



Stanford eCorner

Birth of a Business

Andy Kurtzig, *JustAnswer*

March 07, 2012

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2923/Birth-of-a-Business>

Entrepreneur Andy Kurtzig talks about the birth of his current venture, JustAnswer. Kurtzig developed the idea for the paid question and answer platform when his wife, who was pregnant at the time, wanted on-demand answers to medical questions.



Transcript

How did I come up with the idea for JustAnswer? I started JustAnswer, now in 2003 when my wife Sarah was pregnant with my first daughter. I have got three kids now; two daughters and a son. And Sarah had a lot of medical questions. She's actually a hypochondriac. Sara's a hypochondriac and just so you know being a hypochondriac and being pregnant; don't go well together. So she called her doctor like every day, what's this, I feel a little rash here, I feel it kicking in there and everyday it was something new. And her doctor, you can imagine, got fed up really fast. And he said well hey, Sara's, that's great, you have got so many questions, why don't you make a list of all your questions and bring them to your next appointment in a month and then I'll answer all your questions then. We don't want to wait a month, she's like freaking out about this stuff. So that's where the idea for JustAnswer came from.

I built a website where Sarah could talk to a doctor anytime she wants, 24x7 and since then we've added lawyers and mechanics and veterinarians and accountants and all these different experts and that's where just answer came from. So I should say maybe JustAnswer was born. So lesson number one; when you have a business idea the first thing you do is go out and see if customers want it. And here's a funny little cartoon, the customer is always right, we've talked it over and we've decided that you must not really be a customer. And I should also say it's not just when you're sort of deciding if a business idea is good to begin with that you should see if customer is actually like. You should actually do that every day forever for the life of your company. And so we've a new version of our software coming out every week, every Thursday night with tests, we're trying and experimenting to see if customers actually like it or don't, if they do we'd do more and then if they don't we yank it and we learn from it. So it's a constant iterative learning process of what customers really want. You don't just stay with the product you've launched, you constantly have to make it better, better, better, better.