive but not obvious to everyone. And then the second thing was, is you were like, yeah, it's all great. We could do all this fancy stuff with LinkedIn. But you also had the instinct like two things. One is you were like, let's try this in marketing supply. And you kept trying it to get to the wins that you described, which was the internal HR support and the external customer support. And you got clear ROI there. And you were like, that's what we're going for. And I think those were two, like just great CEO leadership moments

Fred Crusetto: Well, I think if you add to that too, Andy, I think what you also have to put in is let's just talk about, and you guys know this way better than I is Just the evolution of AI, just what we see, like almost weekly now. So, you know, I mean, compared to like when ChatGPT came out and somebody says, hey, I want to be doing this in six months. And the six months becomes 16 weeks and 16 weeks become six days, and I mean, it's stunning to me. It's coming out. So as we go through these iterations and keep leaning in, just imagine what's going to happen when you see exponential increases in the capabilities of AI. So on the accounting side, um, where the CFO is just going to be able to say, close the books at some point, it's going to be pretty darn close to close the books.



And it won't be this like, everybody rush to the ramparts close within four or five days, it'll be there. Um, and, you know, we're there. So here's the thing is, like on the, on the job loss deal, this isn't an AI thing. This isn't a new thing. This is a technology thing. You know, I mean, think about like 30 years ago, we had pagers, but you know, I mean, you know what? Anybody care what happened to the pager guys? No. You know, and so the same thing's going to happen is we have to look at the technology as a tool and say, okay, this is our lever, this is our wheel of 20, 25 that we're going to go faster on. Now, there's lots of things what we were doing, I think I want to break this down too, is we did two things. We did a strategic view and a tactical view. There's a lot of you could have. I remember I went to one of our team leaders and I said, well, what are we doing? Well, we're doing 17 things with AI. And I go, what does that mean? And then I get this email of like 17 different AI programs that were being used or applications or whatever.

Oh, okay. Like it sounds like Baskins and Robbins. You know what I mean? It's like, uh, we were all doing something and maybe we're all having fun, so that's great. But if we're going to really drive the company forward that set that North Star, there's got to be a strategic, A, uh, strategic place that we're taking this to and how we're going to use this because some of these are just enterprise level, but there's lots of little stuff that you can use. Let me give you an example of just a big time saver for us and a huge cost savings. So we work with lots of distributors across the United States, across, across the world. And then of course we have, um, they'll send us an agreement. So let's just say somebody sends us an agreement, said you got to sign our agreement. Here's our agreement. Before we'd have to, our CFO have to take the agreement, we have to send it off the legal, they come back, blah, blah, blah, blah. They redline, we go back and forth. What does the CFO do now? He just takes the agreement, drops it in. What are the six things I need to know that, that are the least advantageous clauses for us in this agreement?

Boom, boom, boom, Boom, boom. Within 18 seconds he's got exactly there. He can look at all the stress and pain points in that agreement and then we go back and we just say, well, what's our risk? Okay, fine, fine, fine. Change this. And suddenly that goes from maybe a six day process down to about a 16 minute process. So, you know, it's, it's there. I can give you examples where on our business in the Philippines that I support. Um, one of the first things I said is we will never, ever, ever write a job description again. You tell us what the job is, what it is. Like we put in five or six key points, chat, GPT will write that job description at any particular time. We might have hundreds of openings and we can't do that. And before somebody would be struggling over what does a Magento developer look like an E Commerce or something like that. And ah, people, what the hell is Magento? You know, and then they're on the Internet for three hours trying to figure that out and how does that compare against this or that? Boom. Just have them write it. So tactical, strategic. They're all savings. I think it goes back, Adam. The people that probably aren't using this is, are the ones. I guess the big mystifying thing to me is which is just the most amazing is there's been kind of this, like, I don't know, maybe this. There's still people in denial that this is a big deal. And there's also people in denial that, oh, uh, just because there's been some setbacks with AI or not seeing the returns, maybe that it's not going to work. I think if you don't take your bat off your shoulder and swing at those two pitches, you're going to go back to what I said. You're either going to be, you're going to be roadkill.

Adam Brotman: I was talking to a, um, potential client for our firm yesterday in kind of a sales pitch and I was explaining the. To your point, like, we, at our company, we talk about bucket one, Bucket two. Like, bucket one is kind of our own, you know, random whiteboard, like, techno terminology. So we talk about. There are bucket one use cases, which is like, every day. It's just a lot of stuff you mentioned



Like, like, you shouldn't be writing job descriptions again, you shouldn't. Like, you should be running transcripts of meetings through this. You should be like. And I, uh, what I said to him was, he was the COO of the big company. I said, I said, you, you should not be making any major decision without riffing on it with O1 Pro. If you're like, if you're a big executive, like, it's almost malpractice at this point to be making big decisions without running it by, like, a frontier model. And I said that to him. I said, by the way, regardless whether you hire us or not, like, everybody should be doing their everyday important decisions, analysis and, and thoughts, at least running it through these top models. Because that's insane to me that you, uh, if you understand what they can do, it's insane to me that you wouldn't do that. It's just a. It's an. It's an inexpensive opportunity. Those are the everyday bucket one things. There's bucket two things that are, like, initiatives. Oh, like, can we automate customer support and make a bot like you talked about doing? Can we, you know, can we use AI to do this, like, you know, other thing that enhances customer experience in some way that we'd have to otherwise hire a firm of developers to do? Like, there's two different things. We're big fans of both.

But it's amazing to your point about, like, how some people are in denial or whatever. You're just like, there is. You literally have BCG level advisory capabilities at your fingertip for anything you want to do. You might see that, think that's overkill, but once you get into that muscle memory of like, yeah, I should be bouncing this off of AI, I mean, Andy and I have gotten to the point where we barely have a conversation amongst ourselves or anybody else without recording it because we just feel like. You mentioned data. Like, we feel like, like we're all sitting on a lot of, like, there's data, data, and then there's, like, things that you don't think of as data, which are like, transcripts. And like, the guy from that you mentioned, the whiz kid that used to use the, uh, PowerPoints for deals and, like, have it. Like, that's Data, Right. It's. If we don't talk about it, you don't think of a PowerPoint as data. Like, we're surrounded by amazing data as leaders and there's this incredible tool that's effectively free, that's available to us, and yet somehow there's this disconnect. You know what, what? Why do you think there's this disconnect? Like, to your point, like, why? You get it? We get it. It's part of what we're doing. But we actually find that a lot of dentist leaders are still like, oh, I wonder what the ROI is going to be. And I wonder if it's a big deal still, what the use cases are going to be. And we're like, oh my God, the use cases are like every day, all day.

Fred Crusetto: That's a great question. And it's a journey, it's an evolution as you go along. And I was having about two months ago and um, six weeks ago I was having lunch with a friend of mine from China who had gone to uw mit, worked over at HTC in Taiwan, and he just wrote a book. And this guy's like, wicked smart. And, and we're talking, he goes, well, Fred, there's going to be, you know, billion dollar companies within the next 18 months with one or two people. And I said, like, what do you mean, one or two founders? He goes, no, like one, uh, or two people. And you kind of like, okay, I'm trying to put myself out there. I'm trying to think. I can't wrap my head around that. I mean, I mean, I, I, I taught for me to brush my teeth in the morning by myself. You know what I mean? So I'm just saying is like, you got to, you think out there, you go, so we go on for another 15 minutes. And then I look at him, I said, you know what? So I guess what I'm telling you, my goal about like doubling the company and not reducing headcount through technology is, isn't really ambitious. And he goes, yeah, pretty much. You know, and so it was, you know, it's one of those moments once again where you have to have this recalibration. And I think the challenge is, Adam, is if you, if you're not in, just think of how many companies there are out there and people, you know, and this different businesses, businesses is just so hard to run on a daily basis.



I know the government thinks it's easy, you know, and we should just be, we're not paying enough tax or whatever, but it's it's really hard. And then you're incorporating all these things and then you're coming in and maybe you don't, uh, you're not leaning in from this perspective of, uh, let's just still face it in business, entrepreneurs by nature, they're not afraid to take a shot and realize they, you know, they're going to miss a couple, you know what I mean? The greatest hitters in baseball only get on three out of ten times, you know, but if you're a high, if you're a professional and you're thinking, well, gosh, I want to have a pretty unblemished record, maybe I just want, you know, I'm, if I don't shoot, I won't have a miss and then I'll have a perfect record. So I think there's some of that. I also think it's happening so quickly. It's there. I think that there's people inside most businesses that we were, I was very blessed with our chief technology officer, who I said had been on this exploration of, of automation, um, for a number of time. And this was just like all of a sudden accelerant to this journey. But a lot of people aren't in that, you know, and that's uh, you got to fight that and think about traditional businesses with silos and I mean, I'm talking with people. I was on the phone with a company yesterday and they were still telling me that they had their own data server room. What the heck? I mean, that's just like you're just screaming to get hacked, you know. And uh, you know, not alone. You think you're gonna, if you have a data service room, how much AI you think you're gonna be doing? Andy Sack: Mhm. Brad, what's your advice for people? What's your advice for CEOs about utilizing AI?

Fred Crusetto: I think if you're a CEO, you got to look at it, you know, kind of two ways. You got to start the journey and the, you know, the journey of a thousand miles starts with one step. How do you eat the whale? One bite at a time, you know, and I think you have to. What's the, what does the CEO have to do? One of the CEOs number one things is to anticipate and act. And this is going to, this AI requires you to anticipate an act. It's going to impact our business. So whatever that act is, start that journey, learn a little, you know, just start to, you know, spend 30 minutes a day and you know, 45 minutes a day listening to A podcast, reading something, getting up to speed. And then I, if I was a CEO, I would probably pull my people together and say, what do we collectively know about this? And, you know, where do we see this as a SWOT analysis on our business? Um, I still think there's lots of stuff. We have not had anything yet come out of our businesses that, which I would call, kind of call an extender or an innovator that allows us in the take AI tools and then either give that as a free service to our clients or, you know, to let them use, you know, let them use something. So, and what does that could do that's just going to make it. Let's say we have a, uh, thousand distributors and we can come up with an AI tool that can help you sell more gloves or it can help you on your other side of your business. How sticky is that going to be to you? I mean, who's going to come in and knock you out on a 2% price decrease? Nobody. Yep.

Andy Sack: What's been the hardest thing for you, for you and your organization in terms of incorporating AI in your business?

Fred Crusetto: You, uh, know, I think it goes back to just inertia that, you know, you just come to the, you come to the swamp every day and there's alligators in there and you, you're, you're trying to fight the alligators and you forgot why you came, came to drain the swamp. And I just think that there's just the natural everyday deal of stuff going on. You got to deal with it. But I, I do think what the positive that Andy is is that when you see successes and people then see the success over there. Let's say we talked about what we saw in kind of that HR side of our business, and then people go like, holy smokes. I want to have, I want to be, I want my, I want that to be my case study. I want a deflection point.



And like, like one of the biggest areas I think we see for us, like, is internally is for finance. But one of the things around finance, once again, security mistakes. I'll, uh, give an example. We have a rule that, you know, if any order comes in, it has over \$10,000, it has to be approved by, you know, somebody in the company. So there's all these unwritten rules that throws off your AI models. And so we have to go through and say, are we really going to trust as we go forward in how you do it? I think just like anything else think of it, it's kind of like when people started to go to the cloud, remember? And it's like hold on, you're going to like let AWS handle this. But, but we've got this closet over here, you know, uh, isn't that safer? Yeah, it is until like a truck knocks down the telephone pole next to your office and your whole servers go down for five days. So I think it's going to be a trusting, it's going to be an evolution and it also goes back to what Adam hovered on. That point is there is going to be a lot of carnage for companies that do not act on this. There's uh, going to be carnage for people that are people that don't want to improve themselves and bring. Embrace these tools. And I would say kind of this continue to perform commodity functions and if you're in a commodity function that has data and rules, you're. It's going to probably be a bad outcome for you over the next two to five years unless you really lean into this and evolve and put these tools to use for you.

Adam Brotman: You know Andy, Fred said something that's worth uh, also highlighting that I thought was interesting just now which is that when you know Andy and I, as you know Fred, you know we is.

Andy Sack: Drain the swamp comment.

Adam Brotman: That was a great, I love that quote. Uh, I love the fact of like we were there to drain the swamp and then there's alligators. We were just fighting alligators. We forgot what we're doing. That's a, it's a great description of what a lot of corporate work can feel like some days because you just end up dealing with like the shit that's in front of you and the problems. But going back to something you said about sharing and collaborating and exposing little mini case studies and use. Use cases within the company. Like one cool thing about AI is think about what you said Fred. A lot of people, they come to, they come to this discussion and they think well I'm not a, I'm not a tech company or I'm not an innovative company or whatever they say. And they're like how am I going to use AI? I wonder. We hear every day Andy. And I do. I wonder if it applies to me as a manufacturing m. Well, well Fred, you are the epitome of like a basic, you called it blocking and tackling manufacturing company and you were giving examples of uplifts in quality and quantity and productivity and innovation. Customer experiences across. You mentioned HR finance, customer support, sales marketing. Right, you mentioned, yeah, you mentioned it's so cross functional. So what's interesting is Andy And I spent our career from entrepreneurs to operators to investors and consultants. And as we've done that, like, we usually, it's not like what we did applied to every function. Like, like, I'll be honest with you, as chief digital officer at Starbucks, like, I wasn't interacting with the supply chain team most days.

Right, right. It's not that I never did, but pretty much never did. Right. Like, and you could go like, there's a lot of examples like that where it wasn't. There weren't, like, there wasn't surface area for like collaboration, innovation at every level of the organization, horizontally and vertically. What's so cool about Gen AI? These like, advanced systems that we have now that you're describing, there's this opportunity for leaders, individual contributors, everyone to like, share what they learned and what they're doing and inspire other people across the organization. So it becomes like almost like a cultural thing that like, you could sort of. Andy and I talk about it as like, almost like this AI flywheel effect where it's like you're using it more and you're thinking about use cases and you're sharing your internally what you're doing and you're inspiring other people.



Like, there's not a lot of other things that come along that'll let you do that in a, uh, in a company. And I, I, I find that to be a really interesting opportunity for leaders to think about AI in that way, because they don't. It's not obvious, but when you start to go, oh my God, this isn't, this is intelligence as a service.

Fred Crusetto: But I think then, Adam, I would turn that around. I think then that speaks to the culture of the organizations you're talking to. And for you guys out there now promoting your business, that would be almost like one of your top selling points of saying, you know, uh, talking about the importance of using this as a tool for collaboration, for sharing, for recognition, for all of these things to shine. Because there's going to be. Not every company has a culture of cooperation, of innovation. Let's face it, a lot of cultures are cutthroat, innovate. You know, they're not innovative, they're very Machiavellian. My data is my way to the top. And this is, this is a, uh, the complete opens the, the box to everybody. And that allows this person. I was talking with a bunch of young kids I was with over the holidays, you know, they were lamenting about this. I said, guys, this is like the greatest thing that's ever happened to you. I mean this is the ultimate leveler of you. If you're average, you can be like above average. Now if you're great, you can be like, you know, exceptional. Um, and so I think that is. You're exactly right. How do you use that? But then that's just, that goes back to that iteration that's like, that feeds off it. And it's going to go back to that statement I made. You're going to act, you're going to react or you're going to be roadkill. And we're going to be reading about tons of companies in the next 18, 24, 36 months that just didn't get it. And then these whoa, me stories. But then there's going to be all these other people that just says, oh my gosh, look at what they've done.

Adam Brotman: I heard a quote this morning, uh, on cnbc because, you know, so funny, I'm listening to like artificial intelligence podcasts. I'm listening to cnbc. Guess what? They're. It's everyone's AI. AI, AI. Right, it's. And so the, the. Sam Altman made a comment yesterday that I don't know if it was on Paul Raer's podcast or cnbc, but he, I guess Sam Altman made a comment yesterday that hit me like, made me stop in my tracks. He said he was talking about how the. We're now about to enter into the Trump administration. So like a four year period that is going to be. And Sam Altman said it is highly likely that we will have AGI during this, this next administration. And I was like, that's that statement knowing. And um, Andy and I interviewed Sam about the implications of AI to your point, about what it can do to level you up. What it can do like the. We're not. Andy likes to say we're not going to wreck in two years from now. We're just not going to recognize like what. Maybe not a year from now, but when you start to get two, three years from now, it is going to be unrecognizable. And I, it hit me like, oh my God, that's right. Like we're entering into this. It just happens to coincide with the new presidential administration. Like the next four years are going to be unbelievable when it comes to this stuff. And yet. Yeah, Fred, you're right. People need to understand that. And look at the glass half full. I mean there's a lot to be scared of and a lot of levels, but there's a lot to at least understand that the next four years is going to be something else.

Fred Crusetto: Uh, I guess, uh, what I would also add on that is I do think you're going to come to this. There's always kind of a popping of a bubble, if you will. And I'm sure that there'll be a little popping of an AI bubble that'll let some air out of it and we'll settle. And there's not going to be 500,000 winners. You know, it'll probably settle out a little more and they'll do that. And that goes back to that, you know, relevant stuff versus cool stuff. And it doesn't mean it's not there. It's just, I think that that'll, uh, have to tame that down. That just gives you a chance to digest and then kind of go into a next level. But in the meantime, even with that said, I'm with you. This is just going to be one of those like, oh, my God, how do you. Hold on.



Adam Brotman: Yeah, there's, there's a, uh, I'll just go drift off a second here. Andy. Sorry, we, but this is. This. Andy always said we're going to do these podcasts and we're going to invite cool, smart people like Fred on so we can just talk and just record it and let, Let the world listen in. So, like, one of the things that's amazing over the holidays is I was thinking, uh, I was, I was watching these AI researchers talking about. Because that's, you know, we're in this business so we geek out on this stuff. Like these AI researchers talking about how they're racing one another. So Google and OpenAI and anthropic and Llama, you know, from Meta, uh, like they're racing one another to get to super. And now, by the way, Elon Musk X AI is 1000% in this game. They are, they are catching up, if not already caught up. And there's rumors that they might surpass the frontier models that are out there. So, like, they're absolutely a player. So you got Xai, Anthropic, OpenAI, Google's Gemini, Meta's Llama, and those are just five of the major systems. And guess what they're all trying to do. I was like, shaking my head is like, because we're all cut from the same era and cloth, the three of us. And I was like shaking my head going, oh my God. They're racing each other to see who can get to effectively this concept of AGI or super intelligence the first. And they're running up against like, maybe they're running up against scaling laws. Like, they've run out of all the data they can train on the Internet to make it smarter. And they're like, well, let's figure out ways to use synthetic data by making the AI talk to itself about how it solves problems, and then we'll use that data to train on. And. And I'm like. I'm, like, shaking my head, going, the average business leader, do they understand?

Fred Crusetto: And that goes back to. What I'm saying is, if that's happening, you have these synthetic threads and everything like that. Believe me, I was talking to this wicked smart kid, uh, 10 days ago that works for this company called Astro Forge. And they're using AI models, so they're going to. They're mining asteroids and a. A square. I was cubic squared foot of this stuff weighs a ton. And I'm going, you lost me at. You know. But my point is. So just imagine as you go there, and let's just bring it back to, like, daily blocking and tackling. How far are we away from the accounting team saying, close the books, right? How far are we. Uh, Give me this. Yeah, but this piece of data.

Adam Brotman: But, Fred, that's. No, you're right. That. My point is, I think it's. I think it might be the end of this year. And now that sounds like an insane thing for me to say, but it's. If it's not the end of this year, it's maybe the end of next year. And I. If I'm even 80% correct, like, last night, Jensen Wong, the CEO of Nvidia, was the keynote at CES, and he was. I was watching video.

Fred Crusetto: Did you see any of this?

Adam Brotman: He hauled out this thing. It looked like a giant, like, wafer chip. And he's like, yeah, this is the, uh, whatever the thing was. And he was describing it as having, like, the breakthrough. They've now figured out how to put X number of bits, billions of transistors or whatever, and all these versions of. I'm, um, getting it wrong, you know, Hamilton Rubin, whatever it's called. And, like, they put it on this thing. He goes, yeah, this thing can handle as much data right on this board as the entire Internet traffic today. The entire Internet traffic. He said last night. He goes, here it is. It's right here. It's like, this is one thing. And I was like, oh, my God. So they're. You got the AI researchers doing this one thing. You got the chip companies, particularly Nvidia, doing this. You know, like, it's. It's uh, and they're trying to get agentic about it. So anyways, Fred, to your point, like, I think, I think this sort of like just speak it into action, you know, thing that Eric Schmidt has this expression, you know, text to action, like is coming. Like when things get agentic, when the memories get. Get amplified, you bring it back to what you just said. Like, I think we're. I think we're, uh, you know, a year, maybe two away from that. And I, I like your. I, I love what you said about not.



I love the alligator comment too, but I love the a journey of a thousand miles starts with one step and the you eat the whale one, starting with one bite. Like, like, yeah, like, it can feel overwhelming. But, um, I love your advice of like, take a deep breath. You're going to find practical applications, but you got to just start by getting you and your team's head in the game here.

Fred Crusetto: I agree. I think it goes back to like, we were talking about culture and values and think about, you know, what are we always talking about? What are values of a company? You don't make values up. Your values are kind of your DNA. It's what people do when you're not around. So if we want to have a culture that's going to use, you know, is going to use AI, let's just talk about as this tool to help us evolve and take the company to the next level. We have to make sure that, that this new DNA strand is somehow woven in to the culture and values of the company. And that's probably this curiosity strand and it's an innovation strand, if you will, and you just have to do it. Those are the challenges is then taking that back and doing that and then you can only go as fast. You can only. I mean, there's just gonna be. There's going to be some people that are going to be excellent racers that can go to higher speed than others and, and how do we bring that in? I'm actually super excited about. One thing we didn't talk about was that Andy kind of brought up was we've got an issue in our business is we're running a dual AI platform because we have significant operations in China and we cannot run anything that we're running outside of China in China and everything that we're running inside and our programs in China are all then based in China, China centric, everything like that. And there's some like, amazing cool stuff that is coming out of China. You know, it's not an either or uh, it's just there's some really innovative things that we're being able to do over there. Business is a little different, a little smaller, but we really went to our guys and our leaders here and we brought them in. And, um, not all our team speaks English, so they could be on some of the calls. But we're pretty excited about that, uh, and seeing what they do. But unfortunately, what we're probably going to see going forward is a, um, dual lane approach to technology within the AI world. We run kind of, if you will, kind of a US centric AI for all our stuff across North America, everywhere else in Asia, except for China.

Andy Sack: Yeah, Fred, I mean, we did not invite you on to opine and be our resident AI expert. Uh, we invited you on because, you know, for 20 years I've just, both Adam and I have been on. We've known you, uh, you've been a member of Forum three, and it's just been awesome to watch you plot along, drain the swamp, fight the alligators, and drain the swamp again. And you just come at it with both humility, resilience, and putting one foot in front of the other. And your basic gut instinct on things and the values of your company have just led you into great success. It's been wonderful to watch. And it was really that, for lack of a better term, meat and potatoes approach to AI as CEO that we thought really resonated with the purpose of the podcast. Like, this podcast is meant to be straight talk, CEO to CEO, leader to leader. What works about this AI shit, what doesn't. And, and I think in the last hour you've been able to share with the audience a number of little morsels, we'll have you on again.

Fred Crusetto: Well, thanks a lot, guys. I appreciate it.

Andy Sack: That was a great episode. Um, what a, what a blast Fred is, huh?

Adam Brotman: Yeah. I mean, it's funny because in some ways it might be the most important episode we'll ever do because he's just, I mean, he's the epitome of pure growth mindset leader with the most non technically sexy business you could have on its surface. Um, it's actually a very sophisticated business, like global.



He does E commerce. Like he. It's a very sophisticated, complicated business in reality. But if you told somebody, like, I'm in the glove, the latex glove manufacturing and distribution business, like, it's almost like a cliché of like, I'm in the, like, nuts and bolts business or something. You know, it's like. And yet he has been one of the most, if not the most successful glove manufacturing company ever. I mean, possibly, I don't even know the history of the industry, but he might be the Starbucks of gloves. And, and you know, he's one of them. And like, it's because he's. And we've known Fred for 22 years. Going on 25 years. Exactly. He, he's, he's, um. And I want to spend some time with you talking about this Andy, his, his mentality, which, by the way, I had the privilege and you have as well, with your work with Satya Nadella and stuff like, like when you come across like a seriously interesting growth mindset leader, you, it, you, you, you know it when you see it, and it's just an amazing thing to behold. And you know, that's Fred. Right. Like, he doesn't know anything about AI. He says he's like the least technical guy in the room, and yet he was probably the first person in his company to get on the urgency around that. This is. There's something really important happening with neural network gen AI systems. We need to be on this, even if it's going to be a long journey.

Andy Sack: Yeah. So it's interesting. I mean, you hover on that. And I want to, I'm going to, I'm going to both emphasize a couple points and add to what you're saying, which is, you know, let's talk about Fred. What you're saying is that Fred, and we talk about this in our book, you know, the AI first mindset as a critical component of the leader. And I don't think. And I think what you're saying is that it's at least so far the most important interview we've done on the podcast because it's such a case study of that. Here you've got literally a import export business of plastic gloves. It's a commodity business. There's little to no differentiation. It's the plastic gloves you see particularly during COVID but when you go.

Adam Brotman: To the dentist, you're a Jacoi and they're handling.

Andy Sack: You go to food, you go to restaurants, you go to the dentist. Those plastic gloves, both clear plastic and now colored black. That's what he sells. And he sells that predominantly as a B2B business. Um, and he's from Form 3 for over the 20 years. He's grown it into hundreds of millions of sales.

Adam Brotman: And Forum three, the YO chapter, not Forum three, the company. Yeah.

Andy Sack: And what's fascinating about it is in it. So that's the business that he's in. He, uh, he's not a technical guy, but he also was the first. He moved to. He opened and started going to China before it was trendy to go to China for cost advantage because he thought that that was critical, strategically important to his business. So he did that. And he now has a China operations. He has a business, ah, processing, um, also for cost savings in Philippines, which is also. Which he also spun out and serve helps. And that's a B2B business. He's helping other companies harvest the cost savings in the Philippines. And then he start. He. He moves to AI he meets some people. He's always listening for an angle in the commodity business. And he comes across AI he's enough to. He's. He. He writes down the name and he gets the people in and, and he's like, yeah, let's try it. And he tries three things and he, he goes on that journey. And he's been on that journey now for 20 years. And each one of those moves. We're focused on the AI point here. But that kind of leadership is what I think is a lot. It's. It's not hovered on enough. And I think you're right to emphasize it as one of the most important episodes we've done so far. Maybe even more important than, you know, the MAD episode. Right. You know, Brice comes at it with a similar lens. I'm sure when Brice listens to that in this commentary, I'm sure Brice will be nodding his head going, yeah, culture. Creating the right culture under a leader like that is what is so important.



Adam Brotman: Uh, yeah, Brice from.

Andy Sack: Brice from Moderna.

Adam Brotman: Brice Chalanov from Moderna, the head of A.I. but you're right, because Brice is so. Okay, let me bounce back and forth with you because the, uh, in the book, the, the chapter, if I remember correctly, we talked about the AI first mindset, but we talked about the growth mindset. Like we, we literally mentioned, like, people should be aware of the growth mindset. And I think we even like, gave credit to some of the original authors that published and talked about the growth mindset and the research around it. And we're pointing out like Fred has it. And I saw that with Howard Schultz at, uh, Starbucks that he was incredible.

Andy Sack: Satya has it as well. Satya as well.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, that's right. Because like, Fred, like what I loved about what Fred said is that he, you know, he said, oh, I went to this conference and, and uh, we just said it just now in the episode, like, I went to this conference and I was late. So I sat, I think a YPO conference. I was sitting in the back and I was back with the speakers. Like it was almost like I was in the green room with the speakers. And he starts chitchatting because that's how he is. He's like, what do you do? Like why, what are you going to speak about? Oh, you're going to speak about AI. Like why is AI interesting? I, I been using AI for years. No, not this kind of AI. There's a new kind of AI. Uh oh. What do you mean oh? It's like a digital brain. Like he's. If you're in the right mindset, you're asking questions, you're not thinking, you actually know things you're constantly trying to learn. And then what we've talked about is like once and he mentioned it on the episode, remember on the episode he said he had this like aha moment. We kept trying to get him to say the holy shit moment, but he kept saying I had a uh. I don't know if it was a holy shit moment. I had an aha moment. And it was like this is going to be as big as the Internet, if not bigger. Like this once he had that like switch flips.

Adam Brotman: He's over this threshold. You and I have talked about, about, about leaders that get it. And at that point, once you get it, like the other thing Fred talked about that it's worth commenting on is he said you got you. You. All of a sudden it's going to feel like you got to eat a whale or go on a thousand mile journey. Cuz it's a long. It's. Change is hard. You're now you're in. You realize like, oh crap. I got to go through a transformation, an education and transformation journey as a leader and as a company. And that's hard. And you know, he said you, you said what's the advice? And his answer, if I remember from just now, was get started.

Andy Sack: Don't be roadkill.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, don't be roadkill. And you know, start the. We could have titled the book, we.

Andy Sack: Could have titled the book instead of AI first or the Holy Moment, we could have titled it don't be Roadkill.

Adam Brotman: Yeah, or like he actually talked about like, you know, like eating a whale starts with one bite, you know, and it's like. But his point was if you don't get on that journey. I think he said start now. Like get on that journey. We couldn't agree more. But I, I got to say, like that doesn't happen without the right leadership. So I, I want to continue to hover on this leadership.



Andy Sack: Can I add, can I add to something you're saying? So it's interesting because we've had, you know, we're out talking to prospective customers, C suite director level CEO. And, and this podcast is really aimed at CEO, our businesses where that's who we're talking to predominantly, but the C suite. And it's clear that there are people that either naturally have that curiosity and that mindset, and there's a bunch that don't, and they're just busy. And it turns out that there's a lot to be busy with and there's nothing wrong with being busy. But there's a, ah, we recognize very clearly the divide of people who are, have had the aha moment and are in search of how do I take this and digest it. And really, like, as we've talked about, this is, you know, the next 18 months. The, the, the race is on. And for those of us we talked about this with. All right, so for those of us who had, who have or are in the industry, we're overwhelmed by the gap of people that get it and don't. And it's just, it's worth hovering over because we get that's Fred's the first positive. It might be interesting to have a couple of people like, oh, because we hear this, oh, what could you give to me so that I could convince my CEO that this is worthwhile? Right. You know, and, and on some level there, I don't, you know, we talk about what could we do with. What would we say, what could we show people to, to deliver that aha moment on some level, if you sat down with chat GPT and played with it for an hour, you haven't had a like, holy moment in that hour. You know, it's kind of a. Yeah, I would say it's a business IQ test because it's.

Adam Brotman: I think that's right. Uh, yeah, that's right. I was talking to uh, one. One of our prospective customers the other day and I was like saying, hey, you know, this is what form, um, three does. Andy and I do. And I was trying to get them to have that aha, ah moment a little bit. And distinguishing gen AI or you know, these frontier AI systems from OpenAI and anthropic and Google and Microsoft and whatnot. And I was explaining to him that it's, it's better today. It's better than ah, at almost any decision you're making. It's overall, on average, going to be better than you. And the problem that I think a lot of leaders have today but haven't had the aha uh moment is they're just, it's not better at you at every single interaction on every single chat. In fact, you have to like, know how to iterate with it. You don't have to be a prompt master or prompt engineer, but you got to get your 10 hours in and get going. And if you haven't done that, what's going to. You're very likely to be a leader that goes, I don't give what the fuss is about. So it writes a better email when I ask it a question. Sometimes it like gets something wrong. Like everyone's talking about this thing and I just think it's like a better Google. And you're like, yeah, well I promise you that if you were even decent and proficient at uh, using it on average, it'll make you better for sure. And I don't, I think we're now at the point, Andy, where it's going to make people significantly better than they would be on every decision they make if they know how to properly sort of bring it to the table and use it a lot. And they don't need to have some big bang thing. But, but anyways, it gets to the point of, I mean, I think, I.

Andy Sack: Mean let's, let's, let's cut to the chase. I think we're of the opinion that it's better than you and I, than you and I as uh, as CEOs, that the alien intelligence think that is AI today is for sure at the same table and it's better than us. And so we consult with it all the time at ah, Forum three. And we encourage.

Adam Brotman: This is a really, this is what's so hard about this area is. And I think we're getting better at this, like, getting better at recognizing like how do we help a business leader understand what we understand about it, have that aha moment so then we can turn around because our services, we helping somebody get to that aha moment isn't really what we offer as our service. I mean we're doing it on this podcast. It's free to consume. Like we go do keynotes. We, we, we write blog posts like we're not trying to chart. We, we want someone to have that aha huh moment because it's in our selfish best interest because then they're going to go, oh my God, can you help me train my team up? Can you help me identify use opportunities? Like let's go. Right.



Which is what Fred did. So Fred had that. He had that moment and then he was like bringing in authors like us to go talk to his team for an hour and got going. Right. So it's, it's, it's a fascinating topic about why. So it is better than you and I at times and in moments and. But it's, there's times where it's not and, and it almost misses. It's funny. You're right. It almost is confusing because if you're using it right, you're actually collaborating with it constantly. And so it's the human plus machine, which we talk about a lot in our book. We talk about it over and over. It's this co. Intelligence that Ethan Mall talks about, whatever you want to call it, human plus machine. And like, that is better than the machine or the human. And I think it's. I don't know how to do it. We talked, remember?

Andy Sack: We know this guy.

Adam Brotman: An Iron man suit. Like the Iron man suit. Although in Iron Man, I think it can fly around by itself.

Fred Crusetto: The Jarvis.

Adam Brotman: But that's coming. We don't have the Iron man suit that can fly around by itself yet, but we've got the Iron man suit. That's. That's kind of the analogy.

Andy Sack: Yes. So I, I completely agree. That's well said. The one thing I would say, because you've been saying this and you're more articulate about it than I am, when I simplify and say the alien intelligence, the AI is better than. Than. Than you and I as CEO or anybody as CEO, that's sort of a misnomer because it's, it's actually what you said. It's actually the experience, plus this AI that has innate capability that's better than any CEO and it's the union of those two things. That's right.

Adam Brotman: It's not quite garbage in, garbage out, but it's a little bit of that old saying, garbage in, garbage out. Like if you know how to converse with it, if you know how to collaborate with it and you do it enough. So I'll use a sports analogy and I know we're gonna gotta wrap up here, but like follow this in. In football, right? You sort of like, you gotta like, there's running. You. You running plays and passing plays and you gotta like, run. You gotta like mix it up, right? You gotta like. You can't just only pass because it's sexy and you. And it's exciting and you get 2010 yards on the field. And a lot of times when you run, you get stuffed, and it's like three yards in a cloud of dust, right? And I feel like you using AI properly to make it better than you. You have to commit to the run game, right? You gotta, like, get in there and, like, collaborate with it a lot and understand that, like, it's the, it's the cumulative compounding effect that you brought it to the table and you augmented what you did with it so that it can really become this, like, Iron man suit that you can wear as an. And that you are better. Like, Tony Stark was pretty smart. He was pretty studly and in the Iron man, but when he put that suit on, he was Iron man.

Fred Crusetto: Right?

Adam Brotman: And so there's an element of, like, you got to kind of know how to wear the suit.

Andy Sack: Yeah.

Adam Brotman: Well, a lot of mixed.



Andy Sack: Let's put it this way, your, Your NFL fandom comes through in spades. If you're not an NFL fan, that last bit is probably lost to you. But the, The. The point has been made. Uh, I thought it was a great episode, uh, at a future time when we have a chance to get through it. One thing I want to say, I think the fact that he tried three things and that the, the use case of HR and customer, um, support, the fact that those were the two that he focused on that got the most ROI is something that we should talk about in a future episode. But we have to run. So let's wrap it up. Thank you all for listening. This is AI first with Adam and Andy. You can go to a forum3.com get, uh, get our podcast. You can get case studies. Join our email list. Follow us on LinkedIn forum3.com Thank you all. You can never overinvest in AI onward.



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