

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/just-keep-building/>

Nikil Viswanathan, co-founder and CEO of Alchemy, shares an example of a product he built as a student, observing that notable founders who have built great companies often built many smaller products first.



Transcript

- The other thing I did at college is 00:00:03,240 I like building, right.. And a lot of these things were just things I built for fun.. Like here's this website that has like basically quoted all your friends, all my friends said like really stupid, silly stuff and we would quote them.. And then it was like this digital version of a quote board.. This was when, I was here when Jim Harbaugh was here and it was like we were the worst team in the country, football team, to like one of the best teams in the country.. And like he was.. Is David Shaw still here? No, he just left.. All right.. So like Jim Harbaugh was like crazy and like David Shaw was like totally stoic.. So you can go see that, "Zoolander", best movie in history..

So I made a website on how to blue steel, made like a quantified sell thing.. So I like built a bunch of things.. I actually had a Dropbox folder of like 75 different things I built.. I counted recently.. And there's like a few other folders.. I couldn't find it.. But the point here is like, one of the things I really noticed is I just did this for fun 'cause I liked it, right.. It wasn't like I was like trying to start a company or anything like that.. And the other thing I'd really noticed from talking to people was everyone who had built something great had all just built a lot of things, right.. So for example, I think I had mentioned before, Mark and I were playing chess at Facebook and I was like, yo dude, did you know that Facebook was gonna be a thing? He was like, no man, we built like nine things before Facebook, right..

Like Facebook was just like this, we thought this thing called Wire Hog, this file sharing thing was gonna be the big thing, right.. The same thing with Bill Gates.. He had built like a bunch of things before Microsoft.. So really that was kind of a key lesson that I took away...