# Audio file

[S'well Sarah Kauss.mp3](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

# [Transcript](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Hey really quick before we start this.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:01 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Brand new episode of How I built this. I want to remind you about a new video series that we've just launched. It's sort of how I built this online live conversation with me and a different founder to talk about how they're handling the crisis, how it's affecting their business and also how they're working to build resiliency and think.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:20 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Creatively about ways to navigate.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:22 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[He threw it this Wednesday, April 8th at 12 noon Eastern. I'll be talking with David Neeleman, the founder of JetBlue and Azul Airways, about his industry and his ideas on how to move forward. And then on Friday, April 10th, at 12 noon Eastern. I'll have Tristan Walker on. He's the founder of Walker and Company. It's a company that makes personal care products like the bevel razor. So we're going to catch up with him.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You can join us live and please bring your questions.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:00:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Thoseconversationsallhappen@facebook.com/how I built this, you do not need a Facebook account to watch it, so just go to facebook.com/how. I built this again, that's this Wednesday, April 8th with David Neeleman at 12 noon Eastern and then Friday April 10th with Tristan Walker also at 12 noon.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:08 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Eastern find thoseconversationslive@facebook.com/how. I built this. Bring your questions and I hope to see you there.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:20 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You went to a trade show and you literally saw a table with knockoffs of your bottles. Or is is that?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:27 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right. Yeah. So not only were there swell bottles at this trade show, but the swell bottles had won an award and had a ribbon on a display case at the trade show.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:37 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was it the same logo with the S apostrophe? Well.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, it was the same logo and it had the trademark symbol on the side of it. It was. I almost passed out.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:43 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Lots and and what? What was your first reaction like?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:01:55 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[From NPR, it's how I built this a show about innovators, entrepreneurs, idealists and the stories behind the movements they built.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I'm Guy Raz, and on the show today, how Sarah Cows turned the humble thermos into a sleek accessory called swell and watched her business grow. By the 10s of millions of dollars.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:09](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Turn.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So what are the common threads? You might have noticed on the show is the element of design. Design matters a lot and not.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Design of your product, but the design of your business, the logo, the colors you use, the customer interface, all of these things differentiate successful brands, especially when they're trying to break out of the pack. So for example, think of spin drift, sparkling water that is a crowded space, but.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:52 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Spin drift stands out not only for the quality of its product, but for the simple and clean.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:02:58 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Side of it or soul cycle. The founders of that company spent months coming up with.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:03:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Colors Gray, black, yellow, and the simple geometric logo. A bike wheel with spokes. So design matters and that is in part the story of swell. It's a water bottle. Yes, a very good water bottle. But when Sarah Kallis launched it back in 2010, there were already lots of good bottles.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:03:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Out.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:03:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Thermos bottles that kept your drinks hot and cold. Camelback bottles with those foldable straws, squeezy plastic cycling bottles, but almost no bottle that looked sleek and beautiful. A bottle you'd want to put on your Instagram feed. And that was Sarah Kauss's great insight.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:03:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That is how she broke through the pack. And as you will hear, she didn't have personal wealth and lots of her friends wondered why she was throwing away a perfectly safe career and accounting to pursue water bottles.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:01 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But Sarah had a hunch that lots of people would want a better bottle. People who didn't want to buy and throw away single use plastic people who wanted a functional and nice looking bottle at the same time. And she was right. In 2016, just six years after it launched, Swell reportedly did about $100 million in revenue.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:23 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And by the way.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Sarah managed to scale the company without ever taking a dime of outside money. She did it by building swell, methodically and strategic.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:34 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Anyway, right now the company is dealing with the same economic anxiety that everyone else is facing, and I'll ask her about that. And because of the current situation, I couldn't interview her in a studio. So Sarah joined me from her home in Florida, which is where she grew.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:50 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Up I am sitting in my.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:04:53 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Bedroom in Jupiter, FL. The reason I'm sitting in my bedroom and not my Home Office is my son who's just under 2 likes to come and knock on the office door and say Mama Mama. So this was the quietest place in my house that I could hide. So.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:09 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's a beautiful, sunny day in Jupiter. I'm watching the boats on the Loxahatchee River go by. It's it's a bit bizarre that it's so pretty out, given what's going on in the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:18 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[World and and that river you're looking at, you actually grew up like by that very same river.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:23 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:24 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yes, life was simple. It was easy. You know, you could ride your bike outside and have all kinds of adventures. So you know, there was always some kind of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:34 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Something to be discovered. You know something to be built. It's a beautiful place to have grown.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:40 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Up and then tell me about what your dad did for a living.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:05:45 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[He ran and owned a car wash he built and ran that business for 40 years. You know, 5-6 days a week working at the car wash, which also had a gas station, a little shop and a few tenants, including an ice cream store that my mom ran and a plant nursery.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That he rented out so he was a small business owner in in Florida.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wait, all of this was at the gas station. There was an ice cream shop and a nursery and a gas station and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A car wash.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:13 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was genius. So you. It was. You dropped your car off on one side and you had to walk through the retail establishments to pay for your car wash and of course, you had to wait 15 to 20 minutes until your car was done. So why not buy a plant, an ice cream cone and maybe some greeting cards while you're waiting? So it was, it was sort of one stop shopping.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:23 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. So is your mom and dad basically worked together every day. And your dad was kind of running the facility your mom was running the ice cream shop. It sounds like they made.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:42](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Work.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[They made it work. Yeah, they're they're still really very close. And I think that, you know, building a business, building a family, you know, going through all that together, it's a unique opportunity to sort of talk about your day and talk about your lives together. But they.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:56 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Certainly made it work.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:57 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What kind of kid were you in high school? What do you remember?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:06:59 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[About you as a high school student.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, I was as awkward as they come in high school.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:05 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A terrible hairstyle. I wish somebody had told me at the time that those big bangs were going to come back and haunt me in later years. I was certainly not a popular girl, you know, I was a bit of a nerd. I was Co president of the Save the Manatee Club with my best friend. I was. I was at a club called Deca. It was a business.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:22 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Love it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Club and I went to state and national conventions working on business problems my senior year. I was voted most likely to succeed in business.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:36 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So you were already into business in high school like you were. I remember those kids in high school, they would be mocked. You know, there's that kid in the the the business club and some of them were very briefcases. But you were kind of like.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:49 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:07:50 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I was definitely like that. I I actually I think because I grew up with entrepreneurs that were always running a business. I think that I knew that I would go into business in some form or faction from a pretty young age.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:02 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. So you went off to the University of Colorado and you studied accounting, which is a very practical thing to study. And I guess you your first job out of college was with Ernst and Young as a trainee or a junior CPA.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:19 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Correct. Yeah. So I I took the CPA exam right out of college and I went to work at Ernst and Young. I think the weekend after I graduated and I I was in Denver for two years working as an.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:30 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Auditor and then I moved to Los Angeles and I was still at EI and I worked in the tax.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Division for two years.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:37 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And and basically that means that you were your first two years you were sent to a client and you would just go through all their books and just make someone's life miserable by asking them. What's this? What's this? What's that? Right, I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Mean. Is that sort of what you did?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, that's that's basically right. I mean, I wouldn't say we were there to make everyone's lives miserable, but I can't say there was a single client that was ever happy to see us coming. You know, they would give you this audit room somewhere in the basement without heat or air conditioning or window and say, oh, how long are you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:08:54 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[No, right?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:02](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:04 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Staying. Can you leave tomorrow so?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:05 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, no ones.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, here come the others.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:09 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, so you do that and then?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You do tax.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Auditing too, after your first two years.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, after my first two years in Denver, I was getting a little bit itchy to try to do something different, and this was 2000, where allthe.com companies were really quite exciting. And I kept reading about the clients that Eli had had in California and they were allthe.com companies. They were mostly new media companies.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:34 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And really, the first DTC companies that I went to go work with and it was really a bit of the Wild West because a lot of these Internet companies were transacting, you know, potentially for the first time, yeah. And we were helping them think about and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:09:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Solve questions and problems that were absolutely brand new so is non glamorous as a tax role sounds it was actually pretty interesting work just because of the types of individuals our clients were.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's amazing because this really does speak to how you were really kind of, whether consciously or not, laying the groundwork for what you would eventually do, because all of those skills would be crucial when you started your business eventually. I mean, just having that knowledge and the ability to think about financial issues from the beginning gave you huge.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:20 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Manage.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I agree absolutely. You know, in hindsight, almost everything that I did helped lay the groundwork for where we are today, but it didn't feel like that at the time I was such a restless soul, right? It was I I just couldn't wait to do the next thing and find myself and figure out what the universe had in store for me that I didn't realize that.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All of that was, you know, potentially very valuable and and necessary steps to get to where we are.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:47 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Now.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:10:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. Alright. So you you do your thing at Ernst and Young and you decided to go to Business School to hire a Business School. Yeah. And. And did you make that decision cause you thought? Alright, I've done this. Now I need to build a network of people or I need some new ideas about the next thing to do. Or was that the thinking?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:06 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was after a few years of really working with these clients I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I just wanted to become one of my clients and one of the common themes that my clients had were a lot of them had gone to Business School and so it was more just the gift of time of a couple of years to try to come up with some idea or some kind of what's next for me because I realized that why I didn't aspire to be my boss.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:14](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:32 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Where my boss's boss. But you know, I met so many amazing and fantastic people in Business School that I wasn't really networking with to help me with my business. They were just my knucklehead friends that were helping me get through this experience of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:11:46 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Cool. That now happened to be, you know, the movers and shakers of business. Yeah, well, I don't know that I needed to go to school to learn finance or marketing or operations, but I think for me, it was the combination of the confidence plus the network of friends, that kind of help support me through the times that I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Need it that you were there from from 2001 to 2003.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I should mention right that you were there at a time where I don't think entrepreneurship was really being emphasized, right? Like most students were really kind of going there and they would end up at McKinsey or at a big finance firm.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:22 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[On the partnership track is that is that right? Like entrepreneurship wasn't really a thing quite yet.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:27 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's right. It really wasn't a thing when I was in Business School. I think I took 1/2 class on entrepreneurship, but it was more how to finance a business than how to start and grow a business. You know. Now, of course, there's whole centers devoted to it, and there's a lot of resources that I wish that I had.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:42 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Bad, but no, it really wasn't a thing back when.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:44 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I was in school.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:46 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I think that going there in the back of your mind, you had this idea of maybe I'll graduate and become an entrepreneur. Was that your thinking or not quite yet?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:12:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, it was, I mean, even my essay before I went into Business School, I wrote about how I wanted to start some company at some point and do something. I just really was looking for that big idea when I was in school. And, you know, unfortunately, I didn't find the idea while I was in school. I was still searching for it. When I finished school, I was actually at HBS during the time.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:13:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[September 11th. So the economy took a real change from the time when I started in 2001, through the time when I left in 2003.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:13:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. So you you finished in 2003 and what did you do when you grow?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:13:29 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, I I had a really hard time finding a job when I graduated, so myself and just a couple of my friends, we actually wound up staying at Harvard Business School and the school created jobs for some of us. So you're working in a position that, you know, quite honestly, always making less after Business School than I did before. You've got a massive amount of student.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:13:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Loans and you also just don't know when the economy is going to get better. And it was it was a really strange and difficult time for myself and a couple of my friends that wound up basically kind of sticking around and not finding our next step.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:13:49 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:02 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, so you, so you get a job at working at HBS for a while, and then and then I guess eventually you get a job with a a real estate development.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:07 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Firm I did so my my previous roommate from before Business School when I worked in California, she said. Well, there's an interesting job at my company.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I know you have no real estate experience, but they're looking for someone and I was able to talk my way into international real estate development role for a number of years helping to build big private partnerships for mostly laboratory buildings for scientists.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:38 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Huh.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:39 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Tell me about your kind of your state of mind.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:42 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Then were you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:43 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Happy. Was your life interesting? Were you thinking? Alright, I'm on the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right track now.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, I was really unsettled at the time. I liked my job. I liked the people. But professionally I I found myself sort of really wondering.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:14:59 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was this all that there is? You know, I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Finally was finally, you know, making a pretty good, normal, decent salary. You know, being a VP at a public company. I had some some stock options that, you know, would vest over time and, you know, was obviously helping me with my savings account. But, you know, helping me pay.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:15 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Off my loans.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:16 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I I just, I sort of started to get a little bit itchy almost the same way that you know, when I was at Y.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Knew that I didn't want to become my boss's boss. You know, it was certainly a really interesting challenge to see if I could.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:28 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Figure it out.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:29 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But it wasn't necessarily the thing that was making me feel really excited about my career.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:34 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And you were living in New York at.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:36 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The time, by the way.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:37 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I was like my company had put me up in a a month to month rented apartment because I was doing a a real estate project there. So I was really living in nomadic life. They they put me up in a a studio.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Apartment there so.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Did you have time to think about or did you make time to think about what else you could do? Did you talk to people about it, or did you kind of keep it inside?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:15:59 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I kept it inside, you know, I I would say that from the outside, everyone thought that ohh things were going pretty well. I I think I was at the point in my life that I didn't want to whine and moan about. They seem to be high class problems about oh, you know, I'm not feeling fulfilled. But I was working so much and I wasn't really making the time.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:16:19 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To think about what came next, I almost.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:16:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I had to go on a, you know, a vacation with my mom and really step away from the day-to-day of my busy life to even have any type of, you know, reflection time. I literally had to get outside of my own life, you know, in a place that required you to put your BlackBerry at the time away and and not be so focused on, you know, the next ping that you're going to get on your e-mail.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:16:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Because I wasn't really making the time to think about my own personal situation and what came next.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:16:49 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, this is this is an important moment because I think it's around 2009. Your mom going on vacation? Hiking trip to Arizona. I guess your mom.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:16:59 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Had been cancer free and was celebrating.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yes, it was a really big, exciting moment. My mom had had breast cancer and was so brave and so strong and and really got through it to the other side and was done taking all of the horrible medicine. And we said, you know, if if you can just get to the other side of this, we're going to go away and have a, you know, a fancy spa vacation. So we went off to Tucson, AZ, and it was.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:24 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[One of those moments that because we were celebrating her her health and and really having those deep conversations and those those thoughts about.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, life. You, you get one. And you know, what are you going to do with it? And you know, how do you want to spend your time and what's really important and my mom.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Started it and she.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:42 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Said, you know, if I had to do it all over again, I would have been a painter. She said she loved to paint and she taught painting classes in high school. But she.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:17:53 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wanted to have a career and raise her family and she studied something else and she did something else and she said, you know, now that I got through this cancer thing, I'm going to take painting lessons.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And she said to me, she said, what is it that that you've always wanted to do and don't wait for health scare? Don't. Don't wait for, you know, until you get my age to go do it. You know, what is it that you wanted to do? And I don't it just it all came out of me just.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:17 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Just in that conversation.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:19 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, so you run this hike. This is intense, man. I'm like your mom survived, like she's telling you all these things. And you're like, oh, my God, you must have been. You must have been crying a lot and laughing like you must have.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Super intense.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Because this is really the beginning of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:35 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What would be the rest of your professional?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:37 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What what happened on that hike? He would.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:39 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's it was one of those things, guy that it was everything. Everything just came together. I just, you know, I was walking with my reusable water bottles, so I for many, many years have gave up single use plastic. I think part of it was, you know, Boulder being part of me going to see you and, you know, being a very environmental school.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:58 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:18:58 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, I grew up recycling, so there was, I always used a reusable bottle, but.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:19:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was. It's hot in Arizona and we're hiking for a long time. And so I'm, you know, I'm walking with this metal bottle on a hot day and drinking hot water. So the first thing that occurred to me is, would it be great if somebody invented a water bottle that actually kept things cold? And then I had just recently been at my Business School reunion at Harvard, and they had a professor that made a presentation.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:19:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right, right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:19:24 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[About climate change and talked about how those that are affected by the water crisis were only going to become worse in the future. And so I had this idea on the hike that if there was a company that that was creating a better water bottle and you tried to tie it to a social mission.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:19:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[By working on plastics and climate change and educating people about the water crisis, it could be really interesting to do something good while doing something good.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:19:56 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow. So you're thinking all right, maybe there's something to do with water. Water bottle, a better water bottle. You finish your hike, your trip to Arizona, and you say goodbye to your mom and you go back to New York and you go back to your job. But does this idea like, like when, when you are on the flight?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:12 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Back to New York, when you get back to your apartment, like is this idea now planted in your head?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was. I started writing a little bit of a business plan. It's embarrassing to call it that now, but it was more of an outline, a manifesto of of what I thought this company could be.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And what did you write?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Ohh I I wrote that we were going to be the the water bottle partner to Fashion Week and and the Ted Conference and sold in Bloomingdale's and you know changing the world and you know I I sat down and just started writing like if if a product could do all this you know how how would it work you know of course there weren't any practical.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:43 Speaker 3](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's in there. There wasn't anything in there about.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:20:56 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The financial statements or or you know how to do it? Processes or procedures or manufacturing it was it was more of just a thought piece about what could happen if this really.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:06 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Worked, So what?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was your first, what do you remember? Your first step being? I mean here you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:10 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Are.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You are working for a.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Real estate development company. No background in.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Manufacturing or supply chain or or design even.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:20](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What was the?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:21 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[First thing that you you remember doing after writing down your manifesto.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, I remember going to the sporting goods store, paragon sports in Union Square, and I purchased one of every water bottle on the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:30 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Hmm.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I started using them myself and passing them out to my friends and asking them to use them as well, just to try to get some feedback on how it could work better, how it could look better, how it be packaged better. Really just trying to educate myself on what was out there and what I wanted.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To build and what did you find?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:53 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Out well.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:21:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I found out that there were a lot of bottles out there, right? This this was a very crowded marketplace. But what I discovered was there wasn't anything that really looked great. I mean it, everything was appropriate for the gym. Everything was fine for hiking, right. But there wasn't anything that I thought could catch like wildfire, like a fashion accessory, a thing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And so I thought it really needed to catch your eye when I designed this, it really needed to be beautiful, for lack of a better word. And there were some bottles that were functional, but they were marketed for extreme. Yeah. Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:17](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Here.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:30 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Camping and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:32 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That wasn't the market I was going to try to go after and so I just thought if I could convert the non converted so if I can convert people to use a water bottle.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:22:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That haven't because it it actually works, right? It's like the thermos. It keeps things hot and cold, but in a way that it's the thing to do instead of the, you know, the avians and the fijis and the smart waters. You know, if I could try to go after sort of that set that was using what they were drinking.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[As more of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A statement the bottle needed to really be a statement piece.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. When you started to talk to friends and other people about this, I'm I'm assuming people were like, Sarah, there are millions of bottles out there.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:18 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, Are you sure you wanna get into this? Did anybody say that?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[No, that's that's exactly what they said. Every everybody you know, closest friends included, thought this was a foolhardy idea. I actually went to a Business School, a classmates wedding, and I was explaining, oh, I, you know, I just quit my job. And I'm. I'm just getting ready to to launch this company. And I what do you think about the idea?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And one of my good friends jumped into the conversation and felt the need to defend me, and she said, but she used to have a really good job.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:23:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And she felt so uncomfortable for me that I was explaining myself to a perfect stranger at this wedding that she almost wanted to defend my honor by saying, well, I used to have a business card.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That made sense to people.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What did it take for you to quit your job? I'm assuming when you quit that job, you figured, well, if this doesn't work, I can get another job like it I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:13 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Again is that we?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Were thinking. That's right. I think my downside risk protection was, you know, I still had my CPA at the time. So I thought, OK, if if this really doesn't work out, I guess I could always go back to, you know, helping people with their taxes, which I really didn't want to do. So I was super motivated. But yeah. So I always thought there would at least be something.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:14](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Now.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:20](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:26](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[For me to do if this went sideways.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:36 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And how much money did you have to live off? Like what was your run?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:40 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So I had $30,000 in the bank.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:43 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That you had saved up from your.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[At the time.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Correct. And that was going to last you, you know it could last you a while, but you also need that money.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To I guess to start the company.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:24:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right to start the company to buy the first initial inventory, build the first website. It seemed like a lot to me at the time, but when I really started getting into, you know, beginning to build the business, it actually wasn't going to take me.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Very far. So let's start with how you began to build the business. First of all, you have an idea for a water.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Model that's going to be a beautiful.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:14 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Bottle that's going to do everything that a really good thermos does, but it's going to look cooler. Who who do?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:19 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You call like.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:20 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Where did you go?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I started designing the product actually in PowerPoint. Of course now we have, you know, 3D printers and engineers on the the team. We do things properly, but at, you know, back then I I started with a line drawing that I had made myself and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I thought, OK, how do we take this drawing and turn it into an actual product? And I just wound up taking my Business School friends out for coffees and say.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[This is what I'm struggling with. This is what I really need your help you know. How do I find a factory? How do I do this? And I wound up finding a a friend of mine in school who's who's dad had made some products and could put me in touch with the right people and kind of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:25:56 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Send me on my way. Wow. So eventually you land on a on somebody who can help you design the bottle.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Act and how how did?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You land on that design of the bottle that most people listening to that will will recognize.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:10 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, I wanted it to be really classic and really simple. You know, I wanted it to be something beautiful and iconic enough that could be sold in the MoMA store, but I didn't want it to be like the ones in the sporting goods store with, you know, the carabiners on the top and, you know, the neoprene on the side and the neon colors with the reflective tape.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:27 Speaker 3](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. Yeah, right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:30 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I just wanted it. You know, the whole idea was just to try to encourage people to drink tap water and not to use so much plastic. And so I wanted it to be as sleek and elegant as possible. And so I I really just tried to make it functional more than anything.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:26:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, so you've got a prototype and then where do you get it made? Is it again like the father of that friend from Business School kind of connected to the possible like factories in China that could make a prototype?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:00 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. So I actually originally really wanted to make the bottle in the US and spent a fair amount of time reaching out to factories in the US and I couldn't find anyone that was interested in working with me. We just didn't have the scale and we, you know, I couldn't say that I wanted to make.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:16 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, thousands or millions of pieces, you know, day one, until I had the demand. And so I wound up finding that the, the factories that I had been connected with in China were willing to to take a risk on small entrepreneurs and do a small run until we were really up and running.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So. So what was your initial run? How many bottles?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So I made 3000 pieces and they were all blue. They were all the same size and they were all exactly the same and I had them shipped.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To my apartment.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:44 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[How much did that cost?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Do you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:46 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, it was the majority of my savings at the time. I actually convinced the factory to let me do it. 50% down payment and a 50% payment 30 days later. So that helped a little bit, but I had a bit of a fire under me that sell.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:27:52](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I bet.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:05 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The name.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The swell was on the side, the logo and everything was was printed on it. How did you come up with?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:13 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, I wish I could say that I came up with the name myself. Unfortunately, I'm an accountant at heart, so I actually originally named the the company can't live without it because I thought you can't live without water. Yeah, I thought I was a genius. I actually spent $1000 on the the URL can't live without it.com and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Which is available if anyone's interested.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:36 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, no, it it turned out that was a terrible name for a water bottle company because so I actually hired a A-Team to help me build the first website. And I I had them sign an NDA. And I tell them my big top secret, you know, idea for starting this water bottle company that's going to change the world and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[They said OK.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What are you going to call it? And I I told them can't live without it and they just started.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:28:58 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Laughing, just like you did just now, guy. And they said, you know.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[We like you and we're going to tell you this. No one's going to buy this product if you call. It can't live without it. And so even though I hired them to create the website on the side, they help me come up with some other names. And they actually came up with the names. Well, and as soon as I heard it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:16 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It I knew that that was the right name.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:19 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But I'm imagining that swell existed like swell.com, or there was their company is like, swell. It's.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Know.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:26 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It swell existed. So swell, actually turned out to be really difficult to register, but it was actually a a Business School friend of mine that said to me, you know, how are things going as well? And I said Ohh, we don't get we can't use the name. We have to go back to the drawing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:39 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Bored. She just. She was a banker. I don't know how she came up with this idea, but she said, well, why don't you put an apostrophe in the words? Well, and then it's a logo and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Not a word.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:50 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And of course, I called my attorney and said, hey, could can we do this? And he said sure, yeah, that's no problem. Of course, this is after he had billed me for lots of time and hours and expenses.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:29:59 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Didn't come up with the idea itself, but it was. It was the way that we were able to register.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's crazy because you look at it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I think it just works perfectly right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:09 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, I think that works well. I mean it it, it works perfectly because it's so positive. You know it's it's so old fashioned of a word and the the idea of of swell is so old fashioned, you know, trying to harken back to the time that people weren't walking around with plastic water bottles and they were drinking water out of the the tap or their filter at home and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:27 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The fact that we build wealth for people, you know, we bring clean drinking water to people in need, you know. So the fact that we're separating the S with the word well, sort of leans into the mission of what we're doing. It's it's everything that I was looking to do sort of wrapped up into a word, which it turned out quite.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Lucky for us.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:44 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Alright, so it's 2010. You are in New York, living in New York still.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Correct.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[At least 3000 bottles arrive from China and then what? Like how? How do you start to think about getting people's attention and getting creating awareness around it? What?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:30:59 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Did you do?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:00 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I I literally just packed up and and went into stores and I asked to speak to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:04 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Buyer or speak to the owner. In the case of smaller stores and and just explains that this is me. I'm Sarah. This is my product. This is what I'm trying to do. How many can I put you down for and were.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You nervous doing that?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:18 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I I was really nervous. I have to say I am not a natural born salesperson, but I had to sell the inventory because.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:23](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Were were there days where you would, like, walk around, store to store and walk in and just feel like there was no, no interest or?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:27 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I had to pay off the other payment.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:37 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[There were days and weeks actually that I would. I would sort of # the pavement and try to find people to buy the product and I would only get notes. It was a bit depressing in the beginning, you know, I I wrote that manifesto that that small business plan and said, you know, we're going to be sold in Bloomingdale's. And the buyer said no way we don't sell water bottles.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:31:56 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, in those early days I got a lot of notes before I got a few people to start saying yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:32:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[When we come back in just a moment, have Sarah got those buyers on board and how swell began to get a lot of attention, including from people you don't want to get a lot of attention from copycats and counterfeiters. Stay with us. I'm Guy Raz, and you're listening to how I built this.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:32:22 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[From NPR.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:32:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

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[00:32:52 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

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[00:33:10 Speaker 4](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

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[00:33:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

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[00:33:43 Speaker 3](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right now, every household in the country is being asked to fill out the US census. It's the form that helps us determine how voting districts are redrawn, where to build public schools and hospitals, how to spend federal money. So why are some people afraid to fill it out? We're getting into all that this week on NPR's Code Switch podcast.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Hey, welcome back to how I built this. I'm Guy Raz. So it's 2010. Sarah Harris says 3000 brand new swell bottles in her apartment. And she starts pitching them store by store in New York City. And when she can't get any traction with stores.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, I'd say, you know what, I I really think if you use the product, I really think if you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:26 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Tried it. You would understand how great this is and and lo and behold, oftentimes when we get a call back and say, you know, I tried this, I put ice cubes in last night or I made tea before I went to bed and it's still hot. It's still cold. Come back and tell me a little bit more about this product. So you know, I had to take a little bit of a risk and give away some product in some cases to try to get people to really understand.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:47 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It worked like it I said it was going to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So did you eventually sell all three thousand of those bottles?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:34:55 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I did. I did. So it took a number of months, but I eventually sold all of those bottles, some on the website on swell.com and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:05 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Who?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:05 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Knew about the website. How would people even find out?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:07 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[About it I I put it on my Facebook page, I told all my friends and family members and I asked if they would repost it as well and created a swell Facebook page and I just asked people to start liking.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:17 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But I also started to reach out to the press at that time as well myself.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:21 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[How did you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Do that. So I went to Barnes and Noble and I didn't buy the magazines, but I wrote down the address of almost every editor, mostly women's fashion magazines, and started writing letters. And every day I tried to send out a couple of boxes to to different editors with a letter and saying, you know.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[This is my product, this is what I'm trying to do and here's a sample I I would love it if you could try it and if you like it, could you write about it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And how would you know that it was the right editor? I mean, cause you know a person could be a features editor, but the person who writes about pro.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:53 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[This could be an assistant editor and you would never know.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:35:57 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I would not know, but I would hopefully guess that if this what I thought was a beautiful product would show up on their desk and they weren't the right person that potentially they would pass it along. I also had a hunch that even if they weren't the right person and a product arrived, that they might just use it anyway and that, you know, maybe that's one way that I could win people over.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:14 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:17 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, having a swell bottle sit on the desk in someone's office as they're trying to think of story ideas, you know, potentially they'll think.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:25](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Not us.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And when you initially reached out to the editors.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:29 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Did you write?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:30 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A letter saying, hey, I'm Sarah House, this is me. I started this business I'm making. Did did you tell a little bit about yourself?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:37 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I did, I I told him about myself, you know, I told him about what I was trying to do. I talked about how much plastic was in the ocean. I talked about how many people, women and girls primarily are affected by the water crisis and how we're trying to give back to UNICEF and make a difference in the world.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:36:53 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I talked about the product, you know, I said this is this is a hydration fashion accessory. This is not a water bottle. You've never seen anything like it before. And This is why it's important.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To your reader.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:02 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Were you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Thinking initially that this should be something that women would want to use out and about, particularly women.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. So actually my my target in the beginning was women because I was really making something for myself and, you know, friends.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:16 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Me and I thought, you know, women also do a lot of the shopping for the household. So if you really want to get in with a group, if you target someone, why not try to make this a fashion accessory and appeal to not just women, but to their spouses and their, their families, their kids. So, you know, we really did start with women.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:37 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's the target now. We're actually pretty balanced and in our customers being women and men, but that's really where the idea started in the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:40 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:44 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Beginning.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Meantime, did you order more bottles from China or or did you still did you kind of hold off until you sold all 3000?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:37:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, at this time I was still working through my first 3000 and I got a call back from Oprahs magazine from the O magazine. Oh, I sent one of my samples to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Because you can imagine.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:07 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[They get 1000 samples.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:10](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:10 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Week or a day, right? So what happened? Was the editor called and said I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Of stuff or day, yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Got your bottle?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:15 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:15 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I took it on my family vacation to Peru and it worked. I used it every day. I kept my water cold. We really want to run this product and we want to run it on the old list, which is the must have list for the summer. But the catch was.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[1.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:29 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[This, she said. You need to send me one of every color you have because color looks good on a page. I know I only had blue, and of course I I still remember what I said. I said, well, I'm standing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Ohh and you only had them in blue.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[In the warehouse right now, which was what your.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:44 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Apartment. Yeah, like my kitchen, living room. Tidy apartment. Yeah, I can bring you as many as you want.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Are you OK? Yes. Oh, you said.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I'm staying in.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The warehouse, OK, yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:50 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[They only come in blue and it was this heartbreaking moment because she said, well, call me back when you have more colors because we really need colors to go on the page.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:38:57 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And so you said.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:02 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I said I will and I literally hung up the phone. I walked out the door. I went to Barnes and Noble. I purchased a Pantone color book. I picked out six additional colors and I called the factory and I said, listen, I need you to make me two bottles each. And these six colors.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And FedEx them here. I need one for Oprah's magazine and one for myself to take pictures to put on the website so we can we can show that we're selling these products and that's how we went from one color to to seven and we were featured then in the summer of 2011.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:36 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[In in Oprahs magazine, which was a really big milestone for the business.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:41 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. We talked to Sarah Blakely three years ago on this show. And, you know, there was the Oprah effect for Spanx. What happened to swell? I have to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Then like people.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:52 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All of a sudden your web traffic went up.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:39:53 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, the web traffic went up so much that we and I say we I was still the only employee I had to really work on the back end of the website because we crashed immediately. So there was absolutely an Oprah effect. But I would say more than anything it was sort of this stamp of confidence in the business that that either gave me more confidence as I went into retail.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:40:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Or give retailers more confidence to try the product and put it on the shelf. I made a little sign that said, you know, as featured in Oprah Magazine, and that certainly helps, you know, opening up retail doors.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:40:25 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[How are you fulfilling Web orders? I mean, there must have been a lag time between the time somebody ordered it, because now when you order something, you expect to get it in two days or three days. But I imagine you did.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:40:36 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That you weren't able to fulfill all these orders that were coming in through the website quickly.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:40:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, at the point that I had ordered the additional inventory, I realized I was going to need a fulfillment center. So at that point, I wasn't actually sending the orders myself from the post office. So I had set up a fulfillment center luckily and, you know, worked with the company that basically works with direct to consumer companies. So surprisingly, even though we were pretty small.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:40:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Company orders were going out in a day.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:04 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Or two. Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[All right, so you start to fulfill orders and you're now getting more interest from smaller bouts.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Leaks, but you also had a pretty big turning point. In addition to the O magazine 2011, when you landed a deal with crate&barrel, they ordered a few 1000 bottles. How did that happen? Did they approach you? Did they hear about you through, you know, just media?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Attention, you know, I think crate&barrel did hear about us through media attention, but the way that I actually met them was through a.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:31 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Great show. So I had been going to some of the gift trade shows and standing in a little booth almost like a science fair booth. You know where you stand there. Next to your poster board and you say, oh, hi. This is my product. And I remember being very excited to meet the buyer from crate&barrel. And you know they said they were going to put us in all of their stores, but also their catalogs that would go.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To so many homes in America. So that was a really big.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Exciting turning point.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:41:53 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That first full year, which was 2011, do you remember how many trade shows you went?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:00 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I went to 17 trade shows that year and it was exhausting. Stay on friends couches and start doing customer service for the e-commerce site or billing credit cards. You know, being the only employee and doing all of the jobs, you know. And of course, my friends would want to talk. You hadn't seen him in years. And you said, oh, can I crash at your place in Atlanta?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:05](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:18](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The last thing you want to do after talking about a.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:23 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:23 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Water bottle talk to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Anybody. So those those were trying times.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:28 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's for sure.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:29 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That must have been really. I mean, go into all those trade shows must have been absolutely crucial, because that's where you've got the critical mass, where you meet those retailers and distributors. So crate&barrel, was that a a huge deal for you? I mean, you'd already had the O magazine thing, but was the crate&barrel?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[An even bigger.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:45 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Thing Crate Barrel was a bigger thing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Because it gave us a bigger stance, it gave us, you know, national attention and in some cases, from a press perspective, they really want a retailer to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:42:57 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Tell their readers to go to. And so we started to sort of get a little bit more press because we had better retail placement. It was also the first time we figured out how to make a bar code. Sticker, Crate Barrel is our first National Council. It was the first time we had to read a vendor guide. And so they had these requirements. That said, you have to actually have the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:14](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Ohh yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:17 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Sku number in a bar code sticker. So I googled how to do it and I I printed out the barcode stickers on my home printer, invited my girlfriends over and we had pizza and wine and stuck all the stickers on. I actually shipped the bottles from my warehouse to the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:32 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[House to put the stickers on because like the stuff that was in our warehouse, wasn't compliant with their vendor guide. And so it was a real learning opportunity to say, hey, listen, if you're going to start working with some of these really big partners, they're going to have to get.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:46 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[On how to service them.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Meantime, it's just you. You are the company. You are swell.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was just.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Me. Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:56 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Do you remember what your sales were in your first year?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:43:59 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I think my sales in the first year were just under 100,000.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:02 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Dollars. All right, so.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh, by the way, did you ever think, OK, Now I gotta go out and raise some money if I want to scale this thing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:12 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I considered it, but then quickly discounted it because I thought you know what this is going to be a big waste of time and I'm not really sure if it's going to work. And so why don't I just wait until we're bigger and more successful because we'll have a better pitch and a better story to tell to.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Investors, if that's the path we want to go down. So your idea was let me get.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:29 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Some traction and then I'll find the money to scale it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Exactly right. OK. Makes sense. So you continue to kind of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:36 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Of get attention and you're in crate&barrel, and by 2012 you did like $2,000,000 in revenue. Did you I'm assuming by that point you had to hire people to help?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You. I did. I hired my first employee that year. Her name is Katie, and it was her first job out of college. And she?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:44:57 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Showed up to come work with me. She was very brave.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:45:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I remember the first time I saw a really sort of notice the swell bottle was at the Ted Conference in 2013. Was that a deliberate strategy in your mind? Like, let me put these in these in the Ted bags, cause you have to cause, right? It's a barter system like you, Ted is not really buying them from you. You are essentially right. It's a donation. You're.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:45:16 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Ted does not buy it. It's it's a donation and it it's it's an expensive, you know, since, you know, 23000 people that go every year. And so, you know it. But it was, it was very deliberate because as you can imagine, being as scrappy as I was starting so well, I didn't have a marketing budget.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:45:21 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Very.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:45:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And so I thought, how do I get my bottle in the hands of influencers of people that are sort of on the cutting edge of ideas? Ted being one of those real obvious places. And I had sent a bottle to Ted and said, you know, again, this is my bottle and this is my story. And, you know, surprisingly, they called me back.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:45:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And even though that's really what I wanted, it was a huge decision to pull the trigger and make the donation because it was expensive and it was a product that I had to basically give away and not sell with the hopes of, you know, something coming out of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[How did you know that?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:13 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Donating all these bottles into the Ted gift bag, how are you able to track whether that was going?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:17 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[To.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:17 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Be you know whether there was going to be a.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:20 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Return on that investment.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, it is hard to track, but we can try to see where orders come from, you know, on the website we have a little, how did you hear about us live? So we try to see our people talking about Ted there, but we have a pretty big corporate business where we actually work with big companies and we we put their logos on both.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:38 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And some of the first bigger corporate orders that we received were CEO's and and founders of companies that had had a 9:50. They actually wrote to us from the Ted Conference.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Ben, Ted. Ohh wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So we wanted the same thing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:50 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, exactly. And so in a couple of years ago, Shonda Rhimes was one of the the Ted speakers, and she wrote into, you know, info. It's well bottle here.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:46:58 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Self and said oh hi, I'm Shonda. And I just got a swell bottle at the Ted Conference and she purchased swells for all six of her shows at the time. And the cool thing about that was then you had the the likes of, you know, Kerry Washington and all of those amazing stars that she has access to because of her shows all walking around with the small bottle. So it's really hard to really quantify.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:06 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:13](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh my God.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:19 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But when you pull back and you think you know, how did I meet?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:22 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Shonda, how do we meet LinkedIn? You know, how did? How do we get a bottle to? Guy raz? It was a big, you know, calculated expense. But at the same time, it it certainly has paid off for us.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Now I read that like a year after you started swell you, you went to China to go visit the factory that was making the the bottles for you. And then you went to a trade show in Hong Kong and you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:44](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:44 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Literally saw a table with knockoffs of your bottles. Or is is.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That right that.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It is a true story. Yeah. So I had gone to so many trade shows, you know, over the first year. And here I am in Hong Kong and I saw a big, you know, promotion for a trade show. And I thought, great, I spent all my free time at trade shows. Now, why don't I go check out this show and see what it's like and not only.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:47:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What? What happened?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:07 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Were there swell bottles at this trade show? But the swell bottles had won an award and had a ribbon on a display case at the trade show. What? Yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:17 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was it the same logo with?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:19 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The S apostrophe well.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, it was the same logo and it had the trademark symbol on.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:24 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The side of it it was.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:24 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh my God.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:25 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And it and it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was all of our colors. It was everything it was. It was as if we had gone to the show ourselves, yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:29 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh my God. Oh, my God. What was your first reaction? Like, what's going like you must have, I'm sure.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:34 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I almost passed out. I couldn't believe it, and I was there with my boyfriend at the time. Who's now my husband, and luckily he kept his wits about him.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:42 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And went over and started talking to someone standing by this, you know, display case.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:46 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[What do you say they say?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:48:47 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Hey, what are you doing here? He said. Oh, hi. Tell me about this. And then the the gentleman that was working in the booth was Super Smiley and happy. And he pulled out his business card and gave it to us and said, oh, hi, I'm from swell. And his business card also had swell on it. Of course, I had never seen this man before.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So what'd you?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Do we contacted the officials that were running the show and showed them my business card and showed them the swell website in the US and?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:13 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But listen, this is a counterfeit company. This is not swell. We are not showing at the show. We found someone that had the keys to the display case and we took all of the samples out, stuffed it all into our bags, and we went back to our hotel. I mean, we we couldn't believe what we had just seen.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:30 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow, I can't imagine you had a a budget to hire lawyers at that.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[No, I mean I had done, you know, the initial registration of the patents and design patents and intellectual property, but but certainly didn't have a lawyer on staff or really the budget. You know unfortunately we did have to hire some attorneys and we really did have to try to get to the bottom of it to make sure that this was stopped immediately.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:49:54 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You did eventually win a lawsuit. You received $19,000,000 in damages against defendants that were accused of trademark infringement.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:04 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And these were similar. These are just knockoffs. These were counterfeiters who were making bottles and calling them.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:10 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Swell.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Correct. So we've had a number of lawsuits that one included of individuals and companies that are, they're making products that directly infringe upon our intellectual property rights.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:21 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I mean we we talked about this a little bit with Randy Hetrick of TRX because TRX straps.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:27 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Massively counterfeited. He spent years and years and years in litigation. Eventually won. I mean it. It can eat up a huge part of a company's budget and take away from marketing and other things and just time and like mental space, right? I mean, just dealing with all that.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:45 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Is a lot.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:46 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I think it is a lot. I mean it absolutely affects the bottom line. I think it's hard to quantify, but I think you're right. I think more than that, it's the brain space it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:50:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[The the opportunity cost of time when you have your time and attention or your team, or the fact that you're spending money on legal and not on product development or marketing, it really creates a lot of stress and strain on the organization. It also creates a fair amount of confusion for customers in, in the marketplace.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:51:14 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[We hear from customers through customer service that they bought us well, what they think is as well and it's not working. It's not keeping things hot and cold or it dense or the paint is coming off and we asked the customer hey, send us a picture of it and it's not real.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:51:29 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I think that's the thing.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:51:31 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I have the hardest time with it's. It's not just that they didn't buy the product from us, it's just that customers are having an inferior experience and it could really be turning customers off.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:51:43 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[From our brand because they're not getting the real thing and I think that's where it really gets my blood.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:51:47 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Boiling. So as you were growing 2012, you do 2 million in revenue. 2013 Starbucks approaches you, they want to put your bottles in some of its stores in two cities, Atlanta and Austin.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:01 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[They did great, they sold out. But you you wanted them in all the Starbucks. How did you get them into all the Starbucks?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:08 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So I actually was at Starbucks headquarters for a meeting with our buyers, talking about the program that we were doing in in Austin and Atlanta and it was very fortunate because at the time this was in December 2014, they were opening this new store in Seattle.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:23 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Called the roaster.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And it was sort of this Willy Wonka Chocolate Factory coffee experience where you could see the beans roasted. It's. Isn't that cool? It's the neatest. So my buyer said, hey, there's an opening tonight of a new store. Why don't you come to the opening? And so I go to the roast reopening. And who's standing at the coffee bar?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:30 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, I've been there.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Amazing, yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:45 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Waiting for his espresso. But Howard Schultz.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:52:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. And so yeah, I just had this moment where I realized that this was my time to try a much bigger pitch for swell at Starbucks. So I asked my buyer. I said, hey, do you want to come with me? I think that's that's your boss over there. And she said, oh, God, no. She said I'd be way too nervous to speak with the CEO. And so I said, OK, well, here, hold my bag.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:08 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And so I give her my purse. I grab my swell bottle and I beeline over to Howard before anyone else can get to him. And I just told him my story and said, hey, listen, we're both CEO's here. I'm running a much smaller company. You're running a much bigger one, but we could be doing so much more business with you if you could just give us the opportunity to sell in more stores.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:26 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And he listened. He said OK, well, here's my card. And why don't you contact me? And after the holidays, we'll sit down and have a meeting and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[He.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:35 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Was true to his word. He had me in for an hour and a half the following February. Yeah, and we we hatched a plan. We it was. It was one of those incredible moments where I really would have kicked myself if I hadn't done it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:39 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But I still can't believe I.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:49 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Actually did it.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That meeting led to Starbucks putting swell bottles in like, I think, 14,000 of its locations around the world.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:53:59 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's right. So I think 10,000 stores in the US and Canada, 25 countries in Europe all over Asia, Russia, South Africa, I mean, it was incredible.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:03 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And if you hadn't done that, if you hadn't, you know, had the courage to go up to him, had you been too nervous, that may never have.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:19 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Happened.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:20 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Absolutely. I had a moment before I went to go talk to him and I was grabbing my swell and thinking about what I wanted to say.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:27 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I just thought, how am I going to get on the plane tomorrow back from Seattle and live with myself if I don't go do it? And the worst that can happen is he says no thank you. Leave me alone. And the best is that something comes of this. And so I thought, well, I've got absolutely nothing to lose. And it worked out.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:33](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Oh.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:46 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know from that, you know, we sold a lot of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:48 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Product. But more than that, you know, we became more of a household name. Yeah, we had a sign and all the Starbucks that said, you know, Starbucks favorite hydration fashion accessory is swell with our logo bigger than the Starbucks logo. I mean, that's better than sales. That's brand recognition. Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:54:59 Speaker 3](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:02 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:05 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's incredible. I think by 2015 that year, your sales hit 50 million.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:10 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Years you had not raised any money, you had not gone to investors, did you at that point kind of give up on that idea and say, I don't, I don't need to do this anymore.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:18 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[We were actually having some investors come to us and we had some really interesting conversations, but at that point, we were just so busy and trying to scale this company or like painting the plane after we took off, we didn't really have time to think about an investor pitch or or really what that would look like. So luckily we were self funding.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:21 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I'm sure.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:38 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Pretty well at that point. We really didn't need the outside capital.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:42 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's amazing. I mean, did any investors kind of not maybe say this directly but sort of suggest?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That like, hey, look, if you don't take our money and you don't, you know, scale up even faster, you're gonna get crushed, cause some other big brands are just gonna make a similar bottle and crush you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:55:58 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I mean, it definitely heard that from a few people, but I honestly was so focused on what I was trying to do that I wasn't really that concerned about what others were doing and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:56:11 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I had a lot of confidence as well and in myself and what I was doing. And you know, I have met some really nice investors. I just didn't meet anyone that I thought was really going to be that helpful to what I was trying to do.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:56:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I I'm curious about this idea of confidence, right? Because some people just have it. They're born with it. And but I think most of us aren't most of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:56:34 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[As we grow into our confidence and confidence can come and go, right depends depending on your circumstances in life and where you are. But as you built this business and as you saw more and more people buying it, I'm assuming that your confidence grew more and more as well.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:56:52 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I would say yes, although I think with every phase of the business there was always something that sort of.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Put me on the back foot. And so I didn't have time to have too much swagger or overconfidence because there's always something that I could have done better or I should have known or, you know, a person or a process or a system that that needed to be upgraded. And so, you know, I think where I really have come full circle on the confidence.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Peace is being able to admit that sometimes things aren't working perfectly, and to be able to be honest about that imperfection and ask.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:31 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Other entrepreneurs, or even just, you know, other employees for advice or help because I think that if I had been overconfident at any step of the journey that it might have blindsided me or the company for sort of that next big step forward on on the growth perspective.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:50 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[So.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[As you got to a point where your sales are huge, I mean.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:54](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You're.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:57:56 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And you are. You know, you gotta grow the company and you gotta build it out and you gotta get a space. And and how did you hire and what? What did you do? How did you manage all that chaos happening while still, you know, with all that?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:10 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Growth, it was chaos.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:12 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[For sure, you know, it was drinking out of the fire hose or you know, any one of those.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:17 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Allergies, but it was.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:20 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It was a really interesting fun time. You know, it was trying to figure out, you know, how do you get 6 months ahead of yourself instead of always being three months behind. But it was a lot of fun. I mean, I had. I had a really energized, you know, team. There was something that was a bit magical to our scrappiness that that we seem to be able to get through a lot of that chaos and and make.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I don't know thrive on it, really.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:43 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah, it's amazing that even in the lesson, swell jumped onto the scene.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:58:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Over the past 10 years, pretty much every airport has a water filling station. It's a common thing. Parks, public parks have water filling station, not water fountains, but stations where you put your bottle under and there's.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[A.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:00 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know there's a sensor and you and I have to imagine that swell as part of that. Right, don't you think?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:07 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I like to think that we really did create.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:09 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Part of this movement of people carrying a reusable water bottle, you know, part of why I started as well was I was trying to get people to stop drinking so much single use plastic. And so it makes me very happy to see so many, you know, water filling stations pop up and so many people carrying a reusable bottle.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:27 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You mentioned earlier your ex-boyfriend because he's your husband, Jeff who joined the company, I guess in 2016 as the CEO has. How's that been to work with your partner?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:33 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yes.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's been great. Honestly, I, the poor guy. You know, he never applied for a job. He he basically got kidnapped one day. It was one of those situations where I would come home from work after, you know, something had happened. You know, the website being down, for example, and being my partner, I really just needed to vent about it. I would say, oh, this happened today.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[00:59:49 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Right.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:00:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And I just needed to get off my chest, but he would spring into problem solving mode and he would stay up until 2:00 in the morning, fixing the thing, fixing the website, fixing the thing, coming up with the new system for it. And so he said. Listen, Sarah, why don't I come in for 1/2 day every Tuesday and help you get in front of these things instead of you coming home?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:00:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[After the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:00:23 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And it was. It was one of the classic cases of escalation of commitments. You know, that half day on Tuesday basically just escalated to, you know, him working full time for the company. And, you know, it's not what I would have expected having met him, you know, after swell was started, I never would have thought, oh, I'm going to make this guy come and.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:00:42 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Work for me and and fix all of my problems.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:00:45 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But it's been so incredibly valuable for the company to have him there by my side. I really couldn't do it without him. There's no way that that swell would be the company that we are today. You know, if he wasn't willing to sort of put his ego aside and say, listen, I'm going to drop what I'm doing to support you and your dream.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:06 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[In your company, so all of this will work.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:09 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Your business, I mean, I know you don't release financial information anymore. I think in part because of of all the counterfeiters. Is that right?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:20 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That's correct. I found that the more that I talked about our revenue numbers, the more that we seem to have a bit of a target on our back, yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:26 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah. Yeah. But I mean it. You still own 100% of the company?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:32 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I do. I do. Wow.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:34 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[It's pretty insane. I mean, it's pretty crazy, right? I mean, you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:38 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[There are very, very few businesses that have been on the show where the the entrepreneur who founded it, still, Sarah Blakely, is a good example of this, where they still own the entire company unless they were independently wealthy at the beginning and just had, you know, endless supplies of cash. So I think just in.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:01:56 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[From recent weeks from the time that we're recording this conversation, you stepped down as CEO. You're still the executive chairwoman, and you hired a CEO to take over. As of this recording, we're not sitting in the same room.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:09 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You are at your home.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:11 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I'm in my home studio and we're living in a really crazy moment where all businesses are just they don't know what's happening, right? There's a lot of uncertainty. So first tell me about that. I mean, are you? I mean, you're not running the company day-to-day, but what's going on right now with?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:32 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[With the business in this situation.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:33 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Sure.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:34 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[I'm incredibly happy that I did bring in a A CEO who was absolutely the right decision for swell before this global pandemic, but especially now and I'm following the leadership of the CEO who started, you know, just six weeks ago, so it's it's not the transition I was hoping for for him.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:48 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Yeah.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:54 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But you know in in trying times, that's that's when leaders step up and he's doing an incredible job.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:02:59 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, this really is a moment that's going to test every single business in America, small and large, and and there's so much unknown about what's ahead.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:05](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Mm-hmm.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:08 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But how are you thinking about your business and about kind of staying resilient as best as possible? I think it's probably fair to assume you are like every other business you're going to take a hit. People are probably going to be buying your products for a while. It's possible it's very likely. So what are some early kind of creative ideas?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:29 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That, that you guys are coming up with to build some resiliency into your business.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:34](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[MHM.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:36 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Well, I have to say these are these are really uncertain times, you know, no one knows where this is going to end up, myself included. You know, I I do think that there's going to be, you know, more pain and more disruptions before we get out on the other side of this unfortunately. But you know what? I I hope that we find on the other side of this is is sort of a, you know, a changed business environment, sort of a new.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:03:55 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Sense of of community and and relationships that businesses have with their customers. You know, one of the.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:04:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Things that I'm.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:04:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[On and I'm optimistic about is just really leaning into the mission as well. And I think one of the things that will be left with on the other side of this is is really how you know, COVID-19 or otherwise. You know, we're all intertwined and we're interconnected and that my actions and your actions matter for our communities. Our key messaging is really like.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:04:24 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[How can swell be your companion at home right now? You know, we're we're trying to have a sense of humor about, you know, video conferencing and and trying to do your at home workout while you're homeschooling your kids and, you know, trying to be the cook. And, you know, we're we're trying to say we've got products to help you.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:04:41 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But at the same time, like, can we be this place to kind of keep you healthy and happy while you're staying home and staying positive? But we know that all of our retailers aren't going to make it through this time. We're just trying to be supportive. And you know, if if there's ways for us to weather the storm and get out on the other side, what I'm really hopeful for is that we have sort of a renewed.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:05:03 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Sense of community, and like companies that have a mission really matter.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:05:12 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[When you think about success that you've had with this brand.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:05:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Do you tribute that to to skill, to hard work or or more to luck or a combination? What do you think?](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:05:25 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[You know, I think that has to be both. You know, I I would say that it absolutely has been hard work. It's been a lot of hustle, you know, no one's ever going to outwork me. And I I live for swell, and this is this has really been my, my lifes work these last 10 years.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:05:39 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[But I have to say luck has played, you know, such an incredible role in in our success. I was lucky to be born to parents who are entrepreneurs. You know who taught me the power of hard work and positive thinking and doing the right thing. I was born in the country and society that values education for girls. And I went to great schools and I have a network of friends who supported me on this journey.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:06:01 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[And the power of timing was so lucky, you know, I started as well because I had a personal mission to eliminate single use plastic bottles. But at the same time that I started the company, there were so many people around the world waking up to the issue of climate change and global warming and and how.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:06:21 Speaker 2](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[If they potentially had the need to take personal action and so yes, it's been a lot of work, but all of the stars aligned in a really lucky way for that work to have turned into something.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:06:34 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[That Sarah Kraus, founder of Swell Swell, recently became an official B Corp, which means the company is now legally required to consider the impact of all its decisions on its customers, workers, the community and the environment. And, by the way, remember the original name Sarah had for swell.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:06:54 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Aunt Liz.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:06:54 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Without it, well, the domain name can't live without a.com is still presumably owned by Sarah, but should you be interested, you can still register. Can't live without it. dot shop can't live without it. dot Biz can't live without it. dot life, and many other variations.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:07:16 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Hey, thanks so much for listening to the show this week. You can subscribe wherever you get your podcasts. You can also write to us at hi BT at NPR dot. And if you want to send a tweet, it's at how I built this or at Guy Raz, our show is produced this week by JC Howard with music composed by Montina Ribli. Thanks also to Julia Carney.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:07:23](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Org.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:07:35 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[Candace Lim, Neva Grant and Jeff Rogers, our intern is Rainey toll. I'm Guy Raz, and you've been listening to how I built this.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[01:07:51 Speaker 1](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)

[This is NPR.](https://1drv.ms/u/s!ACuE0Z-4JoB_ggE)