URL: https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/solve-your-own-problem-2/

Prospective founders are often advised to find startup ideas by solving their own problems. Hipcamp founder and CEO Alyssa Ravasio explains how a missed opportunity for great surfing inspired what became Hipcamp.

Transcript

- Hipcamp started very much 00:00:05,420 as a problem I wanted to solve for myself.. So, I was really lucky.. I grew up spending lots of time camping.. I'm one of three girls.. So I think for my parents, it was one of the only vacations that was affordable and manageable.. And it was just a huge part of, you know, how I grew up how I remember having moments like crossing rivers and having these realizations of, wow, I'm so strong.. I can't believe I was able to do that.. And it just became this huge part of how I grew up and found confidence and really, you know, became an adult which apparently I am told that I am today.. So for me, you know, the outdoors was always something that I did.. I just normally went with other people, right..

My dad would book, my friends would book, especially for overnight camping trips.. And when I started trying to plan my own trips, I moved to San Francisco after being in DC, after attending UCLA Go Bruins, I just had to get one in there.. I'm done, you know, I started looking for my own campsites and what I found was that it was incredibly broken, and the whole system was really difficult to use and everything was either booked up six months ago, or really difficult to find.. And in particular, I spent many, many, many hours researching for a trip on New Year's.. I wanted to go be by the ocean.. That's my favorite place to be.. And I just couldn't believe that I had to look at County Parks and State Parks and National Parks and all the private campgrounds.. There were so many different websites that at one point I crashed my Chrome Browser because I had too many tabs open.. And eventually finally found this campsite.. This is in Andrew Molera State Park..

It's in Big Sur, it's gorgeous.. There were no reservations, which was good news to me, cause I had not thought to book six months in advance and upon arriving, I found out that despite doing many hours of research, I had failed to learn what for me was arguably the best part about this campground, which was it had an incredible surf break and had a point break.. So a very well-formed wave that was coming off of a bluff that was out in the sea.. And I hadn't brought my surfboard.. I absolutely loved to surf.. I'd actually had my board in my car 'cause I was surfing so much, but I'd read all about the campground.. And so I figured, you know, if there was surfing, it would have been mentioned.. So it seems they have to take the board out of the car and give my friend in the backseat a bit more room.. It was still a great trip, but you know, really highlighted for me that if you can spend that many hours researching and still end up, you know, missing, what's probably the most important part of the outdoor experience.. This isn't really a broken system..

And so it was actually just the next day, New Year's Day driving back into San Francisco that it kind of hit me that this was a really broken experience and the internet was a really great way to fix it.. And so I decided to start solving that and learned how to program and build the first version of the site later that year...