Gabriel Almeida It. Emilio Alvarez Gabriel Almeida How'd you sleep? Pretty good. Heavy. How about you? Emilio Alvarez Decent. Gabriel Almeida Mine was too. I woke up a couple of but I didn't have trouble sleeping. I'm going to the doctor Friday because I think I might be waking up because I'm not breathing, like, you know, because I'm waking up every night, bro. Like, 3, you know, like, up, like, get up. Might as well go to the bathroom. Although that's not the reason I'm waking you And then. Yeah, probably takes, like. I never check my phone because that's just but probably takes, like, I don't know, like, 20 minutes or something to get back to you know? Emilio Alvarez Are you sure it's not your age? Gabriel Almeida Could be my age. Do you. That happens to you Emilio Alvarez No, not really. Gabriel Almeida so you sleep through almost always? Emilio Alvarez Yeah. Gabriel Almeida And I do have to do something about her. Emilio Alvarez I mean, sometimes, like, I'll use a bathroom or but it's like I'm up and back. Gabriel Almeida Yeah, I hear you. Emilio Alvarez It sounds like you're getting a little. A little sick. Gabriel Almeida No, no, it's just my. Yeah, I always. Whenever the AC is bumping a little, like, a little hard because that helps me sleep. I like the first hours of the day. I'm always, like, blowing my nose. Emilio Alvarez Interesting. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. I could take like, Zerg every day. But then taking Zyrtec every day isn't the best thing for you. Emilio Alvarez Yeah. Gabriel Almeida This guy accepted, bro. Know if he knows how to work this. Emilio Alvarez Gotcha. Gabriel Almeida Wait until 905 and then we can send him an email. Emilio Alvarez Yeah. And by 9, 10, he's not here. Like, what's your schedule? Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Emilio Alvarez So, man, I'm does it make sense at this point to, like, the one if you. Because there's like, two slides I need to finish, essentially, like, actually, like, clean up. And there's a few where, like, I had the blanks and all that stuff where it's like. I kind of know what I'm trying to say. But, like, I was like, I'm not gonna spend time on the last wording. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Emilio Alvarez Does it make sense for you to do that and I like, putting yours into this format? Gabriel Almeida I think it might better for me to do the formatting thing because I can do it in beautiful AI, and that's much faster. Emilio Alvarez but, like, we need it to be in a consistent format. Gabriel Almeida Yes. I can do it in beautiful AI. That's much faster. Emilio Alvarez What do you mean you can do that in beautiful AI? Gabriel Almeida I can. It's What I've been telling you, brother, Beautiful is capable of doing. Why it's amazing. I can take your slides. This guy's calling me. Let's pick up. But he's calling you, bro. Hey, Sam. Emilio Alvarez Hey, how's it going? Gabriel Almeida Good, how are you? Sam Kachmar Good, this is Gabrielle. Gabriel Almeida Yes, great, thank you for your time. let me ask you a quick question. I sent a calendar invite with a Google Meet so that my co founder could join. Would you mind logging into that or is that inconvenient for you? Sam Kachmar Where did you send that to? Gabriel Almeida I never received that. Your email. You accepted the invite, so maybe if you. Do you use Outlook? Emilio Alvarez No, I don't. Gabriel Almeida Okay, I can send you the invite right here on what's easier, email or WhatsApp? Email. Okay, cool. I'm sending it your way now. Okay, dude. In Beautiful AI, I can upload your slides, copy and paste them into my presentation and edit the color scheme, the fonts, everything with two clicks. Emilio Alvarez I am not convinced that's going to look but we can. Gabriel Almeida So. Emilio Alvarez And dude, the things like the color scheme for Beautiful AI man, just to be completely sincere, it's not it. Sam Kachmar Dude. Emilio Alvarez The design is not it. Gabriel Almeida You saw two colors. We gotta edit it obviously. Emilio Alvarez But it does not look great. Gabriel Almeida Man, you're judging something you should be shouldn't be judging. It's not an end product. Dude, how does he not see the freaking invite? It doesn't make sense. It's on an Apple calendar too. There you go. Hey, Sam. Emilio Alvarez Sam, good morning. Sam Kachmar Nice to meet you. Gabriel Almeida Nice to meet you. this is Emilio, my co founder that's been working with me in this project. Sam Kachmar Nice to meet you, Emilio. Emilio Alvarez Nice to meet you. Sam. How's it going? Gabriel Almeida Pretty good, Sam. We'll jump right into it just out of respect of your time. So Bill recommended you very highly to us. Thank you for making the time to speak to us. Sam Kachmar Bill's a very nice guy, a very impressive human. Gabriel Almeida He is an impressive human. So we are currently, I think you can call us Bill, students. Although it's not formally a class, but we're currently part of MIT's staple startup incubator or accelerator. And we're currently researching a thesis around business and process outsourcing for small to medium businesses within the spatial design and constructure ecosystem. So that includes architecture firms. So would love to get your thoughts into how you see outsourcing in your industry today and if you're engaging in any aspect of It. Sam Kachmar I think what I would say is I get solicited for outsourcing our existing conditions and 3D modeling and rendering and things like that on a relatively regular basis. Gabriel Almeida Okay. Sam Kachmar But our firm, I make a pretty concerted effort to keep as many things in house as possible, which both provides stability in terms of when there might be lulls in other aspects of projects, that we do all of our existing conditions measurements in house, we do all of our 3D renderings, and we do all of our virtual reality work in house. Just because I feel like that gives our team a better handle on how we do things. I'm sure we could outsource stuff and at firms I worked at in the past, we would do that. But it felt always like the product that you got back was. I don't know what quite the right term is. Not. It was a game of telephone. Sam Kachmar Just when you talk to somebody in a circle, the word that comes you know, 10 people later is very different than what you say to somebody and what they hear in there. So that's just kind of how we operate in there in general. So I may not be the best resource for being pro outsourcing. I guess I would say I'm almost more pro insourcing or keeping stuff in house as much as possible. At least that's my firm's general philosophy. Emilio Alvarez Gotcha. You I mean, understanding that more deeply is super helpful as well. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. So you are in your firm now. I think there's 14 people. Sam, I was checking out your website. Sam Kachmar are maybe 15 up in New Hampshire now. We have two offices, one in Cambridge and one in New Hampshire. And so there's 13 of us down here and then there's two up in New Hampshire. yeah, 15. Gabriel Almeida Right. And I understand, Sam, that your preference is not to outsource for the reasons that you mentioned. But if you were to consider it, like, what in your mind would make sense or would be worth the shot? Is it like the rendering? Is it the drafting? Is it something else? Sam Kachmar I think the place where it would happen for us is if we felt like our staff was overloaded process wise or, you know, in terms of workload wise, and we could somehow ease their workload but still allow them to produce the more creative aspects of our industry, essentially remove some of the mundane tasks on a day to day basis. Yeah, that would be where I think outsourcing would become more attractive to us. I mean, the pitch that we get from most every, you know, email and LinkedIn message and things that constantly kind of come in are you know, it can save money and get stuff done But that's not that attractive of a pitch just because I, I, we're not trying to do things faster. We move at a really good pace. Our team's efficient. Sam Kachmar sometimes I'm like, there's a limit you know, there's a law of diminishing returns as to how much more efficient you can get if you're 98% you know, getting that 2%. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Sam Kachmar the amount of effort it takes to achieve it may not necessarily be like the juice might not be worth the squeeze on that. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. But regardless of speed, Sam, I mean, what about the argument that you just could be growing, Right. With more ease? Sam Kachmar Yeah, I think that is also a good thought process. I thinking about how much you want to grow or if you want to grow is a very relevant part of that as well. I think my firm is relatively young and still developing. You know, went from whatever it was like zero or you know, one to 15 people in a couple years. And now we've kind of stabilized at that point. And you know, there are a lot of growing pains with that. And so as we have settled into a good groove, there's a part of me that isn't looking to grow at this current point in life. I think I've got three young kids, we're not young. I got an eight year old, a five year old and a seven year old. And so, you know, I really enjoy my time with them. Sam Kachmar And that's an important part of my life right now. like, to me, trying to grow a company more or trying to scale up or do any of those kind of things isn't the most attractive in that way. You know, currently, I think maybe it might become that in another, three to five years as my kids get a little bit older and don't want or need my involvement in their life as much as they do Gabriel Almeida Yes. Sam Kachmar So that's kind of how I think about that. Gabriel Almeida Yeah, that's helpful. How do you think, Sam, that like, if you do or imagine I don't know, five years down the line, like you're actually thirsty for some more growth and expansion? Do you see, do you see yourself looking at outsourcing in a different light or you think you're basically going to see it the same way and decide that it's not the best route for you in your firm. Sam Kachmar It's a really good question because I think, you know, I question myself as to whether or not I'm like, old and curmudgeony and am I, like, aging myself by thinking that's, like, not a good idea. But there's a part of me that thinks there's a certain level of connection, especially in the type of work that we do. That sort of knowing the place and knowing the building and knowing the people that are involved in it is an important aspect of it. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Sam Kachmar So sometimes when outsourcing to the Philippines or India or China or wherever it is that you're outsourcing to, the challenge is how do you form that connection over a. Over a digital tether, as opposed to being able to have in person connectivity in there. Gabriel Almeida Right. Sam Kachmar And that's a challenge to try to figure out. And it's one I, I'm sure we'll grapple with. And I. I'm sure the world and markets will tell me that I need to outsource and need to move that way, and maybe I'll end up doing that and maybe somehow I won't. Gabriel Almeida Right. Interesting. You mentioned like, if you were going to. To consider outsourcing, Sam, it would be more for those mundane tasks that would free up more of the creative time for your team. What are those Monday tasks specifically in your mind? Is it drafting? Is it rendering? Sam Kachmar No, it's not rendering. It's drafting. It's existing conditions and then it's construction details. So. Gabriel Almeida Okay, that's where those things are. What auxiliary functions to your firm, that are not part of your core business? Because drafting, it's but it's. It's part of your core process. Like, what about What you know, other things? Sam Kachmar Billing? We have a bookkeeper, I guess, that is outsourced already. Gabriel Almeida A bookkeeper outside of your firm. Yeah, got it. Interesting. Interesting. Emilia, anything in your end? Emilio Alvarez I think if I'd like to better because I know that you mentioned a little bit about the. That you prefer to have things in house, essentially. Incorrect me if I'm wrong. Like, my understanding is, like, because you actually like to have people who are basically more like, involved, almost emotionally with, the area with the house or whatever's being built, or just on the sun, getting the artistic feel for what you're trying to do. Is that something that you think is, like, something that has to happen Or do you think it's something being on the Same time zone, etc. Would also help? Sam Kachmar I think I. I think it's something that physically matters in some capacity. But I mean, a lot of our staff have been younger and they're now growing into a more seasoned role. I think in these last five, eight years we've had young staff that's been growing out of college. And I've thought that it's been really important for their professional growth if they are going, you know, start their own firm sometime, become a well rounded professional and everything that they have all those sort of tools in their box. And that has been part I think, what's influenced me to say I think we should do all this stuff in house. Sam Kachmar you know, as our team continues to mature and grow, maybe some of those things won't seem as relevant and maybe we'll evolve into a different spot from there. Gabriel Almeida Got it. One of the things, Sam, that we're looking the most into is outsourcing of the drafting function. Like I'm. I'm originally from but I've been living in my. Miami's been my home base for now 10 years, I believe, this. But a lot of movement there and a lot of density and interior designers and architects. A lot of residential projects. I think real estate's been booming in South Florida for really long time. And we've spoken to around 15 people there, high end interior designers. Haven't had the opportunity to speak to as many, like, more architects. Which I I don't know if in the region you're there's this clear distinction between architecture firms and interior designers. Where I'm from Brazil it's all mixed up. It's all. Gabriel Almeida Interior design is within the best architecture firms. But a lot of them, Sam, are already doing. And this includes mill workers for shop drawings, for example. A lot of them are already doing shop drawings overseas renderings overseas. And what they seem to try to find is someone that has a very similar cultural feel and taste that the firm has, apart from the hard skill of drafting. And it is in a way limiting to that person, of but they do very much delegate all the mundane drafting to that individual or group of people and not the creative process. So I think it's interesting to hear from your perspective, even if it's that specific, maintain initial manual work still a, A Concern in your end for not doing that in house, Gabriel Almeida And it seems like a couple things come into play. one, it's your concern for the development of the junior people in your. In your firm, Because if they're with you in your office and during your project, you have more of an opportunity to develop them in the future. But you seem to also. And that's what I want to dig a little bit more into. Sam, you seem to also think that there's this value for. Even if there's a person that's only drafting, which I, I think is not the case in your firm, because you seem to be giving them more than just that responsibility. Even a junior person, you. Gabriel Almeida It seems like you have the field that even if all they're doing is drafting, apart from being in a physical space and office where you can help them correct their drawings, like, you think there's value for them to be in contact with the project in person, in the residence, in the house or the apartment, Sam Kachmar I do. I think that there is a value in the sense you know, this is a long standing discussion in our industry you know, you can move to modular housing and have everything produced in a factory and have it delivered to a site and erected you know, in two weeks, or whether you can 3D print a house or whether you can do whatever. You know, I think the idea of shelter and a home is this thing that's always existed for all of us as humans you know, we all grow up and you form some kind of weird emotional connection with your house. Whether it's a good one. If you had a, a nice family that raised you, in some ways a bad one, whether you had an abusive relationship or whatever else in there. Sam Kachmar But I think we all sort of transcribe these emotions into these buildings. And I mean, to some extent, you know, there's you and maybe this is the wrong conversation for your purposes, but I mean, I think that, you know, in some weird way, not to be like heebie gb you know, I think buildings absorb some kind of energy or existence or whatever that goes into them, you know. You know, sometimes if there's been, you know, some serial murder or living in a building for a while, it might not have a good feel to it. And. Or if a really like, loving, caring family has existed in a house for 50 years, even though the house might be kind of run down or a little bit shy, there's sometimes a good feeling in Some of those spaces. Sam Kachmar And I guess what I think is that when a good team is working on creating a home of that way, some of that energy or some of that feeling goes into the construction of that place with both the contractor, with the architect, with the interior designer, with the client, with everybody that's involved in that construction. Above and beyond, just sort of the. The numbers and the sticks and the bricks and the. Everything that goes into it, I think there is some form you know, congealing of both energy as well as physical environment, so. Gabriel Almeida Interesting. no, that's super interesting. Sam Kachmar Take that for whatever you think about that and, you know, call it who. You call it, whatever. But I think there's. There's some. I. I think there's something there. And I'm you know. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Sam Kachmar Trying to be all man, the energy flow of this place or that is the other thing. But I think that when. When a good team works together on a and something. Something special sometimes comes out of you know, above and beyond the actual just, like, aesthetic look or physical strength or prowess of a building or things like that. Gabriel Almeida Yep. Do you think, that, like, for some reason it may make more sense like, either interior designers or mill workers or GCs to outsource something like drafting more than an architect like or you think it's the same. Sam Kachmar I think those are all different professions. And I guess I would say. I think it would. Gcs, it would make more sense Because I've worked as a general contractor when I was younger. I and an inherent. I grew up. My dad was a builder, and I grew up and I got into and I think there's a inherent sort of tension between those industries, because in architecture, you want to design something to look and that might mean curves or weird stuff or overhangs or things. And in construction, you want to be pragmatic and either efficient and build something and keep sort of your things on budget and everything. Sam Kachmar So you're trying to think, how do we make this more efficient or, you know, fit within the budget better you know, what is the most efficient way to construct Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Sam Kachmar And so I think for builders, it's more efficient to outsource drafting because I don't think there's as much of a connection in terms of how that goes Interior designers. What I find, at least here in Boston or in our industry, is that interior designers outsource stuff many a time because they're not very good at drawing on a technical side, they tend to maybe be good at selecting things or hand sketching, but they don't have the capabilities to do 3D modeling or create renderings or specific or VR walkthroughs or things like that. Shops or like, you know, cabinet makers that would make sense to outsource stuff. Sam Kachmar Usually what we see is once a shop reaches a certain size, they have an in house drafter that then just drafts all of their projects for them and then if they get slow, they end up laying them off or something. But I'm sure that could be outsourced easy enough. Gabriel Almeida Yeah, that makes sense. Wanted to ask you too, Sam, about turnover. It's one of the things that we're noticing a lot is a high turnover in every firm that we speak to in this space. Well, not every firm, mostly in the interior design firms in Florida. So how has turnover been in your firm and how do you see it more broadly in the industry? Our and maybe you disagree with can educate us a bit is these are not you know, especially for junior roles, high paying jobs. And, and they're, they're, they require a lot of people. They require a lot of skills. A lot of you know, stressful with a lot of people are usually overexerted. Sam Kachmar I think that my team has been pretty fortunate that we've had a low turnover rate. You know, we lost one person last year and we lost one person a year before that. And so we've hired a couple people to replace them. Gabriel Almeida Okay. Sam Kachmar And, but I think one of those people is here for five or almost six years and they were going back to grad school and the other person was leaving to start their own development company, which I kind of thought was going to happen in there. And so I feel like one of the things is by doing different things within our office, by you know, one you know, part of our team is out doing site measurements in Newton right now. And that's a little in some respects like a team field trip. They're out there taking a bunch of measurements. You you know, breakfast out there. Yeah, they're seeing a different, part of the city. They're doing different things and then another day they'll be in here doing design shred. Sam Kachmar I think that by doing those different things together and having that sort of unique aspect of doing something different every day, that lends itself towards a lower level of turnover. But that's just my own personal philosophy. I know that doesn't work in the restaurant industry. I can certainly do. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. But do you see turnover being more of an issue in the broader industry apart from or you don't really have an opinion about that. Sam Kachmar So I think that high end residential firms here in the Boston area, 10 or good ones. And when I say good ones, I don't necessarily mean the best design ones or the best profitability ones. the ones that I think are led by some of the people I like respect the most. Because I've been in this industry for a long time, for my age, I guess I've you know, doing this sort of since I was it's weird. I, my dad was a builder, so I was working on job sites as a teenager. So some people that I know now, I've known since I was 12 or 13, you know, they've continued to mature through the industry. Sam Kachmar so the people that lead good architecture firms or good interior design firms have lower levels of turnover because they just genuinely care about their staff and they do things like company retreats, they celebrate birthdays, they like, they do silly things within their office and not that those things, you know, make or break somebody's decision when you get an offer for more money to leave yeah, I'd rather work somewhere that I got paid a little bit less but that I enjoyed being with the people that I was with than taking a few extra bucks but wanting to kill myself every day when I go in, like, be like, this place sucks. I hate these people. And it just drains the life out of me because like, I've worked at a couple of those places and like, same. Sam Kachmar I don't want to say it doesn't matter how much you get paid because if you told me tomorrow, like, I'll pay you $5 million to go work there for you, I'd be like, well, okay, I go there for a year But like, it matters in some capacity. Gabriel Almeida Absolutely. Sam Kachmar Leveling part. Gabriel Almeida Absolutely. And then Sam, when I, when were talking about how you see outsourcing, right. I was quite interested in like you said that the pitch of like, we can do this at half the cost of your US labor. I don't know if they mentioned half the cost, but that's what we think we can deliver and faster that neither of those things landed with you. And you mentioned how like, you necessarily want to move faster and the savings didn't. Didn't seem speak to you. I don't know if that's kind of like a skepticism for the quality of the work you would but you also mentioned how, like, it's. It's also not. Gabriel Almeida It also doesn't or, it would land strongly with you if were talking more about a pitch of, like, this will help you grow. This is how you grow. This is how you get to the next level, even though that's not something you're looking to do now. So I get my. I guess my question to you like, how. What would be your advice if we are going to go forward and try to offer this to the industry? Like, what do you think is the pitch that resonates the most? Like, what are the value levers that we should try to build our business Sam Kachmar I think the value lever is how you can offer some form of support to these companies and try to figure in a little bit. I think you have to tailor it to each one. Depending upon if. If it's a residential firm that's doing, you know, lake houses in New Hampshire, you they might need help with certain types of drafting on shoreline permit management. If it's all Back Bay condos in then they might need help the Beacon Hill Commission or, you know, and maybe that can be outsourced in some way or, you know, how things are drafted there. But some of those things are localized elements, and that's a challenge to outsource some of those things. And that's the thing I. I struggle with sometimes. Sam Kachmar I to your point, the thing about drafting and renderings, you know, there's a lot of. I guess I would say there's a lot of companies that I come across that ask me. We do all of our modeling and in building information modeling in and companies ask me, you know, why you don't need to do that. You can just use CAD or you can just do this. And I love hearing that every single time because, like, we're really good at doing that stuff and other firms aren't or can't. And I think sometimes they either do outsource stuff or don't. But our firm can do a lot of those things in house. Sam Kachmar And because we do them in I think they are more connected and work more efficiently sort of with each other and with our drawings and with our meetings than if they were all outsourced. Of course, I think of it A little bit like a. You know how, like, Apple does, like a. kind of a walled garden. you know, your phone works better with a home pod than it does with a Sono speaker or whatever else in there. I guess I feel like that's part of why I think about keeping stuff in house in that way. I think for that works well. Gabriel Almeida Okay. Sam Kachmar And it creates a good ecosystem for our. Our clients in there. Gabriel Almeida So correct me if I'm wrong here, Sam, but I think part of what you're trying to get here is, like, if we're going to try to sell outsourcing for drafting, for example, not rendering, then the way we sell that to each client has to involve, like, listening to each client's needs and what they value. Because in your opinion, can I think, Emilio Alvarez Drastically. Sam Kachmar trying to just have like, a quick listening session like, the principal of the firm or, you know, whoever is the. The managing studio director or whatever would probably helpful. Because if you can listen to then you can hear specifically. If they're looking for. Maybe they are looking for rendering support, maybe they're looking you know, drafting support. for, I don't know, like, maybe they're looking for design ideas and sketches. Who knows what they're looking for? But if you listen to some of those things, maybe that can help influence how you then pitch or sell to them. Gabriel Almeida Yeah. Sam Kachmar As opposed to just having a singular pitch that goes from the same thing to each and every firm. Gabriel Almeida Absolutely. That's great advice. Emil, do you have anything else in your end? Emilio Alvarez I think that's all from my end, man. Gabriel Almeida Cool. Sam, thank you so much for your time. Just wanted to wrap up by asking. We're trying to learn, Sam, as fast as we can about this space and rule you know, things as fast as possible. Do you have any colleagues in the ecosystem that could potentially be. Be helpful conversations to us that you would be willing to introduce us to? Maybe, Sam Kachmar Let me think on that. And maybe I can email you over the names of a couple other firm owners in and amazing you can reach out to them and see if you could set something up. Gabriel Almeida Incredible. Thank you so much. Super helpful. Have a good day. Sam Kachmar It was really nice talking with you guys. I hope you guys have a great rest of the day. Gabriel Almeida Thank youTube. Sam Kachmar All right, see you guys. Gabriel Almeida Bye.