

Andy Jacob:

Hello everyone. Andy Jacob here, with the DotCom Magazine Entrepreneur Spotlight Series. I have a fascinating show today. Everybody knows, at the DotCom Magazine Show, at DotCom Magazine, everybody calls me Mr. Safety. I've got flashlights and I've got gadgets, and I'm very interested in personal safety, and everyone knows that I love all the things that go along with personal safety, especially driven through technology. My wife calls me Mr. Safety all the time.

Andy Jacob:

So listen, we were talking about safety and we had a discussion to bring on a leader in the field, somebody that's got something sort of new and hip, a new app that really resonated for our entire team. And we went through the Rolodex and we found Ms. Peter Goodman. And when you hear what he has going at his company called Kazoo, I think it's really going to resonate for you.

Andy Jacob:

They've developed a B2B mobile SOS technology that really saves lives. It's really, really interesting through enhanced 911 connectivity, and when you hear this story, I think you're going to love it. You're going to want to download the app and check it all out. It's super cool. It just transforms your personal smartphone, really into a personal safety device. It's super cool. So Peter, welcome to the DotCom Magazine Entrepreneur Spotlight Series today.

Peter Goodman:

Thanks, Andy. It's great to be here.

Andy Jacob:

Oh listen, everybody knows, all my family and friends and everybody at DotCom Magazine, people watch the show as a matter of fact, they know they call me Mr Safety. So when I saw Kazoo, it made all the sense in the world what you're doing, but before we get into it, let's pull the lens back like we always do at the start of the show to 30,000 feet, and tell us about Kazoo?

Peter Goodman:

Okay. Well, the impetus for Kazoo is really, one night I was driving back from an event. It was around midnight and it was dark, cold on the side of the highway, and I blew out actually two tires. And so, I had no idea where I was, I have no idea about the mile marker. So I needed help, and I needed to reach an emergency contact. And even if I had reached an emergency contact, they would have no idea where I am as well.

Peter Goodman:

So I started to think that I needed help in the moment. And so, I started to think about all the different applications for intervention technology. For instance, Uber, you have assaults or deaths, or tragedies, or you have livestream events, or things that are happening in the moment. People record these or livestream them, but they can't get help. So that was kind of like the crux of the idea.

Andy Jacob:

I love it. Here you are, you're driving down a road, a highway. It's night time, something happens to the vehicle. You pull off to this side of the road. You're kind of looking around like anybody would, a little

freaked out about what's happening. You realize at that moment, as a technologist and as an entrepreneur, that there's a big problem that needs to be solved here, and it's really, really fascinating. For the entrepreneurs watching the show, right there, that must resonate for you with someone that saw a big need, a big problem that actually affected his own personal life. And then here he is with Kazoo.

Andy Jacob:

Now listen, I love what's going on with Kazoo. It's so interesting, Peter, we had a chance prior to the show today to have a pre-interview. And one thing that really resonated for me and kind of made me kind of scared was how many of these 911 calls end up at the wrong 911 locations? So let's talk about that because that's just crazy information that people need to hear about.

Peter Goodman:

Yeah, absolutely. And really, that applies to the situation I was telling you. Even if I had called 911, 911 calls are not that accurate. And what happens is we're really dealing with 50-year old technology, so that normally cell phones, your friends know where you are. If you walk in front of a storefront, they can send you an ad on your cell phone, but when you need help, a life and death situation, the way that the 911 infrastructure or system is configured is old technology.

Peter Goodman:

So it's basically giving you a best guess between three different towers. So it could be basically, "Hey, we think you're in within 300 meters." So what ends up happening with Kazoo is that we're able to do a 30-foot radius basically, because we're passing the vital information directly through to 911. So it's not only more accurate, but you don't have to know your location. You don't have to have all your vital information. It's passing that along right to the emergency call center in seconds.

Andy Jacob:

Wow, it's so interesting. And of course, here recently, Peter, without naming any names, there was a big story in the news, and it was a murder mystery. And unfortunately, a young lady ended up on the wrong end of an argument and was apparently murdered. And again, I don't like to bring that type of news up, but I'm just thinking, and as I was watching all the news reports about it, if she only had Kazoo, the whole dynamic could have possibly changed because what you're really doing is you're saving people's lives.

Andy Jacob:

So let's talk about it. Somebody goes to the app store, they download Kazoo, tell us what happens? God forbid, somebody has an emergency or needs to reach out to be saved, what's the process with Kazoo at a high level? Of course, let's not get so into the technical aspects of it, even though you can very well do that, but let's talk about the high level about what happens?

Peter Goodman:

Okay. Well, currently the product is in beta form. We spent two years plus developing this technology because it's very complex because you're dealing with location-based services, 911, et cetera. But when the product does come out, we have a business-to-business applicability. So for instance, Disney or AT&T, colleges and universities, or home security companies could white label or co-brand Kazoo and distribute it through their channels to millions of customers.

Peter Goodman:

In addition, we're going to have a B2C aspect of it, so that you could go to the app store, any consumer can download the app and get set up, include their emergency contacts, and there's even more that you can do with Kazoo. It's a location-based app dealing with communications, social activities, et cetera.

Peter Goodman:

So it's really applicable to people's everyday lives, not just emergency situations. And that was really important that people to trust it, they're familiar with it, they're addicted to it. So those are kind of the two different channels in terms of how people would get the application.

Andy Jacob:

That's great. And of course, the adoption is going to be so big once the big carriers and the large technology companies see what this Kazoo can do. I had a chance to take a look at sort of the process and I showed it to the team, and we're all just so thrilled with what's happening. It was really amazing, all the ways Peter, you and your team have thought through this program.

Andy Jacob:

Now, one thing that happens, my wife and I, we have on each other's phone, sort of a Find My iPhone app because I don't mind my wife knowing where I'm at, and she doesn't mind me knowing where she's at. It's just a safety feature, but you've got some great technology with Kazoo as well, with regard to being able to find somebody within 30 feet, that's remarkable.

Andy Jacob:

Let's talk about how that's all going to work with the technology that really is going to save lives?

Peter Goodman:

So in terms of how the technology works with you and your wife, you have Find My Friends, or your wife can see where you are. You can see where she is, but that's only useful in as much as you guys know where you are, but if there is an emergency, you or her can send out, within seconds, an emergency notification which has a loud beeping noise on your phone. It's a push notification. When she or you accepts it, you see the live broadcast paired with location. You can pull down the map.

Peter Goodman:

If it's just kind of, let's say a broken down car or something that doesn't require 911, you can help her. But if it's an elevated situation like a crime or something more invasive, two things. You can actually call 911 if you're halfway across the country, just tap 911. It will route to the local jurisdiction of where your wife is, the local emergency call center, and deploy help right away.

Peter Goodman:

That's what's unique. That's what no one has, and that's kind of the magic behind Kazoo's emergency technology.

Andy Jacob:

Wow. I love it so much. So no matter where I am in the country, God forbid [crosstalk 00:10:07]. What's that?

Peter Goodman:

Or world.

Andy Jacob:

Worldwide. Wherever I am worldwide then. If I have an emergency, then it's going to contact into the sort of local SOS response team, right? Is that the way it works?

Peter Goodman:

Exactly. It will be routed electronically into the local emergency call center. It's not trying to find her with bouncing off different cell towers. It's much more accurate and precise, and not only what it's doing in terms of getting to the right call center within seconds. It's also passing along her name, her phone number, her longitude, latitude, any other critical information that the phone, she deems available to pass along, as opposed to the 911 operator saying, "I can't hear you. Where are you? What's going on?"

Peter Goodman:

So for instance, if you're intervening on behalf of your wife, you can actually tell the 911 center what's going on. It's giving you on-scene eyes, which again, is very different than any other technology that's out there.

Andy Jacob:

Wow, Peter. It's so cool, and it's so interesting. And really, when we think about saving lives, moments and minutes matter, and that's so interesting. Now, there's another component of Kazoo that caught our attention that we just loved, and we're saying to ourselves, everybody here at DotCom magazine, this is going on our phone. It looks really great.

Andy Jacob:

You have a video component also, which is very, very fascinating to us. Maybe you could walk us through that a little bit?

Peter Goodman:

Right. In addition to the livestreaming component, we've also integrated immediate livestreaming technology. So that for instance... And we know that there are other apps out there like WhatsApp or Facebook Live, there are a lot of apps that do livestreaming. But what we do is whether it's, let's say a child who's locked out of their house and the mom's at work, he can just tap a button right on his app, and it'll do an instant livestream with a bi-directional communication with his mom, which is very helpful.

Peter Goodman:

If you're out with friends and you're at a concert or wherever, you can do instant livestreaming as well, and there's no limit in terms of the duration. But what we do is we automatically save that information or save that video, so that a lot of times when you're instant livestreaming, once it ends, it disappears.

Peter Goodman:

However, with us, it's automatically saving that on your phone for 14 days. You can then download it and save it forever. And that also relates by the way, to the emergency technology, because even though it's livestreaming, it automatically... When it's cut off or it ends, it's automatically saving that livestream video to your phone, paired with location, so that whether you want to show it to law enforcement, or you need it for some kind of record, it's always accessible, and the user owns their own data.

Andy Jacob:

Peter, it's so well thought out and when I listen to this, what you've been able to do with your team is really transform any smartphone into a personal safety lifeline that really ensures total peace of mind. I'm talking about for tens of millions of users worldwide, and we just love it so much.

Andy Jacob:

What we really like at the DotCom Magazine is when someone like you, an entrepreneur with this great background and experience that you have, is able to put together something that is very complicated, sort of on the backend, but front facing to the consumer, they say, "Wow, I get it. It's simple and easy to use." And they've made personal safety easy. Even though it's a complex backend system, the front facing system for the consumer is remarkable. And that's why I think so many large organizations, large technology companies, large phone companies, et cetera, and your B2B model are going to be adopting this as part of their system.

Andy Jacob:

Now, one thing that's really interesting already is you've got a world class engineering team that is building this app. People from Infinity and Microsoft, Warner Music, incredible people. So when we think about building this app, how long was it from the time you were on the side of the road, in the dark night, and you started thinking to yourself, "There's got to be a better way, we have a big problem here," to the time where the app started being built?

Peter Goodman:

Yeah. I would say three-and-a-half years ago, around three years ago, I had that incident and I started thinking about how to implement this type of emergency services. Before that point, I've been in mobile technology for eight years, we were focused on location-based services, dealing with parental and family safety, alerts, if you want to know where your child is, if they're at home, if they ride to school, et cetera.

Peter Goodman:

But that was really focused and location centric. When that happened to me, I started to think about, "Hey, what if someone can..." If we can develop not just a technology that people can say, "Hey, did you see what happened to me? Or this was happening," but you can't get help. So I started to think, what happens if we have technology where we can actually get help in the moment, in that second, and be rescued or attended to?

Peter Goodman:

So it was basically about three years, and then Kazoo was founded a little over two years ago. So it's been a pretty big effort, but the technology had been developed, even the underlying technology before even Kazoo was founded.

Andy Jacob:

That's awesome, Peter, and you're along the path. You've taken amazing steps. People are already talking about Kazoo. You've already been vetted by AT&T and FirstNet, to enter into their App Developer Certification Program, which is really, really powerful.

Andy Jacob:

I think you've already signed a marketing channel partnership with a national non-profit, which is really interesting. That gives you immediate access to hundreds of thousands of their users. You're really putting all the things in place necessary to show off who you are and what you're all about. I know you're based in Washington D.C. and this platform is several years in the making. I know you're just so proud of it, and when we saw it, it just resonated for us.

Andy Jacob:

Let's talk a little bit about entrepreneurship just for a minute, Peter, because people watching the show, they're going to say to themselves, "Well, this gentleman was on the highway. Something happened to his car. He had to pull off to the side of the road, and right there in the middle of the night, he said to himself, 'There has to be a better way. There's a big problem. I can solve this problem through a technology platform.'"

Andy Jacob:

So let's talk about this entrepreneurial leadership team that you have, because you put together a great team of people. And what's the key? When you're in a startup mode, Peter, what's the key with putting together the best team that you possibly can?

Peter Goodman:

Yeah. The old adage, or people always say that you're investing in people. You can have the best product in the world, but if you don't have the right people to bring it to market, to get the funding, to do the analysis, figure out the go-to market plan, has the experience, that amazing technology will never make it.

Peter Goodman:

I feel very fortunate in this case, we have an A team and we have an incredible... What I believe is an expansive product. And so, in terms of our team, I've been doing entrepreneurial companies endeavors since graduating college. I started out in medical software, pretty much all SaaS based companies. And the team that I assembled are people along the way, colleagues along the way that I've had with me, that we've had joint successes with.

Peter Goodman:

So for instance, I've been working with the Head of Marketing and strategy for 10 years. I've been working with our Head of Finance who, she and I have gone through multiple rounds of venture capital, private equity, so we knew that aspect. We have an incredible technology team, the systems architect and essentially CTO, again, as you mentioned, who's worked with some of the leading engineering teams... engineering or technology companies out there. We also have a great product design team as well.

Peter Goodman:

So it's basically, really finding the right people and knowing... being aligned in mindset, being aligned in terms of the overall vision for the company, and basically marching to the same beat.

Andy Jacob:

I love it, and that's so important. And of course, corporate culture starts at the top, Peter, and you've done such a great job. You already have raised money from founders and 381 Reg CF investors that are really interested in your offering, and it's really, really remarkable.

Andy Jacob:

So let's finish, and I know you've only cut out a certain amount of time. As a startup founder, I know you're going a 1,000,000 miles an hour, but you've only cut out a certain amount of time and I really appreciate, because this has been fascinating. I've been wanting to get you on the show for a number of months, and we finally were able to book you.

Andy Jacob:

But let's talk about entrepreneurship. When we think about entrepreneurs, younger entrepreneurs especially, going through their journey, oftentimes they hit a tough time. Sometimes they hit a roadblock. Sometimes they hit a wall that's hard to get through. Sometimes they freeze in the frame, they don't know what to do.

Andy Jacob:

So based on your vast experience, maybe you could share some insight to the younger entrepreneurs watching the show, about what it takes to get through those tough times and keep on going?

Peter Goodman:

Right. Well, it's interesting you mentioned that because a lot of times, and I know I experienced this, especially when I was a young entrepreneur, but also, even today, entrepreneurs often feel like no one understands, they're alone. Everyone's asking them for something, all the pressure is really on their shoulders.

Peter Goodman:

And what I would recommend is really trying to get involved with other entrepreneurial groups. Like for instance, YEO is for young entrepreneurs, where you meet regularly with other entrepreneurs and similar industries. And it's not like a misery loves company, but it's kind of like about sharing ideas and networking.

Peter Goodman:

And the other thing that I think is really important is to find a good mentor or mentors, because the big thing that is okay to do, it's okay to fail. No one likes to fail, but it's okay to fail if you learn from those failures or mistakes. And I think that being a young entrepreneur, it's really important to get involved and have a really good network to really make sure that you don't feel alone, and you also have help along the way.

Andy Jacob:

I love it so much, Peter. It's really, really awesome, what you've developed. It's really interesting, when I think about it and I think about what you're doing at Kazoo, it has to be remarkable waking up every single morning and saying to yourself, "Yeah, we've got this great technology. We're developing this B2B mobile SOS technology that saves lives, and the technological aspect of it is so super cool." And you're working with world-class leaders and developers, and this enhanced 911 connectivity is really going to transform the entire space as far as I'm concerned of personal safety, as a personal safety lifeline that's going to get peace of mind to literally millions of people.

Andy Jacob:

But I'm thinking to myself, waking up in the morning with what you're doing, you have to feel like, "Wow, this is super interesting, but it's more importantly, really kind of important because I'm going to be able to save, and our team's going to be able to save lives, and we're going to give people peace of mind."

Andy Jacob:

And goodness knows how many lives Kazoo is going to save in the future. And just of course, through the 911 program, the 911 program, the connectivity program that you have, that's going to save countless lives just from the tiny aspect of the direct connectivity to the 911 operators and the people that are going to help save those lives, and be there for those people, whether it's an emergency that potentially could cost them their lives or something, God willing less important than that. People still need help no matter where they turn, all the way along the way.

Andy Jacob:

This is remarkable. We love what Kazoo is doing. I'm going to have you back on the show in another couple months, and we want to sort of draw out a little bit more, more of the success stories, once you get this thing up and going, and once so many people start using it, and once the technology actually starts saving the lives that you and I both know that it will, and your team knows that it will.

Andy Jacob:

And more importantly, the people that are investing in your company know that it will. And of course, all the large tech companies that are really coming to your door and saying, "Hey, Peter, we heard about Kazoo. We want in, let's chat. Let's get this thing going."

Andy Jacob:

So Peter, thank you so much for coming on the DotCom Magazine Entrepreneur Spotlight Series today. I've been waiting a long time, and this is just super interesting technology, and congrats on taking this problem and solving it with just a very unique, transformational technology that you have with Kazoo.

Peter Goodman:

Well, thanks for having me, Andy. I really enjoyed the conversation, and look forward to coming back.