Albert Chou:

This is IT Visionaries, your number one source for actual insights and exclusive interviews with CIOs, CTOs, and CSOs, and many more. I'm your host, Albert Chou, a former CIO, former sales VP, and now podcast hosts.

Clate Mask:

It's not just helping them convert leads and grow sales, but it's the time savings and because of the size of customer, the type of customer we serve, putting hours back in their day and doing things for them that make it a lot easier for them to do their sales and marketing work, have it operate in the background, that's the key thing for us.

Albert Chou:

Building a software tool from scratch is challenging enough, but as our guests today discovered, simplifying it can even be a more difficult process. Today we're pleased to welcome Clate Mask. He is the CEO and co-founder of the CRM and automation platform called Keap. That's spelled K-E-A-P, and it focuses on small business needs. Clay, who co-founded the operation more than 20 years ago speaks candidly with us about the arduous effort that it took to make the company's complex automation tool even more accessible for the average small business owner. He also offers some straightforward advice for every aspiring tech entrepreneur. I think that you'll enjoy his comments.

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Clate, welcome to the show.

Clate Mask:

Albert great to be here. Thanks for having me.

Albert Chou:

All right. For those who don't know what Infusionsoft was or what Keap is today, tell is Keap? What does it do? What are you guys about?

Clate Mask:

Yeah, we're sales and marketing automation software for small businesses. We combine CRM, marketing automation, sales automation, and eCommerce into one platform to help small businesses grow.

Albert Chou:

And do you primarily work with e-commerce companies or do you work with all types of companies? It's more like a HubSpot where it can handle basically a customer record, an activity on a website, and then the outbound communication no matter where the person wants to be?

Clate Mask:

We handle all kinds of customers. We definitely have a strong contingent of online businesses, but we have all kinds of customers. The way you described HubSpot, that's really we're kind of HubSpot for smaller businesses.

Albert Chou:

One of the unique things, or I find unique about Keap is the age of Keap. The business has been around since 2001. For those who are born after 2001 listening to this podcast, if you're in college right now studying, in 2001 E-business was not nearly as prevalent as it was today. There was still a lot of questions, is Amazon going to survive? The dot com boom of 2000 had just happened, where tons of dot coms got huge IPOs and went out the door, failed miserably. So this is a really interesting situation here where you have literally seen ... Basically you've built this with the rise of the internet. Give us an idea what got you started, what made you say, Hey, I want to turn the lights on, this is the kind of industry I want to focus on and take us through what you've seen till now?

Clate Mask:

Yeah, you bet. I got into a software company, a web hosting company while I was in graduate school a couple years before we started Keap. When we started this company, we were doing custom software. One of the big questions we had to determine early on was desktop or web? I mean, it was that long ago. So yeah, we were smart enough to recognize the future was web-based and so we created our CRM software in 2003, is when we kind of started to get the predecessor of our current product and we did it web based and thank heavens.

Albert Chou:

Now, were you a developer at the time or what gave you insight as to this is the marketplace to go?

Clate Mask:

I wasn't. My co-founders both were developers and they both said, look, this is the way it's going. And I could see, I agreed with them. And it was tough because there was so much at the time, there was a much more efficiency and much more stability in doing desktop apps and we were doing custom software. If we had just been trying to create a profitable venture at the time and we would've ended up going with desktop apps. But we saw that the future was going all web based, so we started building in Java and that was really kind of the smart move we made back then.

Albert Chou:

What's unique about every startup is every startup typically they don't really know what they're building for. That's the best way to describe it, is you're meeting customers and you're literally building something with the rise of an industry. So as the industry is probably making feature requests and demands, you don't really have someone to look over to say, well, how do I do that? I feel like if I were to start a software company today in your space, I'd have an advantage. I kind of know exactly what things are doing. Maybe I've used products similar to yours. I would be able to be like, okay, I'm going to build this or something comparable or whatever the case may be. And it's really hard to do something where as the industry doesn't really know what it wants, you're trying to fulfill that. How'd you make these decisions? Because a lot of times people say they want to be data driven, but if you're building an industry that's growing, you don't really have data to know what's happening?

Clate Mask:

It's a really great question, Albert. I don't know I've ever answered this for people. But it was two things. First, we were very focused on the customers and what they were asking for. And then second, we were watching the software world and watching how it was changing and we were trying to predict where it was going to go. And then we tried to match up those two things, what customers were asking for and where we felt like the technology and the future was going. But I think a lot of times people are not listening enough to the demand of the customer. And I think that was something we were smart to do. And I think it's easier to do when you're smaller, especially if you come from a custom software orientation. You're pre-wired to listen to exactly what the customer's asking for. So we were coming out of this custom software world, creating a product, watching what was happening in the CRM software world with Salesforce.

And at the time, NetSuite was saying they were CRM for small business, believe it or not. And so we were watching the developments of Salesforce and NetSuite and how they were doing something very different from the SETTLES of the world and the large CRM software packages. And so we were serving these small business customers watching what Salesforce and NetSuite were doing and saying, and we realized there was this thing that was slightly different than what they were saying that was more about helping small businesses grow with marketing capabilities as well. And so it was really listening to customers and watching the industry and then figuring out where the sweet spot was for our company.

Albert Chou:

As you said that answer, it just makes me think about all the different tech leaders we've had on this show. And one of the things that I personally have pinpointed, and I'm sure many others have as well, is this, there's this level of intuition that has to be present because you are building something that maybe data is only reflection of what has happened. It doesn't have any merit on what will happen next. And so where were some bets you think you and your team and your co-founders made that maybe you didn't have the data support it, but ended up being the right decision? Because you're listening to customers so you're hearing their problems very clearly. So maybe you have to make a bet and say, hey, I think this is what they want.

Clate Mask:

The first one I would say was automating emails. Marketing automation wasn't a thing. SAS wasn't even a thing yet at the time. Salesforce didn't really start calling it SAS until a couple years later. We were doing software and we first made the bet to go web based and go with a subscription model. We charged a certain amount upfront, so we had kind of a hybrid model. There was a service fee to get started and then it was subscription. But that was wise for us to go as subscription. It was wise for us to go with automating marketing. We got into the SAS world before it was called SAS and I think that was a good move. We started to do marketing automation before anybody was calling it marketing automation.

There was no Elaquo, Marketo, Silver Pop, I mean there was none of that stuff. It was just our customers were saying we capture a lead and it's really hard to follow up with that lead and nurture that lead through to a paying customer and then beyond that. And so we were listening to our customers who had this marketing orientation and none of the CRM software that was out on the market was doing it. And so I think that was the second effective thing we did. First was going SAS and second was going with marketing automation and really pioneering it for small businesses.

Albert Chou:

You're building for customers, you're making bets including marketing automation before it ever exists. You're like, hey, this is what these customers are asking for, I got to build it for them. Fast forward to the evolution today, obviously you're bigger company now, you have more team members, probably more decision makers from just throughout your organization really. How do you listen to customers today because I mean, you can't really sit down with all of them anymore, you got a lot more?

Clate Mask:

Little different, well you get really clear on who your best customers are, your target customers, and you do some of the old fashioned things we did back then. In a lot of ways when you get more customers it just becomes more challenging to listen to the right customers. But you're still trying to listen to customers and listen to those verbatims and the emotion that they express, it's so valuable. And so you still have to do that, you just have to make sure that the ones that you're picking to listen to are the right ones.

And you can't go listen to tens of thousands of customers. But just in the early days when you listened to 10 or 20 that were really easy to listen to because they were maybe your only customers or it was very clear that they were your best customers, well now you make sure you're picking out 10 or 20 that you still listen to and they are your best customers and you serve them. And then if you design for them and you design for your core customer at the center, then it helps keep the company grounded in its strategy moving forward.

Albert Chou:

And I want to paint this picture for our listeners because this is a human nature is we hear something, we try to compare it to something else that we see. And so when I first heard of KEAP, I immediately thought, oh, so it's email marketing. I mentioned hubs up before. I thought someone's like, well it's more for commerce. And I was like, oh okay, so it's Clavio. And I said, eh, it's not quite like that. I'll tell you who I was talking to. It was the team at Fit Aid. So Fit aid, the drink, the beverage company for those out there, if you guys love CrossFit, you probably know what Fit aid is. But they use theirs for not only the B2C business but the B2B business. And it's something I didn't really think about. They have gyms all around the country, so they need that marking automation that Clate's talking about that they know that they shift a case that runs about 30 days as the case starts getting low, they want to automate and say, hey, it's time for your replenishment or whatever the case may be.

And I was like, man, there are a lot of use cases that I could see why someone would want this integrated. Then I got to see their flow map and not going to lie, I thought it was a military drawing, it was the most spaghetti thing I think I've ever seen in my life. Like hey, I was like, oh goodness gracious. So you've built and built features to handle many different scenarios. One of the challenges for small business technology a lot of times is of course there's smaller budget. So a lot of times people think smaller feature set or they want more simplicity, but yet they have complicated things because in this case I'm naming, they're clearly using one tool to do it all.

Clate Mask:

Yep.

Albert Chou:

So how do you think about as you and your teams develop and build, what goes into that decision process today? Because do you err to the side of simplicity, do you err to the side of budget? How do

you think about doing this? Because I always joke small businesses have all the problems enterprises have, it's just that they don't have any money to pay for the solution.

Clate Mask:

That's true. That's the hard part. The good part is it's a lot easier to solve their problems because they don't have so much hierarchy, bureaucracy, multiple organizations, departments, egos, personalities, you name it. And so that's the positive side of it. But the reality is they do have challenging problems and they don't have the budget for it. So you're exactly right. To answer your question, about 2007, the business really started to take off around our marketing automation capabilities that we had built. We began, a couple years later, marketing automation started becoming a thing and around 2010 we started to say marketing automation for small business. What we found was people who were trying to map their customer journey, they couldn't automate it. And that's what they began using our software for. We built a very powerful platform for them to do that. But it wasn't always easy.

And so if you were more of a process oriented marketing mind, you felt like you died and gone to heaven when you got our product because it was like, oh my gosh, if I can flow chart it, I can automate it. This is amazing. Well let's be honest, that's a small subset of small businesses. Most small businesses don't think that way. That's not how they're wired and oriented. The journey that we've been on was we created this powerful solution and then a few years ago we realized, hey, we've got to create a simple lighter solution for businesses that aren't ready for all of that power. And that's why we changed the name of the company to KEAP and created a light simple automation that so we now have our easy automations and our advanced automations, the advanced automations is what we've always had with our marketing automation capabilities.

But now we've created easy automations, getting that solution for the more process oriented, automation oriented, flowchart oriented small business and having a solution for customers that actually need that but they don't think that way and trying to get them into that world, that was the hardest challenge we've faced as a company. And it just about killed us to be totally honest. It was so difficult and so challenging to take this powerful automation solution. You can't just dumb it down and simplify it. We had to actually reimagine it from the beginning and then build the easy automations that can then help the customer ramp up into our advanced automation.

Albert Chou:

The adage, simple and easy rings true again, a lot of people that have been on this show have talked about how hard it was to simplify something. And we the consumer, if we don't recognize it, because we just see, oh it's only three buttons, somehow it just magically works. But a lot of thought obviously went into that. You mentioned it almost killed you guys. How did you get through that typical transition? Because you obviously did that later in the company's trajectory, so you have a lot of customers and you kind of hit the nail in the head. It eventually gets to the point where every time you add something, half the people say it's awesome, half the people say that sucks, right? And it's really hard to get consensus on anything. It sounds like you had that same problem. Every time you add a feature, someone's like, oh that's harder to use. Or you simplify something, Hey you lost something for me. It's a challenge. How did you go about that? Because I could hear it in your voice that it was tough. So how did you and your teams take this on?

Clate Mask:

It was so tough. We started to do it ourselves with the team that had built the powerful solution and then we realized, you know what? We need a different kind of thinking. So I brought in some people

from the outside, we built the team to work on it and you have all the challenges of the existing product that is paying the bills and then the new thing and they kind of go to war with each other. It's a really tricky thing. And so the team that we brought in helped us create a simple paradigm and an easier way to do the sales and marketing, but they left out the real secret sauce of what we do, which is the automation. They felt very strongly about not going deeply into that.

And long story short, there was sort of boardroom battles and executive team battles. And as a founder, I was kind of on the outside of that and we struggled for a couple of years trying to get that right and then I got the reins back after a couple years and we began to bring the automation into what our easy product is. And so now we have KEAP, which has its easy interface, with an easy user experience, with easy automations, and that's our pro solution, and then you go up to our max and that's our longstanding, robust, powerful solution that we've had.

Albert Chou:

I often do this with all my guests as I reference things that I've heard other guests say. You mentioned getting an outside voice or an outside opinion because we've heard from different tech leaders before, it's like if you've spent your whole life building something, it's very hard for you to imagine what else it should be right? And it sounds like this happened. How did you know that the decision had to be made to be like, I got to get an outside voice in this arena, not because my existing team's not good at it, because you've recognized that there's something they're not seeing. What made you make that decision? And how did it go? Were they sensitive to it? Did they think, Hey, what are you doing to me, Clate, I've been building for you for all these years, you're telling me that someone else knows better than me what's going on?

Clate Mask:

All of those things. And I would say, and some of those things I was wrong on and some of those things I was right on. I mean, you know how it goes, you don't nail it perfectly. The way that we knew is that my co-founders and I were saying, we've tried to simplify this, we really need to rethink it. And so I loved your point about simplicity. It's simplicity on the other side of a very complex journey as you have to go through. And so we realized that we weren't making the progress in ease of use that we needed to make. And we recognized that our paradigm and our way of thinking was limited to the way that we had built it from the beginning. And so we just felt like we needed outside thinking and we absolutely did. In hindsight, I would've done it a little differently. I would've brought them in as consultants and maybe some full time hire too.

But that need in the business coincided with a personal need I had to be a little more present at home and balance things out after burning it hard as an entrepreneur for many years, what we ended up doing was I put a COO in place. That COO ended up just having a different vision than what we could see and what we believed was needed. And he wasn't wrong and we weren't right. It was just different and it created a lot of tension and a lot of challenge for us to work through which then the board had to make a call, well which way are we going to go? Are we going to go with the founders or are we going to go with this COO that's got a lot of years of experience and has a team that he's been bringing in that had that experience. And it was usually boards go with the pedigree, not the founding group.

And so that's what happened. And to be honest, there was a period of time there I was pretty frustrated. I was feeling disempowered and in the corner and not able to really do much. Even though I had the title of CEO, I couldn't actually remove the people and do anything to make CEO decisions. And I went through a pretty tough period working with my coach and getting through that. And then I got to the point where I was really grateful for what they had created in simplicity that we couldn't. I

recognized that while the board sided with them, they didn't boot me out, which is what usually happens. I became very grateful for the opportunity to still be in the company and to now have an easy to use experience for our customers.

And I recognize that if we could just get the secret sauce of our automation injected into the product in the right way, that we'd really have something exciting. And so I was able to get the reins back and outlast those who were dealing with the challenges that didn't have it in their DNA and their passion to do this the way a founder does. And so we began putting the automation into the product and began making progress to unify what was a very powerful product and a very simple basic product that needed to be brought together in one product line.

Albert Chou:

So give our audio, I think you said 2017 this process began, is that right?

Clate Mask:

That's right. You got it.

Albert Chou:

And then when was it done?

Clate Mask:

2020 is when I got back at the helm and I would say it's still not done, but we're making more and more ... We keep making progress.

Albert Chou:

That makes sense. When did you turn the lights on though? And let other customers see and experience what a team had been working on for three years?

Clate Mask:

We started to do that in 2018 and it became very apparent that the very simple solution that didn't have the automation was not the right ... We didn't have product market fit to put it bluntly. And that's what ultimately another 18 months of that from folks who had been building it, they became discouraged. It wasn't working. I could see and my co-founder could see that we had something there that was really cool. It was mobile first. It was simple. It was an easy paradigm, but it lacked the magic of what Infusionsoft had been. In 2020, I was able to get the reins back and then immediately get hit with Covid and everything that came along with that and do a lot of work to get the company turned around and move it in the right direction.

Albert Chou:

So what was the audience reaction when they got to see the blend, right? The final product, The Blend. Was it immediate, whoof, people liked the product? Was it another gut punch of like, Hey, we still have more work to do. I know in software you're never actually done. I think that's ... I tell that to people that want to get in the software games, like the problem with softwares you're never done. It's like there's never a point where it's good enough because the second you're done, someone else is making theirs better.

Clate Mask:

That's right. The reaction was, okay, we see this now, there's still work, a lot of work to be done, but we get it. So what we did was we took the easy and beautiful modern experience and we inserted the advanced automation builder that was the crown jewel of Infusionsoft. And so we did the work to make the front end experience of what had been the automation engine in Infusionsoft, we brought that into the easy user experience. It was still advanced automation though. So we had a nice UI with this advanced automation now in it. And then the next step was for us to say, okay, now let's create an easy automation experience for folks who don't want to get under the hood and build out the kinds of flow charts you saw Fit aid do. So we created a very simple way last year for customers to do if this, we call it when then automation. When this happens, then do that.

And it's in plain English when someone fills out a form, then send out this email and then this and then that. So we created that. Your three buttons analogy that you said, for us is when then automation. When this happens, then do this. Most people, like I said, are not process thinkers, but they can do that. They can go, Oh yeah, when someone clicks on this, then I want them to do that. And so we serve up the different items of when this happens, then do that and they can do it very simply. And then that gets them into the world of process automation. And it's not long before they're reaching for the advanced automation where they want to do, but if they're this and if they're that and if they've done these three things as well and I want to send them over onto this path, that kind of thing.

Albert Chou:

I like the way you described that because I once had to do an email automation flow where I looked at it like a day later. It's like why is it sending nothing? And they said, you've introduced enough but thens and clauses that you've basically eliminated your whole customer base. No one qualifies. I was like, it's working as intended. I was like, oh my bad.

Hearing you talk, on one side KEAP is a very successful company. It's been around for over 20 years. We see the customer roster, it's in the employee count and on LinkedIn. It's an exciting company. You've also been very transparent with us that it's really hard to innovate, it's really hard to innovate in software and the competition is fierce in your marketplace. What would you say to someone who is thinking about getting into this? Because it's one of those things where entrepreneurship is always a challenge no matter what category you're going into, but you have, I would say unique domain experience because you've been at it for this period of time, building the company, stepping away, returning, re-innovating the product that you've gone through many events, I don't know the best way to call it.

Just through just sheer time and you've gone through many events as a CEO of a software company, what would you say to someone like if there's a developer right now or CIO, CTO working at another company, they're thinking, Hey, I want to break out. What should they be excited for? And of course I think everyone knows what they're wary of, but what would you say to them, this is why or why you should not do it or when you should and should not do it?

Clate Mask:

I think first thing, you've got to have a drive and a passion and a commitment to the thing that you see, that you believe in you. It's got to be so strong because it will get challenged, beaten down, torn apart, ripped in, ripped up and torn up in front of your face, laughed at, all that stuff. It's so challenging that if you are the kind of person that is not willing to plow through a brick wall for this thing that you believe in, you've got no chance. It looks like, oh we've got this technology, we're going to go to do this thing.

But market realities and people realities and leadership realities and mental and emotional realities of the entrepreneur, not to mention lifestyle and pressure and financial and spouse and relationship, I mean all that stuff.

If you don't have massive passion and conviction, just don't go. Don't stop. Now on the other hand, if you are just so frustrated with the status quo and the lack of impact that you're having and you see, you're excited about what you can do for a certain subset of the market or a target customer and you are excited about taking on challenges and being able to overcome then, it's the most fun journey you could possibly imagine. But you have to be willing and excited to take on challenges and big, huge, nasty, gnarly challenges. It's stuff that most people aren't entrepreneurs because they don't want to deal with those really hard things. And a lot of those hard things are staring you back in the when look mirror. It's the stuff going on inside of you that's tough stuff to work on.

Albert Chou:

Whatever your weaknesses will just be amplified further when you choose to go off on your own. If you don't like selling, I got bad news for you. If you don't like administration, I got bad news for you. If you don't hearing negative customer feedback, I got bad news for you. You kind of hit the nail on the head there in regards to your experiences developing software. And as engineers or developers, a lot of times we can sit down and think that we have the answer. Like Oh, we have the answer. We can build this and maybe we can build it super fast. It works. No bugs, nothing like that. But there's something about the market that just punches you right in the face. You can build exactly the right thing. It doesn't have any bugs. They hate it or they don't like it or they don't want it or they don't want to pay for it.

Clate Mask:

Or they tell you it's awesome but they don't actually pay for it.

Albert Chou:

Yeah. The dollar gap. I joke with my friends all the time, do they think they have great ideas? Do you know hard it is to get a dollar? They say, what do you mean? It's like, well, think about when's the last time you installed an app on your phone that costs more than a dollar? And they're like, Oh I would never. And I was like, okay, this is literally probably some genius who's coding this for whatever period of time and you've determined their work is not worth $1. And that's how hard it is to develop software. Because that's how people think.

Clate Mask:

Yeah, it is so true. Finding that spot in the market and being able to really drive your product into that space, that is quite a trick to get product market fit and build that momentum.

Albert Chou:

You also have, like I said, you got that experience. You've been through, it sounds like an amazing ride. Of course it's got some lows that we don't want to talk about the lows, but the lows make the highs worth it from everyone I can talk about.

Clate Mask:

Yeah, it's all part of it.

Albert Chou:

I'm curious for you, because you are in a ultra competitive space, CRM, marketing automation, this is not you're one of three options. There's a lot of options to do in this space. How do you view the next five, 10 years for your company? How will you continue to innovate? How will you continue to deliver? Because competition's not going to rest so you can't rest either.

Clate Mask:

Yeah, no doubt. The thing that we've always prided ourselves on except for that little period of time is automation. It's saving time for the customer. It's not just helping them convert leads and grow sales. That's obviously important, but it's the time savings and because of the space that we serve and specifically the size of customer, the type of customer we serve, putting hours back in their day and doing things for them that make it a lot easier for them to do their sales and marketing work, have it operate in the background, that's the key thing for us. So it's about automation. There's some really cool things with AI we're doing, there's some really fun things we're doing with machine learning and just making it easier and easier for small businesses to grow without having to put all of their time and energy into the sales and marketing process.

So that's what we stay focused on. Obviously and everything that's changed in the last decade with mobile and texting and making it so much more possible to run your business from anywhere and on the go. That's all table stakes now. And now it's about, okay, well how do you do that in a way that's really effective for the customer and really efficient for them. We love that work. It's work we fell in love with it many, many years ago and we got away from it for a little season there, but these last couple years we've been back at it loving it. We're having a great time just innovating for customers and making it easier for them to automate the sales and marketing process.

Albert Chou:

Well I'll tell you what, Clate, I agree with you 100%. Being a person who sits in a small business, you already hit the nail in the head. Everyone who works at an enterprise, you might have a job. If you run a small business, you have many jobs every day. Something that you probably, and I always joke that most of it's what you don't want to do a little ... There's a small portion of your day that's dedicated to what you enjoy doing. I enjoy doing podcast. We enjoy researching gas, we enjoy putting the shows together. But that's a small part of my day. It's very small part of my day, in fact, it's like six hours a week total.

The rest is not as fun stuff. I got a feature for you. You don't have to implement it all, but I got this. But I see how many people use voice all the time now for everything that's in their lives. I see a place in the future where you've said when this, or when then. I think that's brilliant in how simple the construct is. But I could see someone wanting to pull up their phone and say, Hey, because they got an idea, because let's say they're doing a customer visit. It's like, oh, usually it takes a week for ... We go back to Fit aid, it takes a week for the drink to get there. So I'd love to get notified six days before that's actually the best time. It's like, okay, when case, deplenish, and someone probably wants to build the flow right there, they're on a customer visit, they say it into a phone and it would map it out.

Clate Mask:

Yep. Very cool. I can see that coming.

Albert Chou:

Thank you for being transparent to show, hey, this journey is not easy. A lot of guests will make it want to seem like it's just a straight rocket ship to the moon,. It sounds like it's anything but that. So I want to thank you for being transparent about what you've gone through and also of course wishing you the best of luck. But before you go, it is now time for the lightning round. The lightning round's brought to us by Salesforce platform, the number one cloud platform for digital transformation of every experience. Clate, this is where we're going to ask you questions about your life outside of work so our audience can get to know you a little bit better.

Clate Mask:

Sounds great.

Albert Chou:

You ready?

Clate Mask:

You bet.

Albert Chou:

All right. You're in Arizona I believe. Arizona's not known as a hotbed for tech. How did you choose to start the business there?

Clate Mask:

I was raised here, love life here. And other than the three or four months a year where it's insufferable, it's a great place to be.

Albert Chou:

What do you like to do when you're not at work? What you enjoy?

Clate Mask:

Family, sports, I love the NBA, Phoenix Suns are my passion, so love that.

Albert Chou:

Are the Suns going to take the title this year, so close?

Clate Mask:

I sure wish I could say yes, but I don't feel so confident.

Albert Chou:

How would you recommend people deal with very insanely high heat?

Clate Mask:

Oh gosh, stay inside and have a pool to go outside.

Albert Chou:

What do you like doing with your family?

Clate Mask:

Travel, watching movies, hanging out together, just being together.

Albert Chou:

Where is somewhere you would like to visit that you've never been?

Clate Mask:

Oh, my wife and I have never been to Italy and we were just saying recently we need to go to Italy.

Albert Chou:

Well right now Italy's dry, like they're having a big drought problem, so you got to at least wait until it starts raining a bunch.

Clate Mask:

Yeah.

Albert Chou:

Well, Clate, it was awesome having you on the show. I want to say thank you for opening up the doors to what your experiences have been. I think what the industry you were in is one among the most challenging, and it's not just tech. I'm talking about building software for small businesses. We kind of discussed it before. They have all the problems of enterprise, but the budget of a small business, their needs are the same. And then there's probably an extra layer that simplicity that Clate's talking about, where an enterprise might have a person dedicated to a role, small business won't have that luxury, right? So I think you're in one of the toughest and most challenging businesses, but I mean, you got a passion for it and I think that was evident in the way you spoke about it.

Clate Mask:

Thanks. Great be with you, been a ton of fun talking.

Albert Chou:

Thanks for joining us today on IT Visionaries.

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