

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/strategic-saas-for-targeted-spaces/>

Dave Vasen, founder and CEO of brightwheel, explains why using a software as a service model—rather than adapting existing software—has worked well in the early childhood education space. While SaaS was trendy, he says, it also was a strategic choice.



## Transcript

- There were so many people 00:00:03,180 that tried to talk me out of this early on, and that was one of the things they said of like, either why would they adopt technology in your space or why wouldn't they just use other tools like QuickBooks or Microsoft or whatever it is? And you know, in some cases maybe the market is too small where it doesn't matter to solve that problem. But if the market is big enough, solving a problem that is albeit maybe small but meaty can be really meaningful. And the reality is trying to take QuickBooks or Square or anything else and adapt it to our market or even, you know, tools built for K through 12, it's really, really different, the way that they run their business, the way that they manage their staff, the way that they are regulated, as we talked about, all of that's really, really unique. And so I, you know, there's some things along the way that have been very serendipitous. One was timing where there was this trend of the verticalization of SAS, which is like every major market now has actually one or two multi-billion dollar companies that are just dedicated to offering really, really great SAS for that space. And yes, you could maybe apply different tools, but the people in that space recognize that if I'm a restaurant, I wanna buy something that's gonna help me run my restaurant, right? And yoga studio, as I mentioned, or if you're a contractor or a plumber, all of that. And so we actually are, you know, we share investors with all the leaders of every major vertical and it is actually just a strategy now which is like go out and be the winning software for that space. Interviewer Amazing. 00:01:17,415 - And I just think you can't 00:01:18,540 actually fundamentally solve their problems. If they can't bill parents the way wanna bill parents, if they can't manage their staff or track immunizations the way that they're meant to, you're not gonna actually get very far with them.

And our ability to speak to them and understand them is what, you know, enabled us to get to this scale...